

ON DIVINE PHILANTHROPY*
FROM PLATO TO JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

BY
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Second Century

Plutarch (50-120 A.D.)
and Epictetus (50-138 A.D.)

Back to earth, on the level of Hellenistic culture, we cannot bypass two important figures who were deeply responsive to the classical Hellenic tradition of *philanthropia*, namely, Plutarch and Epictetus.

While the term *philanthropia* does not appear from the pen of the Apostolic Fathers even once,¹ Tromp de Ruiter writes that the use of the word *philanthropia* «frequentissimus est apud Plutarchum.»²

Hirzel sees in the philanthropic character of Plutarch a general trait of his period.³ Plutarch even became an historian out of philanthropy.⁴ His warm understanding of humanity and a likeable moral optimism give their character to the *Lives*.⁵

Together with the Stoics he believes in the philanthropy of the gods,⁶ emphasizing that the deity is neither φίλιππον nor φίλορνιν but φίλάνθρωπον.⁷ Still, be it understood, Plutarch's deity is rather an impersonal divine principle.⁸ Exalted as he was in the twin priesthood of

* Συνέχεια ἐκ τῆς σελ. 128 τοῦ προηγούμενου τεύχους.

1. Heinrich Kraft, *Clavis patrum apostolicorum* (Munich, 1963), p. 446.

2. S. Tromp de Ruiter, *loc. cit.*, especially p. 295.

3. Hirzel, *op. cit.*, p. 23; «Indem Plutarch Philanthrop war, war er nur der Mann seiner Zeit, der Kaiserzeit». But the same writer adds as a corrective to his description of the mores of the imperial Rome (p. 27): Das Gerfühl des hellenischen Philanthropen empört sich gegen die rohen... Gladiatoren und Tierkämpfe der Römer.»

4. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

5. Albin Lesky, *op. cit.*, p. 824.

6. LeDéaut, *loc. cit.*, p. 289.

7. *Ibid.*

8. A. Feuillet, *op. cit.*, p. 70, writes that the pagan Hellenistic conception of the deity as the basis for the cult of the divinized ruler was far from being unified. He sees two directions of development: «L'une, représentée... par Apulée (*Mat.* XI, 2 et 25, 3) et les oracles Sybillins (III, 11), accorde, à un dieu la prééminence sur les autres; l'autre, qui s'exprime... dans Plutarque (*Isis et Osiris*, 67)... et dans Maxime de Tyr (*Phil.* II, 10a) se rattache au syncretisme, et fusionne les diverses divinités en un seul principe divin.»

Delphi,⁹ he justified his high position by appropriate words expressing his faith in a philanthropic deity.¹⁰ Nonetheless, he could also easily attach the same high-sounding epithet to a generous quality of wine or to a pleasant amusement.¹¹

Without penetrating to the final depths of the problems he courageously confronted,¹² Plutarch did, however, succeed in putting «the stamp of his personality... on the vast mass of the tradition which he used.»¹³ G. Faggin calls our attention to the fact that Plutarch, both as a philosopher and as a Delphic priest, tried to comprehend the profound and pure joy that overcomes the soul in cultual adoration.¹⁴

LeDéaut has concluded that one can find in Plutarch's uses of philanthropia all the shades of meaning previously attested in the Hellenic literature, as well as the confirmation of a wide currency of the term toward the end of the First century.¹⁵

If we do not find the notion of φιλανθρωπία in Epictetus' «Manual», in the lectures of his maturity,¹⁶ we do, however, find a few sincere expressions adorned with the word *philanthropia*.

In the *Gnomologium Epicleteum* of Stobaeus we read: «Οὐδὲν κρείσσον μεγαλοφροσύνης καὶ ἡμερότητος καὶ φιλανθρωπίας.»¹⁷ In the context of praises to his great masters, Socrates and Diogenes of Sinope, Epictetus recommends: «φιλανθρωπῶς λαλήσῃ» (*Diatrib.* 4,6).¹⁸

9. Lesky, *op. cit.*, p. 820.

10. «οὐ γὰρ ἀθάνατον καὶ μακάριον μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ φιλάνθρωπον... νοεῖσθαι τὸν θεόν». *De comm. not.* 1075E, quoted by Tromp de Ruiter, *loc. cit.*, p. 296.

11. LeDéaut, *loc. cit.*, p. 290. Tromp de Ruiter, *loc. cit.*, p. 298, adduces such examples: ἡδονὴ φιλάνθρωπος (*Numa 64E*). «Ἔστια, κρατῆρες, ὑποδοχαί, ξενισμοὶ appellantur φιλανθρωπότατα.»

12. Lesky, *op. cit.*, p. 821. Antonio Quacquarelli, *La concezione della Storia nei Padri prima di S. Agostino* (Roma, 1955), p. 13, contends that the classical historians, such as Herodotus, Thucydides, Polybius and Plutarch did not recognize free creativity of men in shaping history. Only Christianity has succeeded «a dare un valote veramente umano alla storia, con la tesi della resurrezione della carne.»

13. Lesky, *op. cit.*, p. 819.

14. Giuseppe Faggin, *Porfirio: La Lettera ad Anebo; La Lettera a Marcella* (Firenze, 1954), pp. 9-30, especially p. 12.

15. LeDéaut, *loc. cit.*

16. Gabriel Germain, *Epictète et la spiritualité stoïcienne* (Paris, 1964), p. 70.

17. *Epicteti Dissertationes ab Arriano digestae*, ed. Henricus Schenkl (Leipzig, 1916), p. 488.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 422. Διογένης... οὕτως ἡμερος ἦν καὶ φιλάνθρωπος (*ibid.*, p. 333).

The teacher of Nicopolis in Epirus taught that the virtues of philanthropy and nobility proceed from Zeus.¹⁹ But, on the whole, Epictetan philanthropy should be taken at its face value, at least, as emotionless and purely intellectual, since he prohibits any admixture of the emotions, which are to be stamped out as «contrary to nature.»²⁰

In spite of this rigidity of the Stoic framework, Epictetus is famous for his accents of true love for mankind—so much so, that attempts have been made to detect Christian elements in his legacy.²¹ Indeed, he proclaims that «all men have God for Father and are brothers by nature,»²² still, G. Germain rightly reminds us that all this is said in a pantheistic frame of mind.²³

Let me conclude with a real pearl of Epictetus, who showed the unmistakable authenticity of his *philanthropia* by enjoying the view of crowds of men: «Τί γάρ ἐστιν ἡδίων θέαμα τῶ φιλανθρώπῳ ἢ ἀνθρώποι πολλοί;» (*Diatrib.* 4,4).²⁴

St. Ignatius and pseudo-Clement

Second bishop of Antioch, a most powerful theologian and Church leader, Ignatius suffered a spectacular martyrdom in Rome, under the reign of Trajan, around the year 110.²⁵ Even though he prefers to use the concepts of ἀγάπη and ἀφθαρσία²⁶ Ignatius could not be suspected of any lack in philanthropic insight or disposition simply because he never used the word *philanthropia* in his extant letters.

C. Spicq, in a special work on *Agapè*, argues for the closeness of meaning between ἀγάπη and φιλανθρωπία already in the context of the New Testament.²⁷ If this semantic *rapprochement* between the two

19. *Ibid.*, p. 430

20. Germain, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

21. Lesky, *op. cit.*, p. 877.

22. Fr. Copleston, *op. cit.*, p. 434.

23. Germain, *op. cit.*, p. 111. The same author, nonetheless, *op. cit.*, p. 89, calls Epictetus' *Dissertationes* «un livre de piété.

24. Schenkl, *op. cit.*, p. 398.

25. Helmut Köster, «St. Ignatius», *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1965), XI, 1070, col. 1: cf. Johannes Quasten, *Patrology* (Westminster, Maryland, 1950), I, 63.

26. Ignace d' Antioche-Polycarpe de Smyrne, *Lettres*, ed. P. Th. Camelot (Paris, 1051), p. 279.

27. Spicq, *Agapè*, p. 22: «Χρηστότης et φιλανθρωπία sont deux formes de la révélation de l'agapè divine» (cf. Rom. 5:18). The same author writes in his article

terms is real, then we could say that, in practice, the use of ἀγάπη in *Smyrn.* VI²⁸ is almost identical with the philanthropic Church relief organization for the needy.

Once, however, we find the term *chrestotes* (benignitas) in *Smyrn.* VI²⁹ which is the twin concept to *philanthropia* in Titus 3:4, and we see, moreover, that it is theologically used as an attribute of the Father who raised the flesh of Christ.³⁰

This particular use of *chrestotes* was otherwise perfectly fit to signify, by extension, the union of flesh and spirit, divinity and humanity in Christ, both before and after the resurrection, which was the central issue in Ignatius' polemics with his Docetic opponents.³¹

The first link between the neo-testamental and the later sub-apostolic use of *philanthropia* I have found in the pseudo-Clementine Epistle of the middle Second century.³²

The meaning of *philanthropia* in the first instance, is still very close to the old hospitality.³³

Afterwards, the author sharply contrasts φιλία and φιλανθρωπία, saying that φιλία is motivated by the expectation of remuneration.³⁴ On the same premise, according to the self-appointed substitute of St. Clement, *Eros* also is opposed to φιλανθρωπία as being selfish.³⁵

Very strange and daring, indeed, is the definition — much to the

«La Philanthropie Hellénistique», especially p. 178, n. 3, «Il est certain que l'identification de la φιλανθρωπία et de l'ἀγάπη vient du Christianisme, notamment de Gal. 3:28.»

28. PG 5, 712BC.

29. PG 5, 713A.

30. Raymon Laflamme writes in his article «Nature de la b nignit  divine,» *Etudes Th ologiques* (Quebec, 1963), pp. 22-48, especially p. 34: «B nignit  est un agap  tourn  vers le prochain. Bont  est de l'ordre de l'intention, b nignit  est de l'ordre de l'ex cution.»

Friederich Augustus Schilling in his thesis *The Mysticism of Ignatius of Antioch* (Philadelphia, 1932), underlined Ignatius' «deep indebtedness to St. Paul's religious thought» (p. 7) in fighting the «Christless Christianity—Judaism» (p. 24), prophetically aroused, at times, to a point of «letting truth surge into poetry» (p. 39).

31. H. K ster, *op. cit.*, XI, 1070, col. 2.

32. Concerning the date of the Epistle see J. Quasten, *Patrology*, I, 54.

33. *De praedicationibus Petri inter peregrin, epitome Hom.* XXV OG 2, 320C.

34. PG 2, 321A.

35. PG 2, 321B.

taste of psychology nowadays — according to which φιλανθρωπία would be a bi-sexual virtue.³⁶ Its «female» constituent would be the disinterested mercifulness (ἐλεημοσύνη), while the ἀγάπη πρὸς τὸν πλησίον should constitute its «male» active part.³⁷ This ambiguous simile is, however, perfectly unambiguous as far as the semantic incorporation of *agape* into the concept of *philanthropia* is concerned. That the assimilation between these two Biblical terms has been achieved at least in the mind of this unknown author, we can see by his placing of *philanthropia* where the *agape* was usually found: φιλάνθρωπός ἐστιν ὁ καὶ ἐχθροὺς εὐεργετῶν.³⁸

In the context of «love your enemies» theme, pseudo-Clement adroitly connects the concept of *philanthropia* with the theme of the imitation of God, since God is *philanthropos* who does good to both the just and the unjust.³⁹ Nonetheless, according to the same author, the divine *philanthropia* does not abolish the divine justice.⁴⁰

We will have to wait almost two centuries in order to find statements similar to that of pseudo-Clement.

Pagan tradition

As we have to choose only the most prominent writers on the pagan side, we shall limit our study to Numerius of Apamea, Albinus, Marcus Aurelius, Celsus and Aelius Aristides.

The Middle Platonist Numerius⁴¹ impressed Plotinus with his original theory of divine giving, which takes nothing from the giver.⁴²

Specifically from the point of view of my research, Numerius is of some interest when he reaffirms, following in this the Platonic tradition, the goodness of the deity, which is for him threefold and one.⁴³

36. «masculofemina». PG 2, 322C.

37. PG 2, 321C; cf. 328B.

38. PG 2, 321C.

39. PG 2, 321D.

40. PG 2, 324A.

41. I do not have to decide here whether Kenneth S. Guthrie was right or wrong when he adorned the Middle Platonist Numenius with the title of the Father of Neo-Platonism in *Numerius of Apamea; The Father of Neo-Platonism—Works, Biography, Message, Sources and Influence* (London, 1917), pp. 97-98, but it seems very plausible that he, indeed, was «the first explicit champion of a return to Plato» (*Ibid.*, p. 193).

42. *Ibid.*, p. 192.

43. Περὶ τὰγαθοῦ Liber V, XXV-XXVI in *Ibid.*, p. 27. Noteworthy is the

In fact, not once did he apply the epithet *φιλάνθρωπος* to the God-head, but, at least, he did attach it to his master Plato, whose philanthropic mood he opposed to the severity of Pythagoras and the irony of Socrates.⁴⁴ One should not exaggerate the importance of this finding, but neither should anyone exclude the eventual echo of this appealing term in Numenius' readers, especially in such attentive readers and writers as were Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Eusebius of Caesarea, who explicitly quoted him.⁴⁵

Albinus flourished under the Antonine dynasty.⁴⁶ According to John G. Milhaven, Albinus' main direction of thought followed the platonian pattern, namely that «die Idee des Guten ist an sich die erste Gottheit und der erste Nous, dessen Gedanke die Realität der anderen Ideen konstituieren.»⁴⁷

In one respect Albinus might be original when he propounded an infinite ascent of the mind on its way in contemplation of the transcendence.⁴⁸

For R. E. Witt, Albinus is an orthodox Platonist of the Second century,⁴⁹ but M. Cary points out that his works contain an amalgam of Platonism with Peripatetic and Stoic elements; specifically Neoplatonic doctrines are merely hinted at.⁵⁰

«participation» of the Second and Third Divinity in the essential goodness of the «πρῶτος θεός.»

44. Περὶ τῆς τῶν Ἀκαδημαϊκῶν πρὸς Πλάτωνα διαστάσεως 1, 9 *Ibid.*, p. 67.

45. *Ibid.*, pp. 214-215.

46. John G. Milhaven, *Der Aufstieg der Seele bei Albinus* (Munich, 1962), p. VII.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 157.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 158. Albinus could be taken as a forerunner of Gregory of Nyssa's vision of the soul's perpetual progress in sanctity. Cf. *From Glory to Glory: Texts from Gregory of Nyssa's Mystical writings*, selected and with an Introduction by Jean Danielou, trans. and ed. Herbert Musurillo (New York, 1961), p. 46. The same theme of the mystical ascent as unending, never static, is found in Philo and, later on, in Origen. Cf. Henry Chadwick, *Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition: Studies in Justin, Clement, and Origen* (Oxford, 1966), p. 169, n. 100.

49. R. E. Witt. *Albinus and the History of Middle-Platonism* (Cambridge, 1937), p. 124.

50. *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, ed. M. Cary, et al. (Oxford, 1964), p. 28. Niels Hyldahl gave a rather fair presentation of the general situation in his book *Philosophie und Christentum: Eine Interpretation der Einleitung zum Dialog Justins* (Kopenhagen, 1966), p. 291: «Der mittlere Platonismus will weder Mystik noch Gnostizismus, sondern reines Denken sein. Seine rationale Theologie war wahrlich nicht reisvoll... Christliche Denker wie Justin, Tatian (*Orat.* 5, 1 f.) und Klemens können sich bei weitem mit (Albinos und Attikos) messen.»

In chapter XXX-XXXII of his *Διδασκαλικός*, dedicated to virtues, the concept of *philanthropia* is found only once, combined with *ἔλεος*, and again opposed to *μισανθρωπία*.⁵¹

Marcus Aurelius was praised by posterity more as a philosopher than as a wise ruler.⁵² His dramatic breach with mere rhetoric, in order to follow the Stoic philosophy had the ring of a conversion. Ever since, his life has been the noblest commentary on the precepts of Zeno.⁵³ Junius Rusticus introduced his friend and pupil to the teaching of Epictetus.⁵⁴ Stoicism, indeed, was the most popular school of philosophy in his time.⁵⁵

In the *Meditations* the concept of philanthropy is found only once, but in a decisive fragment dealing with the thorny problem of theodicy. The philosopher in purple is questioning the good and philanthropic (*καλῶς καὶ φιλανθρωπῶς*) order imposed by the gods, in which even devout men have to die and never again to come into being.⁵⁶ Before this mystery Marcus Aurelius humbly bows in calm resignation: «If indeed it is so, be certain of this that, if it ought to have been otherwise, the gods would have made it so.»⁵⁷ Nonetheless, his philosophical reticence dares to express itself by asking tragically, and still with restraint; «if indeed it is not so.»⁵⁸ This clause, however, does not break the submissive tone of his conclusion that «we should not be debating thus with the gods.»⁵⁹

In spite of all Stoic self-mastery and all imperial pride, here breathes an air of natural sadness, as if coming from a deep-seated doubt in the philanthropy of his gods, in which there is no life eternal for men, not even for good ones.⁶⁰

51. *Appendix Platonica continens Isagogas vitasque antiquas, Scholia, Timaei Glossarium, Indices.* Cura et studio Caroli Friderici Hermanni (Leipzig, 1875), p. 186.

52. *ΜΑΡΚΟΥ ΑΝΤΩΝΙΝΟΥ ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΟΣ — ΤΑ ΕΙΣ ΑΥΤΟΝ. The Meditations of the Emperor Marcus Antoninus*, ed. with translation and commentary by A. S. L. Farquharson (2 vols.; Oxford, 1944), I, ix.

53. *Ibid.*, I, 265.

54. *Ibid.*, I, 260.

55. Verbeke, *op. cit.*, p. 428.

56. *Meditations*, XII, 5 in Farquharson, *op. cit.*, I, 238.

57. *Ibid.*, I, 239.

58. *Ibid.*

59. *Ibid.*

60. If I have spotted here the weakness of the Stoic panacea, namely, the ethical teaching of *ataraxia* (which is, according to A. J. Festugière, *Epicurus*, p. 87,

Celsus was a Platonist pagan intellectual,⁶¹ the first conspicuous literary antagonist of the Church, writing in the days of Marcus Aurelius.⁶² Origen, in his old age, composed an answer to Celsus.⁶³

Even though one cannot find in the extant fragments the use of *philanthropia*, we see therein such close notions as εὐνοια,⁶⁴ χρηστοί⁶⁵ or πάντας ἀνθρώπους εὐεργετεῖν.⁶⁶

I shall try to indicate, in the conclusion of this chapter, the importance of Celsus in the «cold war» as waged between pagan culture and the Christian cult.

The best representative of the Second Sophistic, Aelius Aristides, was rather an artist⁶⁷ and showman than historian of political theorist.⁶⁸ However admirable the period was, it did not produce first-rate literature.⁶⁹ His *Oration to Rome* is evaluated as still the greatest literary achievement in existence.⁷⁰ With gross but skillful adulation, Aristides extolled the old theory that Rome has a mixture of democracy, aristocracy and monarchy⁷¹ and forcing the tone of official optimism,

rooted in *Timaeus* 90 d-e and *Laws* X 903 b-d), yet, I have no reason to doubt Marcus Aurelius' sincerity in aspiring to be a Stoic Sage. And according to his creed «the Sage did not seek to ignore the world order or to escape from the meshes of Destiny... it was precisely because he understood this order and submitted to it that he enjoyed an immutable peace.»

However, in Leon Shestov's *Athens and Jerusalem*, pp. 307-309, one can find an inspired repudiation of any worship of the philosophical «eternal truths,» as being an idolatrous worship of impersonal Necessity. «One cannot persuade the eternal truths, one cannot move them to pity.»

61. Robert Bader, *Der 'Αληθής Λόγος des Kelsos* (Stuttgart, 1940), p. 4.

62. Amos Berry Hulen, *Porphyry's Work Against the Christians: An Interpretation* (Scottdale, Pa., 1933), p. 36.

63. Bader, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

64. Celsi, *'Αληθής Λόγος*, ed., Otto Glöckner (Bonn, 1924), p. 8.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

67. Friedrich Walter Lenz, *Atisteidesstudien* (Berlin, 1964), p. 237. E. R. Dodds, in *The Greeks and the Irrational* gave the shadowy side of the portrait by writing with his blackest ink: «...another interesting neurotic, Aelius Aristides.»

68. Aelius Aristides, *ΕΙΣ ΡΩΜΗΝ: To Rome*, translated with notes and introduction by Saul Levin (Glencoe, Illinois, 1950), p. 8.

69. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

70. *Ibid.*

71. Chap. 90. James H. Oliver, *The Ruling Power: A Study of the Roman Empire in the Second Century after Christ Through the Roman Oration of Aelius Aristides* (Philadelphia, 1953), p. 989. The same writer remarks in *op. cit.*, p. 894, «Un-

he sees «the whole world, as on a holiday.»⁷² The cause of this universal happiness would be, according to Aristides, the impartial generosity (φιλανθρωπία) of the Romans to all.⁷³

The concept of *philanthropia* is used twice again, always referring to the mild or humane aspect of the Roman imperial régime.⁷⁴

Theologically, φιλανθρωπία is ascribed to almost all the deities Aristides has praised in his «hymns.» Thus, Athena is «φιλανθρωποτάτη,»⁷⁵ Dionysus is «φιλόανθρωπος,»⁷⁶ as well as Asclepius.⁷⁷ According to Friedrich Walter Lenz the two «hymns» dedicated to Zeus and to Sarapis are the most successful in revealing the specific religiosity of the Second century, as well as the inner development of this rare man.⁷⁸

For Aristides Zeus is a self-created god,⁷⁹ father of all and benefactor of all,⁸⁰ but, strangely enough, he is never acclaimed as *philanthropos*. Sarapis, on the other hand, is addressed not only as the «φιλανθρωπότατος... θεῶν» but also as «the most awesome one» (φοβερώτατος).⁸¹ Still, the term *philanthropia* is most frequently to be found in his oration *To the Emperor*, wherein the ruler is glorified as «divine and philanthropic,»⁸² whose *philanthropia* is rhetorically accompanied by all other traditional virtues, such as δικαιοσύνη, εὐσέβεια, πραότης;⁸³ ἐλευθερία,⁸⁴ ἡμερότης, ἐπιείκεια, εὐνοια;⁸⁵ ἀνδρεία.⁸⁶ Of course, he could not for-

like Polybius, Aristides is never on the defensive in his admiration of Rome, and he repudiates the Polybian expectation of the eventual decay of the Roman government.»

72. B. Levin, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

73. Chap. 98, J. Oliver, *op. cit.*, p. 990; cf. Levin, *loc. cit.*

74. Oliver, *op. cit.*, p. 986 and chap. 66, p. 987.

75. Aristides *Ex recensione*, ed. Guilielmi Dindorfii, I (Leipzig, 1829), 20.

76. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

77. *Ibid.*, p. 68.

78. F. W. Lenz, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

79. Dindorfii, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

80. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

81. *Ibid.*, p. 93. Anton Höfler, in his book *Der Sarapishymnus des Ailios Aristides* (Stuttgart, 1935), p. 90, interprets this latter epithet as follows: «Vielleicht knüpft an diese Vorstellung auch die Tatsache an, dass in Smyrna Sarapis und Isis mit den Rachegöttineng emeinsam verehrt wurden.»

82. Dindorfiii, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

83. *Ibid.*, p. 101; cf. pp. 103, 104.

84. *Ibid.*, p. 105.

85. *Ibid.*, p. 106.

86. *Ibid.*, p. 108.

get to require from an ideal emperor versatility in *paideia* also.⁸⁷ Finally, *philanthropia* occurs twice in Aristides' rhetoric exercises as the professional virtue of judges.⁸⁸

Christian trend: Justin, Theophilus and Irenaeus.

For his own times, Justin was a prominent lecturer in philosophy and a serious pioneer in theology.⁸⁹ A. Hamman gives him credit for being the first intellectual figure able to acquire the «droit de cité» for Christian thought.⁹⁰ More familiar with the Bible than with Demosthenes or Isocrates, his style is rather lacking in correctness.⁹¹ But, as he sincerely believed that all good pagan philosophers were illumined by the same Logos,⁹² he was therefore appreciative enough to use their lexical heritage.⁹³ There is also, among others, the age-long term *philanthropia*, which he linked — as a professional «philosopher» — with the theme of the imitation of God.⁹⁴

In spite of a subordinationist flavor in his triadology and the cosmological limitations of his Christology, Justin nonetheless had an «idée de génie» in making Platonism and Philonism serve the truth of Christianity.⁹⁵ He felt not only fervent love toward the prophets who were *χριστοῦ φίλοι*⁹⁶ but toward all men, regardless of their race, if they receive — through Christ — a new circumcision, which will make each of them a friend of God.⁹⁷

I am not in the least astonished that such a man was the first among the Apologists to quote explicitly the *hapex legomenon* «philan-

87. *Ibid.*, p. 102. H. I. Marrou defined the «civilisation hellénico-romaine comme une civilisation de la παιδεία» in his *Clement d'Alexandrie: Le Pédagogue*, introduction, pp. 7-97, especially p. 67, n. 1.

88. Aristides, *Libri rhetorici II*, ed. W. Schmid (Leipzig, 1926), p. 16.

89. *La Philosophie passe au Christ: L'Oeuvre de Justin*, ed. Adalbert Hamman (Paris, 1958), p. 22.

90. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

91. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

92. *Ibid.*, p. 24; cf. *Philo*, VIII, 203.

93. Cf. the index drafted by Louis Pautigny (ed.), Justin, *Apologies*, texte grec, traduction française, introduction et index (Paris, 1904), pp. 183-98.

94. I *Apol.* X, *ibid.*, p. 16; cf. Merki, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

95. Hamman, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

96. *Trypho* VIII, 1 in Justin, *Dialogue avec Tryphon*, ed. Georges Archambault, I (Paris, 1909), 40.

97. *Trypho* XXVIII, 4, *ibid.*, p. 126.

throphia» in the New Testament, namely Titus 3:4.⁹⁸ God is said to be ἐλεήμων καὶ φιλόανθρωπος⁹⁹ because He spared Nineveh. *Philanthropia* is also a gift from the Father — through the Crucified One — together with piety, justice, faith and hope.¹⁰⁰

Henry Chadwick sees a providential interference in the fact that the New Testament writers did not philosophize, thus keeping the gospel independent of all the intricacies of the First century metaphysical structure.¹⁰¹ When evaluating the contribution of Justin, he greets in him a daring thinker, who is, among the early Christian theologians, «the most optimistic about the harmony of Christianity and Greek philosophy.»¹⁰²

Theophilus of Antioch, even though less acquainted with the Greek *paideia* than Justin,¹⁰³ seems, in the view of Gustave Bardy, a weightier witness of growing Orthodoxy, simply by the fact that he was vested with the dignity of a bishop.¹⁰⁴

In his *Apology philanthropia* appears only once, but in an important passage which emphasizes the mystery of free will as the way to deification.¹⁰⁵

Behind the latin version of St. Irenaeus' phrase, «misericors Dominus et amans humanum genus» (Adv. *haeres.* III, 18, 6-7), the editor F. Sagnard saw the quotation of the philanthropic verse of Titus 3-4.¹⁰⁶ The context is that of the economy of salvation.

My attention has been, especially, attracted by the phrase: εἰς φιλίαν ἀποκατέστησεν ἡμᾶς ὁ Κύριος διὰ τῆς ἰδίας σαρκώσεως.¹⁰⁷ Under

98. *Trypho* XLVII, 5, *ibid.*, p. 212.

99. *Dialogue* CVII, 2, *ibid.*, II, 156.

100. *Dialogue* CXXXVI, 2, *ibid.*, p. 290.

101. Henry Chadwick, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-5.

102. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

103. Gustave Bardy (ed.), Théophile d' Antioche, *Trois livres à Autolyce*, trans. Jean Sender (Paris, 1948), p. 11.

104. *Ibid.* p. 7.

105. *Ibid.*, p. 164.

106. Irenaeus, *Contre les hérésies*, Livre III, ed. F. Sagnard (Paris, 1952), pp. 324-25. Behind the twice used «miséricorde» in Irenaeus' *Démonstration* 60, one, at least, may have been *philanthropia* or *chrestotes*, Irénée de Lyon, *Démonstration de la prédication apostolique*, nouvelle traduction de l' arménien par L. M. Froidevaux (Paris, 1959), p. 125.

107. Bruno Reynders, *Fragments grecs: Lexique comparée du texte grec et syriaque de l' «Adversus haereses» de Saint Irénée* (Louvain, 1954), p. 32.

the all-embracing notion of *apocatastasis* the divine *φιλία* here seems very much akin to the divine philanthropy, since it has been found in the clearly soteriological context of Irenaeus' doctrine of recapitulation, which is, according to Gustaf Wingren, oriented toward the victorious *parousia*.¹⁰⁸

While on the scene of Second century theologizing, Marcionite and Valentinian doctrine developed, as it seems, in the direction of hostility toward the Creator and the Creation¹⁰⁹ (and the Creation is the basic presupposition of a dynamic culture), Christian thought, especially in Justin, dared to tackle the problem of the relationship between the new cult and the old culture. Justin feels so confident as to claim that Christianity is the primeval philosophy newly re-discovered.¹¹⁰

In spite of this ambiguous identification of Christianity with the aboriginal philosophy, which would make the intermediary Greek philosophy completely superfluous,¹¹¹ in fact there was going on the slow process of the Christianization of certain Hellenistic notions.¹¹²

On the side of the pagan thinkers it has become crystal clear that they must uphold the inherited Helleno-Roman culture as inseparable

108. Gustaf Wingren, *Man and the Incarnation: A Study in the Biblical Theology of Irenaeus* (Philadelphia, 1959), p. 193.

109. R. M. Grant., *Gnosticism and Early Christianity* (New York, 1959), p. 137.

110. Niels Hyldahl, *op. cit.*, p. 234: «Das Christentum ist... die wiedergefundene Urphilosophie.»

111. *Ibid.*

112. *Ibid.*, p. 251. Martin Werner, *The Formation of Christian Dogma* (Boston, 1965), pp. 24-25, argues that the Early Catholicism, as opposed to the eschatologically aroused Apostolic age, is the product of de-eschatologizing and of Hellenization. He proposes his theory of «Consistent-Eschatology» as the key to the comprehension of Primitive Christianity p. (27). Werner's theory of «Consistent-Eschatology» is seriously criticized by Oscar Cullmann in *Christ and Time: The Primitive Christian Conception of Time and History* (London, 1962), p. 87. H. E. W. Turner in *The Pattern of Christian Truth* (London, 1954), pp. 23-27, also criticizes Werner's exaggerations.

Th. G. Chiffot writes in *Approches d'une théologie de l'histoire* (Paris, 1960), p. 19, that Albert Schweitzer and Martin Werner:

ont eu raison d'insister sur le fait que le salut chrétien est lié au temps, et sur l'espérance eschatologique des premiers chrétiens. Mais ils n'ont pas vu que cette espérance... est désormais, depuis Pâques, fondée sur la foi à un événement *du passé*. Dès lors, la prolongation des «derniers Jours» n'en change aucunement le caractère.

from their pagan cult, since Justin claimed that they are separable.¹¹³

Here there is an important correction to the basically valid insight of V. Weidle¹¹⁴ that I find in Marrou's statement; «Le Christianisme ne crée pas les civilisations ... il les pénètre, les assume... et les modèle conformément à sa perspective.»¹¹⁵ Thus, the newly revealed divine cult would not be so much culture-producing as culture-orienting. This aspect of the disparity between cult and culture will be even more obvious with the deeper incrustation of Christianity by classical culture, as took place in the works of Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and, later on, in the Cappadocian Fathers.

On the other hand, the intolerant attitude that Tatian took in rejecting Greek culture *en bloc*¹¹⁶ was facile oversimplification resulting in the reduction of Christianity to a more authentic *paideia*, allegedly possessed by the Barbarians in contradistinction to the *pseudo-paideia* of the Greeks.¹¹⁷ Such a «cutting-off» solution as is found in Tatian's *Oration* (42, 1;35, 1;29) is ironically enough, inspired by the best Greek tradition of Cynicism.¹¹⁸ Justin, on the contrary, by refusing the simplistic exclusivism of the Cynics' evaluation of what is false or true *paideia*¹¹⁹ was able to conceive of Christianity as an entirely new *tertium genus*, superior to the Gentiles and the Jews.¹²⁰

Irenaeus, in turn, appealed to reason and solid argument.¹²¹ H. Chadwick argues that the «church rejected the Gnostics because they used reason too little, rather than because they used it too much.»¹²²

If Justin rejects all pagan invitations to a religious syncretism,¹²³

113. Chadwick, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

114. See above, p. 57.

115. Marrou, *op. cit.*, p. 66. The difference and tension between cult and culture was emphasized by Prince Nicholas S. Troubétzkoy in his article «The Tower of Babel and the Confusion of Tongues,» *Evrasijskiy Vremennik*. in Russian (Berlin, 1923), pp. 107-124, especially pp. 120-21.

116. Quasten, *op. cit.*, I, 220.

117. Hyldahl, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

118. *Ibid.*

119. *Ibid.*, p. 247.

120. *Dial.* 8,1-2. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 243.

121. Chadwick, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

122. *Ibid.* He adds that «in rejecting the gnostic way the Christians thereby rejected as an inauthentic adulteration... any theology of pure revelation teaching salvation by an arbitrary predestination of the elect and the total depravity of the lost, possessing no criteria of rational judgment.»

123. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

he is, nonetheless, willing to acknowledge that the higher philosophical truths about God were not acquired through any diabolical agency, but that they came either through copying the writings of Moses or through divinely given reason.¹²⁴

The main characteristic of the Church in the Second century, according to Robert M. Grant, is variety in thinking,¹²⁵ «except the uniformity or the solidarity of Christianity fighting the heathen world.»¹²⁶

Celsus rejects primarily the apologists' doctrine of Christ as the true Logos.¹²⁷ He thinks that the ancient divine Logos is to be found exclusively in the great intellectual achievements of the Greek genius, and not in this new-fangled Christianity.¹²⁸ He reverses Justin's arguments and asserts that Noah's flood is borrowed from the myth of Deucalion,¹²⁹ and frontally attacks the idea of the passible, man-befriending God of the Old and New Testaments,¹³⁰ by insisting that God does not love man any more than dolphins,¹³¹ and that he is impersonal, anyway.¹³² No doubt Celsus writes with an uneasy conscience, since he is a polytheist who knows he ought not to be one.¹³³

The issue at stake was, then, to see and to prove in action whether the divine power is behind the official cult of the gods of the Empire, or in the cult of the Church. The persecutions only dramatized the choice between the pagan pantheon as the final point of stability in a world of apparently senseless change, on the one hand, and the Christian God, the initiator of significant change in history, on the other hand.¹³⁴

Celsus fumed with an angry zeal to persecute the Christians,¹³⁵

124. *Ibid.*

125. Robert M. Grant. *Second-century Christianity: A Collection of Fragments* (London, 1946), p. 12.

126. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

127. Kraft, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

128. *Ibid.*

129. Chadwick, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

130. Celsi, *Ἀληθὴς Λόγος*, *op. cit.*, p. 28: «Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ Χριστιανοὶ μέντοι ἀνθρώπινα πάθη προσάπτουσι τῷ θεῷ».

131. Chadwick, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

132. *Ibid.*

133. *Ibid.*

134. R. A. Norris, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

135. Henri Grégoire, *Les Persécutions dans l'Empire Romain* (Brussels, 1964), p. 185.

since for him Christianity was not merely a religious revolution with profound social and political consequence, but essentially a movement hostile to all cherished cultural values.¹³⁶

Indeed, after the outbreak of mob-violence against the Christian communities of Lyon and Vienne in Gaul, Marcus Aurelius replied that the law must take its course in regard to subduing the religious disobedience of the Christians.¹³⁷ His persecution of 177-180 is characterized by Henri Grégoire as «la première... qu' on puisse qualifier de générale.»¹³⁸ This pitiless move could have been made by the Emperor-Philosopher only in the name of a total cultural commitment as he saw it in the given situation.¹³⁹ Festugière has noticed that Marcus Aurelius was a kind of mystic, dedicated to upholding the Stoic cosmic religion.¹⁴⁰ The Stoic Emperor sensed that Christians by accepting their Christ as the only Son of God rejected the claim to divinity put forward on behalf of the «virtue» and «fortune» of Caesar.¹⁴¹ Charles Norris Cochrane saw the core of the clash between the two religions in the fact that the Christians dissociated themselves «from the hopes and fears embodied in the Augustan empire.»¹⁴²

Niels Huldahl pointed out that in Justin's use «βίος» means «culture» or «civilization,»¹⁴³ and I think that μυστήριον stands for «cult», which is a higher sacramental level of life.¹⁴⁴ This «mysterial», cultural orientation in Justin's use of the Middle Platonic terminology explains the infusion of a new Christian content into it.¹⁴⁵ Aelius Aristides, from the opposite camp, bears witness to a cultural meaning of the

136. Chadwick, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

137. Farquharson, *op. cit.*, I, 267.

138. Grégoire, *op. cit.*, p. 247. Farquharson, *ibid.*, on the contrary, thought that it was a local persecution. Gabriel Germain, in *op. cit.*, p. 157, finds a reason for being cruel in the imperial purple itself. For the Christian Emperors, as well. This explanation seems to me unfair both toward the pagan and the Christian Emperors of Rome, who were not persecutors.

139. G. Germain, *loc. cit.*, argues that for Marcus Aurelius Christians seemed to be against the universal Reason he worshipped.

140. Festugière, *Epicurus*, p. 88.

141. Charles Norris Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture* (New York, 1944-1957), p. 225.

142. *Ibid.*

143. Huldahl, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

144. *Dial. LXXXV7*, Justin *Dialogue avec Tryphon*, *op. cit.*, II, 60: «τὸ μυστήριον τῆς πάλιν γενέσεως ἡμῶν». Cf. pp. 110, 150, 2. 6, 4 *et passim*.

145. Huldahl, *op. cit.*, p. 292.

pagan ritual meal in the temple of Sarapis,¹⁴⁶ and, in general, to a vitality of the old culture.

Neither should we overlook the opposition between the aristocratic stamp of the pagan cult, embodied, at its best, in the «chapels» of the traditional «sects» of philosophers and the mystery sodalities, open to the happy few,¹⁴⁷ and the Christian cult, incarnate in the Church, which is, according to Justin, the primeval philosophy now accessible to all.¹⁴⁸ Amos Berry Hulen concluded, rightly in my view, that Celsus' contempt for the common people disqualified him for judgments of a purely religious character, which are entirely independent of formal education.¹⁴⁹

An authority on the Second century, Robert M. Grant, gives the appropriate over-all conclusion when he says that «the speculations of the Alexandrians before Clement had little influence elsewhere, and indeed we see Christianity at its best not in Egypt with the philosophers, but at Rome, at Smyrna and Scilli, with the martyrs.»¹⁵⁰

(To be continued)

146. Anton Höfler, *op. cit.*, p. 95: «Das Sarapismahl selbst ist ohne Zweifel eine sakrale Begehung (Kultmahl).» Michael I. Rostovtzeff in his *The Mentality of the Hellenistic World and the After-Life*, Ingersoll Lecture for the Academic Year 1937-1938 at Harvard University, argues that «the cult of Sarapis was a state religion. Its Egyptian counterpart, the religion of Osiris, was never a mystery cult. ...The Oriental religions were transformed into mystery religions by Greeks... not by Orientals». (pp. 23-24).

147. Celsi 'Αληθής Λόγος, *op. cit.*, p. 41:

148. Hyldahl, *op. cit.*, p. 234. Cf. Ragnar Holte, «Logos Spermatikos: Christianity and Ancient Philosophy according to St. Justin's Apologies», *Studia Theologica*, XII (1958), 167-68.

149. Hulen, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

150. Grant, *Second-century Christianity*, p. 17.