

# MODERN AGE

A QUARTERLY REVIEW



## *Reason and Faith: The Fallacious Antithesis*

GERHART NIEMEYER

ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD somewhere described evil as "the brute motive force of fragmentary purpose." If one wonders about "purpose," one would hardly go wrong to impute to Whitehead a concept which, like Augustine's concept of will, embraces affect, imagination and memory, with striving. If this be valid, "fragmentary purpose" would be an aspect of "fragmentary reality." The antonym of "fragmentary purpose" we take to be something like "wholeness of purpose," or "wholeness of reality." One is reminded of a similar description of heresy which also centers on the fragmentary kind of heretical belief: "Nearly every heresy is a one-sided and exaggerated expression of some truth. The heretic sees one side of truth very clearly indeed, and refuses to believe that there are other sides. He takes a statement which is symbolic, treats it as if it were a literal fact, and proceeds to build an argument about it, as if he knew all about it." (Claude B. Moss, *The Christian Faith*, London, S.P.C.K., 1965, p. 48 f.)

These remarks are made so that I may enter, at one particular point, into a fragmentary discussion of a huge subject that properly requires treatises merely for the definition of its terms: faith and reason. The difficulty of definition is

augmented in this essay as I shall argue against an antithetical separation of the two but must yet make a distinction. Do we call reason that which "the human mind, left to itself" spells out to explain to itself the world? Defined that way, the works of the human mind would necessarily include those of the "myth-making faculty," and thus all but the few "higher" religions. It also would include the "natural theology" of the philosophers or philosophical systems, not only Plato and the Stoa, but also Plotinus. Thus it becomes impossible to draw a line between reason and faith along the boundary between the natural and the supernatural. Hence, if we insist on starting out from a sharply antithetical notion of reason vs. faith, we find ourselves compelled to locate it in the positivistic fact-value dichotomy with its initial decision "to do without God," and "to submit to the object." In other words, the antithesis as such is very recent, and very, very young indeed. To reason, defined as "objectivism," faith would necessarily stand opposed as nothing but a subjective "preference." We recognize in these terms a modern jargon signalling to us that we are on familiar, but also dangerously treacherous ground.

Instead of making an argument in abstraction, I shall focus this essay primari-

ly on two thinkers, Augustine and Richard Hooker. Augustine is selected because he, first trained in Greek philosophy, and then "by Christ" in Scripture, is the first thinker in whom we can clearly trace what happens when one refuses to say "either-or" and dares say "both-and." Richard Hooker, because he is the first thinker to recognize, and analyze as "fragmentary" an argument from faith alone that will not stand the test of reason. Augustine's thought can be dubbed "meta-critical," Hooker's as "anti-ideological." Both thinkers can be said to achieve a wholeness of "purpose," or of consciousness, in keeping with Whitehead's dictum. Neither is presented here by way of a contribution to specialist studies of these thinkers.

## I

A GENERALLY accepted assumption about Augustine says that he was strongly influenced by Neo-Platonism and that he Christianized it as he worked it into his intellectual building. I prefer to take my *point d'appui* with Rudolf Schneider, who in the course of an intensive effort extending over a quarter of a century, (*Das wandelbare Sein*, Frankfurt, Klostermann, 1938; *Seele und Sein, Ontologie bei Augustin und Aristoteles*, Stuttgart, Kohlhammer, 1957) has definitively established: (a) that Augustine's entire thought is shot through and through with ontology even though he never established a system of ontology, and (b) that Augustine's ontology is wholly Aristotelian. It seems that Augustine, who of Aristotle's works read only *The Categories*, obtained his knowledge of Aristotelian philosophy in the schools of Carthage, and from his lecture of Cicero. At any rate, all of Aristotle's important ontological concepts can be found in Augustine's *de trinitate*, *de civitate Dei*, *de genesi ad litteram*, and in his controversy with Julian of Eclanum, not to speak of many other works. Schneider's later book focuses on the soul, a topic in which all important ontological concepts play a key role. Schneider shows that the following conceptual elements of ontology

are common to Aristotle and Augustine:

The *analogia entis*, by virtue of which both thinkers distinguish between hierarchical levels of being;

*potency and act*, by virtue of which both agree that a being having active and passive potency cannot be pure act and thus cannot exist by itself;

*the categories*;

*the transcendental qualities*, for example, the concept of oneness (*unum*) used virtually as a synonym for a being composed of form and matter;

*the inner sense* that apperceives the situation of being, the norm, and the appropriate action;

*the ground (aitia)*, entering into the ontological structure of the soul as form, end, and movement, and into the general notion of composite beings;

*the soteria tou einai*, which Augustine translates as both *salus* and *esse conservare*, and which we may render as *renewal of being* or *preservation of being* although *salvation of being* would be literal;

*the concept of nature*, comprising the principles of movement, essence, and essence-end-movement.

This list, while not full, suffices as a foil for pointing out Augustine's further developments by means of Scripture.

We shall emphasize here chiefly the differences between Augustine's and Aristotle's anthropology and theology, always keeping in mind the basic concepts shared between the two. Aristotle's anthropology centers on the insight that man, composed of body and soul, form and matter, depends on other beings for the renewal and preservation of his being. He needs food to sustain the growth of his form, and, after completion of the growth, to sustain the continued existence of the developed form. Thus in order to be happy, man requires external goods as well as goods of the body. As he also needs goods of the soul, he is dependent on the fellowship with other human beings to enjoy them. Still, Aristotle is aware that the combination of form and matter cannot be secured indefinitely. While the form is the ruling element, matter retains a certain

autonomy by virtue of which it outlasts the destruction of the form. Hence man, to save his being, must rely on procreation, saving human being through the species. Also man requires for his well-being a political association so that he may attain to the "good life" in which rulers and ruled combined seek to save their being in association. To his gnawing concern with man's propensity to destruction Aristotle provides two ultimate answers: (a) in a virtuous political order which fully develops the potency of the human soul, in company with others, man can attain what Aristotle calls "self-sufficiency," *i.e.* a deliverance from his ontic precariousness; and (b) even beyond this, man, striving to "immortalize," may lift his mind to the contemplation of the *aitia*, the eternal things, in pure *theoria*, in which his human concerns with external goods and goods of the body recede in importance, so that the threat of changes and misfortunes seems forgotten. These two constitute Aristotle's attempt to find "solutions" to the problem of man's ontic instability and dependence, solutions that seem to lie within human powers of attainment.

At this point Augustine carries Aristotle's ontological insights consistently further, beyond Aristotle's psychological conclusions and practical remedies. He does this by introducing the concept of man's "mutable" being, mutable as contrasted with the *actus purus* of God. "Mutability" means, on the one hand, that man is the one created being that also can conduct itself so as to change his nature for the worse. Thus, where Aristotle sees mainly the propensity of circumstances to changes, and the likely turns of "fortune's wheel," Augustine sees human life more profoundly insecure than that. To use the modern words of Romano Guardini instead of Augustine's: "...the existing order of things, indeed of life itself seems but loosely, precariously balanced across the chaos of existence and its uncontrollable forces. All rules seem temporary, and threaten to give way at any moment. Things themselves appear now shadowy, now ominous. Reality is by no means as

substantial as it may seem, and personal existence, like all existence, is surrounded by and suspended over the powerful and perilous void... (*Meditations before Mass*, Newman Press, Westminster, Md. 1955, p. 192) With all his closeness to Aristotelian categories and conceptual structures, Augustine draws from them a view that is worlds beyond the sun-lit cosmos of the Stagirite. Sharing Aristotle's insight that the renewal and preservation of being entails dependence on other beings (things and creatures), Augustine translates this into a general law of created being ("*esse cum*") and logically extends it to essential dependence on the immutable being of God. It follows that, speaking ontologically, the *salus*, the salvation of man's precarious being, can ultimately not be attained in this world of mutability. Aristotle's "self-sufficiency" can be realized not in the *polis*, but only in a new life of union with God. Likewise, Augustine replaces Aristotle's contemplation (*theoria*), the forgetting of life's care over the vision of the *aitia*, with man's *peregrinatio*, his pilgrimage to God. This implies more than a shift from a solution in the mind to a solution in the whole of life. It also means a shift from a static to an historical and dynamic principle. "Yet those doubtless judge better who prefer to that knowledge the knowledge of themselves: and that mind is more praiseworthy which knows even its own weakness...for he has preferred knowledge to knowledge, he has preferred to know his own weakness, rather than to know the walls of the world, the foundations of the earth, and the pinnacles of heaven. And by obtaining this knowledge, he has obtained also sorrow (*dolor*); but sorrow for straying away from the desire of reaching his own proper country, and the Creator of it.... Visions have been sent to us from heaven suitable to our state of pilgrimage, in order to remind us that what we seek is not here, but that from this pilgrimage we must return thither, whence unless we originated we should not here seek these things." (*De Trin.* IV, 1-2) Augustine does not discard the treasure of Aristotle's contemplation, but realizes that

pure contemplation will begin only at the end of that pilgrimage, where being is ultimately delivered from any threat of nothingness. Here roots Augustine's psychology, here his concept of will prominently involving the affects, memory and imagination, here also roots ultimately his Christology, all ontologically founded. "Augustine has established the prevalence of ontology in Christian theology!" (Schneider, *Seele und Zeit*, 1. c. p. 31)

Theology is Augustine's other great improvement over Aristotle. Both Plato and Aristotle, and not only they but Stoics and Neo-Platonists as well, had developed more or less of a philosophical (natural) theology. Aristotle's was confined to a few bare outlines. His God is *actus purus* and thus self-subsistent, and prime origin of all movement. Plato, Aristotle's teacher, had known more. He had more than once given profound and convincing accounts of noetical mystical experiences of the *Beyond*. Apart from psychology, however, Aristotle's God is even ontologically inadequate. "Aristotle does not see that, when he understands God as a being existing in himself, everything outside God must in its existence and essence depend on God, if the concept of God is not to be made meaningless." (*ibid.*, p. 30) That leads to the following appraisal of Augustine as compared with Aristotle: "Aristotle has failed to carry through his ontological insights in the other disciplines, systematically and consistently. Augustine has proceeded much more systematically and consistently." (*ibid.*, p. 31) The reason for Augustine's greater power of unity and principle lies in his biblical faith. That faith, of course, did not come to him as the fruit of analysis and contemplation. All the same, he accepted it and committed himself not without regard to its reasonableness.

Thus Augustine's conversion must have had not only that deeply liberating personal effect of which he tells us in the *Confessions* but also the effect of supplying for his philosophy "the other half," hitherto missing. Beginning with Aristotle's prime mover, he now sees further that God is

creator of everything, the origin of all existence because he *is* existence itself, the maker of all essences, a good God whose created things are all good, a God who annihilates nothing but cares for, and saves, being. Thus to the total ancient philosophy Augustine adds a) the personal God, b) the goodness of God and of all created natures, c) the Christian faith in the recovery of the original goodness of the creation by grace, beyond temporal-spatial existence. Further, Augustine had learned through his own experience "that the situation of being, the *unum*, must first be changed if one is to attain to the knowledge of the *verum*. Augustine's great achievement in ontology is his insight that the oneness of being has primacy before knowledge and will,—an insight which in general theory was already available before him." (*ibid.*, p. 21)

Even though Augustine boasts that he was "taught by Christ and not by Aristotle and Chrysippus" he has no practical difficulty of assimilating one to the other. Christian faith provided insights that could not be attained by philosophers on their own, but fitted harmoniously with philosophically secured truth. Mortimer Adler has said: "Philosophy produces a shell into which faith can be poured." It may be more accurate that philosophy provides a structure in which faith finds confirmation of its reasonableness, in turn providing that structure with depth and height in which consciousness attains wholeness. Whitehead's wholeness of purpose certainly must include the concerns with vision of eternal things capable of overcoming man's exclusive preoccupation with short-range temporal purposes. The problem of faith and reason, however, is not located at this point. The problem is found in the way in which the philosopher arrives at the idea of God by way of inferring strong probabilities from his observation of things seen and unseen. "There *must be...*" is what he says. There must be a prime mover, an ultimate One, a workman-creator, a divinity *beyond* the gods of our fathers, and so on. God is a product of philosophic intuitive speculation. This is essentially belief. Belief also

figures in religion, but religion moves beyond belief to commitment, reliance, trust, and submission. Thus Augustine, in filling his works with scriptural quotations, even though his thought merged them with philosophical structures, created for his readers the difficulty that they could not accept the authority of Scripture except by a "leap of faith," a personal risk which to them might appear a betrayal of reason. Reason was taken for something all men had in common, but faith as something common only to those who had personally committed themselves, and thus as something "subjective." Augustine himself made clear that "praise of God" is a requirement for that kind of knowledge which he had added to ancient philosophy. Faith and love, thanksgiving and praise, are personal as well as corporate acts, which, to those who for some reason will or cannot join, appear as illegitimate intruders in the impersonal universe of philosophical reasoning and a false note in the philosophical ideal of practical life according to Aristotle's formula, "deliberation without passion." Reason vs. faith, then, is a conflict not between two varieties of belief, but rather between an intelligible universe that opens up only as an individual submits to it with praise and thanksgiving, and one that seems accessible on no more of a risk than the acceptance of its axioms.

Two remarks can be made about this. The first rests on the findings of a modern book, that the supposed risklessness of philosophical and scientific thinking is an illusion, an illusion erected into a dogma by "objectivism" in our modern age. The book is Michael Polanyi's *Personal Knowledge* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1962). Polanyi proves in countless ways that there is no such thing as the impersonal action of the object on the human mind, so that "objectivism" itself is a belief, and an unreasonable one at that. Rather, says Polanyi, all knowledge involves an element of intellectual passion, a tacit component of previous beliefs, as well as a personal commitment. "Like the tool, the sign or the symbol can be conceived as such only in

the eyes of a person who *relies on them* to achieve or signify something. *This reliance is a personal commitment which is involved in all acts of intelligence by which we integrate some things subsidiarily to the centre of our focal attention.* Every act of personal assimilation by which we make a thing form an extension of ourselves through our subsidiary awareness of it, is a commitment of ourselves..."(*op. cit.*, p. 61)

This "personal" element, however, must not be confused with "subjectivism." "...personal knowledge in science is not made but discovered, and as such claims to establish contact with reality beyond the clues on which it relies. It commits us, passionately and far beyond our comprehension, to a vision of reality. Of this responsibility we cannot divest ourselves by setting up objective criteria of verifiability—or falsifiability, or testability, or what you will. For we live in it as in the garment of our own skin. Like love, to which it is akin, this commitment is a 'shirt of flame,' blazing with passion, and, also like love, consumed by a devotion to a universal demand." (*ibid.*, p. 64) "...this personal coefficient, which shapes all factual knowledge, bridges in doing so the disjunction between subjectivity and objectivity." (*ibid.*, p. 17) For myself, I wish that Polanyi had chosen another term in lieu of 'passion.' Henri Bergson, philosophizing in a similar vein, points to 'emotion' as the source of all creation. Augustine's wide-spanning concept of 'love' comes to mind; and a modern writer might well speak of 'the affects.' All these amount to what Polanyi means. Going beyond a mere analysis of the process of knowledge, Polanyi severely criticizes "the principle of moral and religious indifference which prevails throughout modern science" (p. 153) and insists "that science can then no longer hope to survive on an island of positive facts, around which the rest of man's intellectual heritage sinks to the status of subjective emotionalism." (p. 134)

The other remark must question the subjectivism attributed to Augustine by

those who find his Scriptural dependence one which is invalid because they cannot personally share it. "Augustine," says Rudolf Schneider, "does not insist exclusively on the world of his own experiences, but believes firmly in the existence of real, external being beyond all experiences. Because there is being, there can be experience. Because there is reality, there can be subjectiveness..." (*op. cit.*, p. 27) To put it differently, Augustine believes in, and speaks of, the same reality as the philosophers. He might have invoked Bergson's distinction between the knowledge "of the object... a knowledge attained by the intellect... that is sought for its utility to man, and which enables him to manipulate matter, and thereby, to control it and act upon it," and "absolute knowledge" which does not "move around its object but enters into it" and which "attains the absolute" but, in order to do so, must be "in sympathy with reality without any thought of relation or comparison." Thus reality has dimensions into which one must enter with faith, praise, and worship if one is to understand at all. "Believe that you may understand; understand that you may believe." (Augustine, *Sermo 43*, 7, 9 and 118, 1) There are dimensions of reality which must remain not only unintelligible but even unimaginable to the closed soul. The open soul, however, loving and praising, while disciplined in virtue, will attain a width of vision in which its knowledge of objects is not denied but finally placed in the fullness of context.

On the other hand nobody can deny that Augustine's *Confessions* is a most subjective work. It had been called the first autobiography. Wrongly, I believe, for the modern autobiography, on the model of Rousseau, penetrates into the self in isolation from the world, indeed, in hostility against all that exists. By contrast, in his *Confessions* Augustine "describes the mutation of his subjectivity to God." (Schneider, *loc. cit.*, p. 20) The proof is that he, through divine grace, rediscovered an interest in the things of this world. "The path to this point goes through the awareness and experience of the fallibility

of external things and of virtue. Along this path the interest in things is diminished until it is completely destroyed by despair so that there is left only the knowledge of the hopeless *infirmity*. Through grace a new interest in the things is kindled and they are seen in the way in which they are from God. The relation of God as *actus purus* to the mutable world becomes the central theme and the new vision of man renewed by grace." (*ibid.*, p. 48) One must distinguish here between the personal elements of religion and its public aspects. Augustine has portrayed his personal conversion and salvation. What he communicated publicly, however, was the *doctrina christiana*, which results in general assumptions commonly held, entering into any human endeavor and awareness. This is what one may call Christian culture, a pattern largely independent of personal religious events, even though such events continuously feed and develop it. Christian culture is not the same as the Church. The Church, in turn, exists as a public community of praise and worship, of faith and love, independent of whether every single of its members is or is not a believing Christian. In the same way Christian culture will long survive the Christian convictions of individual members. Its basic assumptions will continue to govern much of human thinking, feeling, knowing and acting even when Christianity itself in its midst may have come under severe attack and, indeed, disdain.

One must expect, then, that Augustine's ability to penetrate, with the love of the open soul, into aspects of reality barred to the critically closed soul, would bring about a net increase of rationality in the total world view. Let us corroborate this expectation by means of three samples: Augustine's view of human nature, his concept of history, and his idea of the state.

## II

SINCE PLATO AND ARISTOTLE, the concept of nature, and especially that of human nature, has provided the chief norm for the order of human life. The essence was taken

as the ultimate ground of the inner possibility, so that man's essence rules his movement, *i.e.*, his coming-to-be what he is. Reliance on nature as norm, however, led Plato to the remark that a city in accordance with human nature was not to be found on earth, but was laid up in heaven; while Aristotle despaired of finding a city with a hundred fully developed, mature men (*spoudaioi*) in it. Both Plato and Aristotle, the former in *The Laws*, the latter in Books IV-VI of the *Politics*, were compelled to speak of order in the midst of perversion, where nature appeared as a concept of scant relevance. Augustine, by contrast, developed two concepts of human nature. The first describes human nature "as it is from God," good in the proportion and hierarchical order of all its parts, and meant to cleave to God for the security of its being. The second concept is that of human nature as vitiated by the sin of defection from God. Augustine saw man as the only creature capable of changing his nature, or rather, corrupting it, which would not be possible if his nature were not originally good. The result is a perverted nature, having become subject to inferior forces, bad habits, and inner disunity. Fallen man is endemically disobedient not only to God, but also to himself. The vitiated nature, however, still has the endurance of a form, albeit a form defective in its false loves and bad dispositions. Augustine's two concepts enable him to account for the irrationalities of social and political life on this earth, for the "discontents" besetting all civilization. He can also refer the problem of inescapable failure of even our best efforts to the perfection awaiting those who cleave to God, without thereby committing himself to a gnostic declaration of war on the world of created things around us.

Augustine's concept of history was perhaps his most incisive break with ancient philosophy and culture. He perceived "the contingency of the universe" and thereby opened the gate for science. (Stanley L. Jaki) For the ancients, who looked to nature for final ends, history was without meaning or order. On the other

hand, they considered the future predictable, since augury and oracle contained keys to its knowledge. Men relying on this knowledge, however, again and again found themselves misled, so that precisely where they looked for certainty they reaped a besetting insecurity. *Tyche* and *Fortuna* were powerful deities, but also notoriously capricious. Man's well-being in this world was subject to radical and lightning-fast turns of 'the wheel of history.' Worse yet, the quest for the "good state" or "the best state" seemed almost quixotic. In the words of Frederick D. Wilhelmsen: "Given a polity firmly based on an understanding of the structure of reality; given a compact nucleus of virtuous men heading this society and governing it according to good laws; given the ideal of virtue as a public goal acting as a leaven throughout the whole community making good men better, indifferent men good, and bad men ashamed; given the material power and technology necessary to maintain itself against all internal and external enemies; given a level of civilization incomparably superior to that of the rest of the world; given all these things, and then add to them failure, not a failure unforeseen but one first adumbrated as the most remote and trivial of possibilities and later sensed as a real menace which ought to be rejected as absurd and even indecent, and then add again a failure now accepted as an inevitable fatality whose sentence of death can only be postponed by rearguard tactics; given all this, and we are given a polity confronted crudely and inexorably with the powers of unintelligibility, the vacant stare of the absurd." (*Christianity and Political Philosophy*, U. of Georgia Press, 1978, p. 67)

This is a conclusion which Marcus Tullius Cicero, falling under the murderer's steel, had to acknowledge with his last breath. It also would have been the conclusion to which Rome's sack by the barbarians, in 410, would have driven a pagan philosopher. For Augustine, however, the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, and his resurrection to eternal life, were the great light planted at the very

center of apparent absurdity. Moved by his faith in the revealed meaning of God's death, Augustine could see history as the great movement from the corruption of man's being to its ultimate salvation, to man's deification in union with God. This also made possible a concept of Providence, the humanly unknowable but purposeful dispositions of a good creator and redeemer God. History's impenetrable irrationality thus vanished. A new sense of freedom resulted. "The stars, in their unalterable courses, did not, after all, implacably control our destinies. Man, every man, no matter who, had a direct link with the Creator, the Ruler of the stars themselves.... It was no longer a small and select company which, thanks to some secret means of escape, could break the charmed circle: it was mankind as a whole which found its night suddenly illumined.... No more circle! No more blind hazard! No more Fate! Transcendent God, God the friend of men, revealed in Jesus, opened for all a way which nothing would ever bar again." (Henri de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, Meridian Book, 1963, p. 5) The future, once considered predictable by magic and deceptive means, now appeared open, its possibilities a human responsibility, its ultimate outcome in the hands of a God of Love. "The future is open, and it is God's." Nor was any speculation on the basis of a scriptural numbers game allowed to take the place of faith and Christian patience. The whole of history is intelligible because it moves toward an ultimate eschatological goal of divine justice and fulfillment.

Augustine's idea of the state ranks with his double concept of human nature as one of the greatest achievements ever in political thought. A radical Christian other-worldliness would have echoed Tertullian's view: "Thus there is nothing more alien from us than public affairs." A superficial reading may suggest that this was also Augustine's view. For he distinguished between two principles of human association: "...two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by the

love of God, even to the contempt of self. The former, in a word, glories in itself, the latter in the Lord." Neither is the earthly city identical with the state, however, nor the heavenly with the Church. They are what in modern jargon is called "life-styles," diametrically opposed. Their mutual exclusiveness, however, does not spell civil war. The state is instituted to keep a peace and an order that is commonly good for both of these groupings. The state, then, is homogeneous neither in religious nor in moral terms. Neither can the faithful of God dictate terms of highest virtue, nor can the mass of egotists write their vices into law. This means that under no circumstances can the state be a paradigm of perfection, not even in theory.

On the other hand, it cannot be considered a matter of indifference by Christians. As a framework of peace, it constitutes the highest common good "on this earth." As composite as each individual person, the state has no power to exist in itself. It remains beset by tendencies toward failure and nothingness. But even in the wretchedness of "alienation from God," Augustine finds the possibility of "peace," *i.e.*, order and justice. Just as human nature, vitiated by sin, still manifests an order, even in perversion, so the state, populated by good and evil at the same time, operates under a law of order which Augustine spells out in the great chapters 12-17, and 24, of Book XIX of the *City of God*. Substituting for Cicero's unduly idealizing concept of a people ("an assembly of rational beings where concepts of true justice are acknowledged") a better, because more empirical concept ("an assemblage of reasonable beings bound together by a common agreement on the objects of their love"), Augustine likewise moves the concept of the state to the ground of realism. The state, in keeping peace and order, is the most important worldly institution in which all Christians should fully cooperate. Not being born from a community in the highest virtues nor even from one of the highest aspirations, the state, in keeping peace and order, is not performing a task of salvation.

The highest destiny of man lies beyond the state, because it cannot be attained in space or time, or even by human powers alone. It will come by God's grace, beyond history and death. In his political theory, then, Augustine is not writing with the pen of theology. Cast in wholly ontological terms which are adapted to this-worldly realism by introducing the concept of original sin, Augustine's political order speaks to all, believers and non-believers alike. Realizing that the state, comprising within itself morally mixed company, can never amount to human perfection, Augustine has created the concept of the *limited* state, which has remained a hallmark of Western civilization.

### III

AUGUSTINE WAS the first philosopher to succeed in combining knowledge attained by virtue of faith in revelation with knowledge attained by the critical discipline of philosophical intellect. Even though critical philosophy as we know it came into existence only in modern times, one may well call Augustine the first post-critical thinker, who methodically and deliberately explored the relation between faith and reason in the wholeness of consciousness. If we now turn to Richard Hooker, we do so because we find in him another kind of discovery regarding that relation. His writing was prompted by finding in the 16th century English Puritans, and their "*Admonition to Parliament*" of 1572, a kind of consciousness that was feeding on faith while disregarding or even abandoning the bond of reason. It was Hooker's achievement to have recognized and analyzed this as a type of "fragmentary consciousness," an awareness which should have, but did not, come from the authorities of the Church of England. Hooker, a relatively obscure priest, wrote *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* "though for no other cause but for this; that posterity may know we have not loosely through silence permitted things to pass away as in a dream..."—surely one of the most memorable opening sentences of any book.

The Puritans' *Admonition* had demanded that the laws of England, particularly those pertaining to the Established Church, should be replaced by laws exclusively derived from the Bible, selected by Calvinist interpretation.

In his *Preface* Hooker directly addresses the Puritans: "Surely the present form of church-government which the laws of this land have established is such, as *no law of God nor reason of man* hath hitherto been alleged of force sufficient to prove they do ill, who to the uttermost of their power withstand the alteration thereof." (emphasis supplied) Contrariwise: "The other, which instead of it we are required to accept, is only by error and misconception named the ordinance of Jesus Christ, no one proof as yet brought forth whereby it may clearly appear to be so in very deed." (*The Works of Mr. Richard Hooker*, 3 vols., John Keble, ed., Oxford 1874, Preface ii, 1) Hooker's criticism from the first invokes his own belief: "...there are but two ways whereby the Spirit leadeth men into all truth; the one extraordinary, the other common; the one belonging but unto some few, the other extending itself unto all that are of God; the one, that which we call by a special divine excellency Revelation, the other Reason." (*ibid.*, iii, 10)

The Puritans held their belief not in conjunction with their reason, but separate from it, so that they adamantly refused to enter into any discursive "conference." This led Hooker to probe for the defects of such a consciousness, which defects he located through the following symptoms: a) self-justification ("a singular goodness") based indirectly on the radical nature of their total critique of England's ecclesiastical order; b) tracing all the world's evil to the extant institutions of ecclesiastical government; c) asserting that the proposed Puritan institutions will be "the sovereign remedy of all evils," d) a reductionism that finds in Scripture only evidence supporting the Puritan demands, e) the resulting "high terms of separation between such and the rest of the world." In his own summary of this attack Hooker at-

tributes to the Puritans: "A custom of inuring your ears with reproof of faults especially in your governors; an use to attribute those faults to the kind of spiritual regiment under which you live; boldness in warranting the force of their discipline for the cure of all such evils; a slight of framing your conceits to imagine that Scripture every where favoureth that discipline; persuasion that the cause why ye find it in Scripture is a seal unto you of your nearness to God." (*ibid.*, iii, 16) He accuses the Puritans of having formed "a cause," meaning precisely that which we mean by that term in our age, when speaking of someone as "engagé." The "cause" is a world apart, not merely distinct from the world in which all men live together, but antithetical to it, and thus claiming for itself a singular, indeed, an ontic merit compared with which the rest of the world appears as mere refuse; the members of "the cause" being distinguished by a special knowledge, stemming from their "nearness to the Spirit," or the possession of Marxism-Leninism, of whatever source of truth from which all others are barred. Such faith is neither proclaimed to others with a view to sharing it, nor defended by argument. It is used as a title of certainty about which one cannot communicate, and which admits between "the cause" and the rest of men only the relation of conquest and submission.

This led Hooker to reflect deeply on the relation between faith and reason. "The general and perpetual voice of men is as the sentence of God himself. For that which all men have at all times learned, Nature herself must needs have taught; and God being the author of Nature, her voice is but his instrument." (*ibid.*, viii, 3) In a sentence that recalls the famous dictum of the great Muslim mystic, Ghazali, "reason is God's scale on earth," Hooker states, "Wherefore the natural measure whereby to judge our doings, is the sentence of Reason determining and setting down what is good to be done." (*ibid.*, viii, 8) and, with reference to the laws of ecclesiastical polity, he remarks: "...those Laws are investigable by Reason, without

the help of Revelation supernatural and divine." (*ibid.*, viii, 9) Finally, Hooker's teaching is thus summed up: "It suffitheth therefore that Nature and Scripture do serve in such full sort, that they both jointly and not severally either of them be so complete, that unto everlasting felicity we need not the knowledge of any thing more than these two may easily furnish our minds with on all sides..." (*ibid.*, xiv, 5) The general idea can already be found in Thomas Aquinas. Hooker's specific achievement is the analysis of a Scripture-based political movement as one whose pretended godliness is spurious because its message denies and evades the common bond of reason that is valid for the relations of men with men. In a somewhat similar vein, the Muslim mystic Quchairi, speaking on the subject of 'intuitions,' states that they may come from angels, Satan, the natural man, or from God himself. "These, he says, can be recognized in the following way: an intuition from an angel will be in conformity with reason and will lead to good works; an intuition from Satan will lead to sin, while an intuition from Nature will lead one to follow one's natural propensities, particularly pride and lust..." (Quoted in R. C. Zaehner, *Mysticism Sacred and Profane*, Oxford U.P., 1967, p. 144)

#### IV

IT SHOULD BE CLEAR by now that we have not attempted anything general about the topic of faith and reason but have touched only on two particular points suggested by Whitehead's concept of "fragmentary purpose." Purpose, which flows from imagery, memory, love, and striving, can be fragmentary in terms of a reality that is nothing but natural. The central thesis of Michael Polanyi's book, *Personal Knowledge*, is that there is no such thing as a purely "objectivist" science, and that fanatical adherence to that fallacious concept can only destroy science. "The science of today," he says, "serves as a heuristic guide for its own further development. It conveys a conception about the nature of

things which suggests to the enquiring mind an inexhaustible range of surmises. The experience of Columbus, who so fatefully misjudged his own discovery, is inherent to some extent in all discovery.... An empirical statement is true to the extent to which it reveals an aspect of reality, a reality largely hidden to us, and *existing therefore independently of our knowing it*. By trying to say something that is true about a reality believed to be existing independently of our knowing it, all assertions of fact necessarily carry universal intent.... The enquiring scientist's intimations of a hidden reality are personal. They are his own beliefs which—owing to his originality—as yet he alone holds. Yet they are not a subjective state of mind, but convictions held with universal intent, and heavy with arduous projects.... He has reached responsible beliefs, born of necessity, and not changeable at will. In a heuristic commitment, affirmation, surrender and legislation are fused into a single thought, bearing on a hidden reality."(*op. cit.*, p. 311)

This result, which Polanyi reached through a number of distinct partial analyses, finally enables him to group "the conception of religious worship as a heuristic vision and align religion in turn also with the great intellectual systems, such as mathematics, fiction and the fine arts, which are validated by becoming happy dwelling places of the human mind."(*ibid.*, p. 280) And finally: "The enquiry into the nature and justification of personal knowledge... has led to the acceptance of our calling—for which we are not responsible—as a condition for the exercise of a responsible judgment with universal intent.... Calling; personal judgment involving responsibility; self-compulsion and independence of conscience; universal standards; all these were shown to exist only in their relation to each other within a commitment. They dissolve if looked upon

non-committally. We may call this the ontology of commitment.... The paradox of self-set standards and the solution of this paradox are thus generalized to include the standards which we set ourselves in appraising other organisms and attribute to them as proper to them. We may say that this generalization of the universal pole of commitment acknowledges the whole range of being which we attribute to organisms at ascending levels."(*ibid.*, p. 379)

Augustine's reality was less fragmentary than that of ancient philosophy because it took in "the whole range of being which we attribute to organisms at ascending levels." It also turned out to be a heuristic vision of the most productive kind which, among other things, produced a rational concept of the whole of history of which no previous thinker had been capable. The close linkage of faith and reason, even though the one is acritical and the other critical, turns out to be ontologically founded rather than being merely a pious wish to include everything. Hooker taught us the sober alertness required to hold these two dimensions in the necessary balance and mutual tension of consciousness. Their linkage can be immensely productive but contains also destructive potentialities. Where faith is mistaken for critical knowledge, and critical knowledge allowed to play the part of faith, a fall into an abyss of inhumanity may result. Occurrences of this kind are too numerous in our memory to make the above finding with a sense of triumphant comfort. The radical "scientist" objectivism that has crippled modernity comes from a deep fear with which one can sympathize, although emotional sympathy must not be allowed to seduce us into a philosophical endorsement. We find, once again, that being human is a risky business, beset on all sides with insecurities and pitfalls. Vigilance is the price not only of freedom, but also of truth and "responsible" personal commitment.