THE HOLY TRINITY

HERMAN BAVINCK

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Table of Contents

Introduction

Herman Bavinck's "The Holy Trinity" is a monumental work that explores the profound mysteries of the Trinity as revealed throughout the Bible. Beginning with God's multifaceted revelation in the Old Testament, Bavinck considers the foundational elements of Trinitarian doctrine as they emerge historically and scripturally. He navigates through the theological developments and challenges posed by Arianism and Sabellianism, elaborates on the intricate terminology used to describe the Trinity, and examines the distinctions among the three Persons. Bavinck's erudite analysis bridges the gap between the Old and New Testaments, offering a rich, scripturally grounded exploration of the Trinity's economic and immanent aspects. This introduction encapsulates the depth and breadth of Bavinck's examination, presenting the Trinity not merely as a theological concept but as the central reality of Christian faith and divine revelation.

Bavinck presents an orthodox understanding of the Trinity that firmly stands within the Reformed tradition, affirming the essential unity and diversity within the Godhead. Bavinck explains that the Trinity is not merely a theological or philosophical speculation but lies at the very heart of the Christian faith, distinguishing it from both Judaism, which denies the distinction in God, and paganism, which denies the unity of God. He emphasizes that the Trinity reveals God as the true Life, the eternal beauty, where unity and

diversity exist in perfect harmony, an absolute unity and diversity that cannot be found in the created order.

Bavinck argues against both Sabellianism and Arianism, which fail to uphold the true understanding of the Trinity. Sabellianism, in its denial of the real and eternal distinction between the Persons, and Arianism, in its failure to acknowledge the full divinity of the Son and the Spirit, both deviate from the orthodox teaching of the Trinity as three distinct Persons of one essence, co-equal and co-eternal. This orthodox understanding, as Bavinck presents, is critical for maintaining the integrity of the Christian doctrine of God, which asserts that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit share the same essence while remaining distinct in their personhood and relations.

Furthermore, Bavinck stresses the importance of the Trinity in understanding God's work in creation and redemption. The economic Trinity, as reflected in the operations of God towards the world, mirrors the immanent Trinity, the eternal relations within God Himself. This profound connection underscores the unity and diversity in the works of God, revealing the Trinitarian nature of divine actions in salvation history.

In essence, Bavinck's orthodox view of the Trinity underscores the mystery of God's being as revealed in Scripture, defended by the ecumenical councils, and confessed by the Christian church through the ages. It is a doctrine that serves not merely as an abstract concept but as the foundational truth of the Christian faith, inviting believers into a deeper worship and understanding of the one true God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

God's Revelation in the Old Testament

Higher still than in the attributes, God's revelation ascends in the personal names, which make known to us the distinctions that exist within the Unity of His Essence. This revelation begins already in the Old Testament. It is not yet fully present there, as the church fathers and later theologians often taught, disregarding the historical character of the revelation; but neither is it correct to say that it is not at all found there, as was taught after the Socinians and the Remonstrants by Semler, Herder, Doederlein, Bretschneider, Hofmann, among others. The Old Testament only obscurely makes known the Trinitarian existence of God; it is the document of the developing doctrine of the Trinity. Yet, it contains, not only in isolated texts but especially in the organism of His revelation, moments that are of the highest significance for the doctrine of the Trinity. First of all, the name Elohim is considered. That this name, in its plural form, is no proof of the Trinity, was already noted earlier. Yet, it is remarkable that this Name, among proponents of monotheism, has never encountered objection because of its form. This can only be explained by the fact that it contains no reminiscence of polytheism, but denotes the Deity in her fullness and richness of life. The God of revelation is not an abstract Unity, but the living, true God, who includes the highest variety in the infinite fullness of His life. Right from the creation, this is evident. Elohim creates through the speaking of His Word and through the sending of His Spirit. The Word that God speaks is not a sound, but a power, so great that by it He creates and sustains the world; He speaks, and it is there, Gen. 1:3; Ps. 33:6,9; 147:18; 148:8; Joel 2:11. That Word, spoken by God, proceeding from Him and thus distinguished from Him, is later hypostatized as wisdom in Job 28:23-27, Prov. 8:22 ff., Prov. 3:19, Jer. 10:12, 51:15. This wisdom has been possessed by God

from eternity, prepared, appointed, searched out, as His nursling and workmistress, through whom He created and sustains all things. But not only through the Word and wisdom, also through the Spirit of God, does the work of creation and sustenance come about, Gen. 1:2, Ps. 33:6, 104:33, 139:7, Job 26:13, 27:3, 32:8, 33:4, Isa. 40:7,13; 59:19. While the Word is the Mediator through whom God calls all things into being, it is His Spirit through whom He is immanent in all created things, and makes everything alive and adorns it. Thus, according to the doctrine of the Old Testament in creation, it is evident that all things owe their origin and continuation to a triune cause. Elohim and cosmos do not stand dualistically next to each other, but the world, created by God, has His Word as its objective principle, His Spirit as its subjective principle. The world is first thought by God and therefore comes into being through His almighty speaking, and when it has received reality, it does not stand outside and against Him but remains resting in His Spirit.

Even clearer in the Old Testament, this triune cause emerges in the realm of special revelation, in the work of re-creation. Then it is not just Elohim, but Yahweh who reveals Himself, who makes Himself known as the God of the Covenant and the oath, of revelation and history. But even so, He does not reveal Himself directly and immediately, Ex. 33:20. Again, it is through His Word that He makes Himself known and saves and preserves His people, Ps. 107:20. And the bearer of that Word of salvation revelation is the Malak Yahweh, the Messenger of the Covenant. Not always, where the expression Angel of God or Angel of the Lord appears in the Old Testament, should one think of the uncreated angel, as Hengstenberg believed. In 2Sam. 24:16ff., 1Kings 19:5-7 2Kings 19:35, Dan. 3:25,28; 6:23; 10:13; we have to think of a regular angel, just as also in Matt. 1:20,28 [???]; Luke 1:11, 2:9, Acts 5:19; 8:26; 10:3; 12:7,23; 27:23; Jude 9, Revelation 12:7. About other places, there can be doubt, such

as Num. 22:22ff., Josh. 5:13,14, Judges 2:1-14, 6:11-24, 13:2-23. But in the places that were mentioned earlier, the subject that speaks and acts in the Angel of the Lord goes far beyond a created angel. The church fathers before Augustine unanimously saw in this Angel of the Lord a theophany of the Logos. Often, however, this view was connected with the opinion that the Father is actually invisible, unapproachable, ineffable, but the Son can reveal Himself and is the principle of all revelation; so with Justin Martyr, Theophilus, Irenaeus, Tertullian. But this separation and contrast between the Father and the Son was rightly contested by the later church fathers, Athanasius, the three Cappadocians, etc. The Son was truly God and thus just as invisible as the Father. Thus, the view of Augustine was prepared, who also thought the theophanies of God in the Old Testament always mediated by created angels. The scholastic and Roman theologians usually adopted this exegesis of Augustine. Luther and Calvin sometimes thought of a created, then of the uncreated angel; but the later Protestant interpreters understood those places mostly of the Logos, especially also in contrast with the Socinians, Remonstrants, and Rationalists, who saw nothing but angelophanies in them. While Hofmann, Baumgarten, Delitzsch, Cremer join the latter view, the old view has been defended again by Stier, Hengstenberg, Keil, Kurtz, Ebrard, Filippi, etc. The difference between these two interpretations is not as great as it seems. The proponents of the old-church view must acknowledge that the Logos assumed a human form; and Augustine and his followers must admit that in that created angel, the Logos revealed Himself in a very special way. And with that, the places where the Angel of the Lord is spoken of cannot all be understood in the same sense. So much is also certain, that in the Malak Yahweh, who preeminently bears that Name, God and then specifically His Word was present in a wholly unique way. This is clearly evident from the fact that He, though distinguished from Yahweh, is also one with Him in Name, in power,

in salvation, in blessing, in worship, and honor. This exegesis is furthermore recommended by the entire Old and New Testament. and are not in conflict with it.Job 33:23, Ps. 34:8 [Ps. 34:7], 35:5, Prov. 8:22ff., Prov. 30:4, Isa. 9:5 [Isa. 9:6], Hos. 12:5-6 [Hos. 12:4-5], Mic. 5:6 [Mic. 5:7], Zech. 1:8-14, 3:1 Zech. 12:8 Mal. 3:1, John 8:56,58, cf. John 1:1-5, 1Cor. 10:4,9; Acts 7:30,35,38, Gal. 3:19, Heb. 2:2 And just as Yahweh now objectively reveals Himself in re-creation through His Word, in the Malak Yahweh; so He does it subjectively in and through His Spirit. The Spirit of God is the principle of all life and salvation, of all gifts and powers within the realm of revelation; of courage, Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 1Sam. 11:6, of physical strength, Judges 14:6, 15:14, of craftsmanship, Ex. 28:3; 31:3-5; 35:31-35; 1Chron. 28:12, of governance, Num. 11:17,25, 1Sam. 16:13, of understanding and wisdom, Job 32:8, Isa. 11:2, of holiness and renewal, Ps. 51:13 [Ps. 51:11], Isa. 63:10, cf. Gen. 6:3, Neh. 9:20, 1Sam. 10:6,9, of prophecy and prediction, Num. 11:25,29; 24:2-3; Mic. 3:8 etc. In a special way, He will rest on the Messiah, Isa. 11:2, 42:1, 61:1, but thereafter also be poured out over all flesh, Joel 3:1-2, Isa. 32:15, 44:3, Ezek. 36:26-27; 39:29; Zech. 12:10, and give everyone a new heart and a new spirit, Ezek. 36:26-27.

This triune Divine principle, which underlies both creation and re-creation, and supports the entire economy of Old Testament revelation, is occasionally also mentioned together. The triple repetitions in Dan. 9:19, Zech. 1:3, Isa. 6:3, 33:22 are not considered here; only the high priestly blessing, Num. 6:24-26, with its tripartite nature of blessing, hints at a threefold revelation of God and thus serves as the Old Testament prototype of the apostolic blessing, 2 Cor. 13:13. The plural forms in Gen. 1:26-27; 3:22; Isa. 6:8, etc., lack sufficient force because they can be explained in the same way as the plural Elohim. More significant are places like Gen. 19:24, Ps. 45:8

[Ps. 45:7], 110:1, Hos. 1:7, because they point to a self-distinction within the Divine Being. And a threefold self-distinction in the Divine Being is most clearly indicated in Ps. 33:6, Isa. 61:1, 63:9-12, Hag. 2:5,6. Many previously saw in the three men who appeared to Abraham, Gen. 18:1-2, a revelation of the Trinity. Others believed that one of the three was the Logos and the other two were ordinary angels, e.g., Calvin, Commentators of the Statenvertaling. However, the exegesis of Augustine, according to whom the three men were three created angels, in whom Yahweh revealed Himself and was present in a special way, is much more plausible.

Judaism In-Between Testaments

These thoughts from the Old Testament have been fruitful in various directions. First, they have been adopted and further developed in apocryphal literature. In the Wisdom of Jesus Son of Sirach, wisdom occupies a prominent place. It is from God and created by Him before all things, and it remains with Him forever. It is spread over all God's works, but its resting place is especially in Zion and is found in the law, also Baruch, cf. But the book of Wisdom goes further. Here wisdom is so hypostasized that divine attributes and works are attributed to it. It is clearly distinguished from God, for it is the breath of His power, an emanation of His glory, a reflection of His light, 7:25,26. But it is also intimately connected with God, lives with Him, is initiated into His knowledge, and selects those ideas that will be executed, 8:3,4. It is the companion at His throne, knows all His works, and was present at the creation of the world, 9:4,9. Indeed, it is Itself who creates, rules, and renews everything, 7:27, 8:1,5. It is identical with God's Word, 9:1,2, 16:12, 18:15,16, and with His Spirit,

1:4-7, 9:17, 12:1. Already in this book of Wisdom, the influence of Greek philosophy is noticeable, especially 7:22ff., but this is much stronger in the case of Philo. The relationship of God to the world was already investigated by Plato. From the distinction and contrast of doxa and epistēmē, Plato inferred that just as the former must have a sensible object in reality, the latter must have an eternal and unchanging being, i.e., an idea, as its object. These ideas, although really nothing more than general concepts, were elevated by Plato to metaphysical principles, to independent substances, to a kind of intermediaries, towards which the demiurge had fashioned the cosmos and which thus are the paradigms and causes of things. Although Aristotle subjected this doctrine of ideas to sharp criticism, the idea that an intelligent, spiritual principle underlay all things was not lost from Greek philosophy. Especially the Stoics emphasized that a divine reason was the ground of all phenomena. They used the name logos spermatikos for this, because all being and life sprout from that Logos as from a seed, and also spoke in the plural of logoi spermatikoi, thereby indicating alongside the unity also the diversity of the all-creating natural power. Even the later much-significant distinction between logos endiathetos and proforikos is derived from the Stoics.

The Greek doctrine of the idea, the nous, and the logos had already been connected with the teaching of the Old Testament regarding the word and wisdom even before Philo. However, it was primarily Philo who synthesized all these different elements—Platonic doctrine of ideas, Stoic doctrine of the Logos, Old Testament wisdom teachings, etc.—into one system. He starts with the dualism of God and the world. God is apophatic, indescribable; we can only say that He is, not what He is. Therefore, He cannot be in direct contact with matter. Before God created the sensible world, He devised a plan and depicted in His mind the kosmos noētos, the ideas, as paradigms and

powers of all things. Philo presents these ideas as the forces by which God can work in the world, sometimes described more or less metaphorically, sometimes more or less personally, as servants, stewards, messengers, mediators, as Logoi and powers, as bonds and pillars, referred to by Moses as angels and by the Greeks as demons, as thoughts located in the divine mind, uncreated and infinite like God Himself. These ideas are also numerous, but they find their unity in the Logos, the idea that encompasses all ideas, the power that encompasses all powers, the book that contains all thoughts within itself, the kosmos noētos itself.

Similarly, just as the divine ideas, so is this Logos described, sometimes more as an attribute of God and one with His wisdom, and then more as a Being, distinct from God. He stands, as it were, between God and the world, participating in both; He is not uncreated like God, nor created like finite things; He is a substitute, envoy, interpreter, steward, angel, instrument, image, shadow of God, yes, His firstborn Son, His eldest Son in distinction from the world, which is His youngest son; Philo even calls Him God, but second God. Zeller clearly demonstrates that the Logos in Philo, like the divine ideas, bears and must bear this dual character. He is an intermediate and therefore a double Being, an attribute of God and yet a Person, neither identical with God nor a creature like the world, an idea in the mind of God and a power in the world, hovering between an impersonal attribute and a personal entity, but therefore deemed suitable as a Mediator between God and the world.

In Jewish theology, this doctrine of intermediaries has been further developed. As entirely transcendent, God cannot directly connect with creatures. He needs various intermediaries for this purpose. If He merely wants to guide the existing powers in nature and humanity, He uses angels. But if He wants to create or recreate in the

world, hypostases appear, which, although creatures, bear divine attributes because they are representatives of God. Such hypostases include Metatron, the vice-regent of God; Memra, the word of God; Shechinah, the presence of God's glory; Bath Kol, the voice of God, which gives revelations and proclaims oracles; Ruach Hakkodesh, the Spirit emanating from God and imparting higher knowledge.

While the Wisdom of Jesus Son of Sirach still closely aligns with canonical literature, there is an influence of philosophy discernible in the Book of Wisdom, in Philo, and in Jewish theology, which increasingly diverges from the thoughts of the Old Testament. Firstly, there is a difference in principle. The doctrine of intermediaries in Philo and later Jewish theology arises from the Platonic opposition of God and the world, of which there is no trace in the Old Testament books. The word and wisdom in the Old Testament are not mediating intermediaries between God and the world; rather, they are entirely on God's side, belong to Him, and are the principles of the created world. In contrast, the intermediaries in Philo occupy an impossible position: they are neither God nor creature, neither person nor attribute, neither substance nor power, but partake in both; they erase the boundary line that in the Old Testament always separates the creature from the Creator and pave the way for the philosophy of Gnosticism and the Kabbalah.

Secondly, there is a no less significant difference in the character that the doctrine of the word and wisdom carries in Scripture and that which the doctrine of intermediaries carries in Philo. In Philo, the Logos in its first sense is equated with reason, thought, the idea in God, and therefore, as such, is immanent to God, nothing more than an attribute. Only in its second sense does this Logos become Word, emanating from God and occupying a mediating position between God and the world. In the Old Testament, however, the Word is not

first the reason and thought of God, much less an ideal worldview, a kosmos noētos, but the spoken Word by which He creates and sustains all things. And the wisdom in Job and Proverbs is presented not as an attribute of God, but personally possessed and ordained by God from eternity, consulted and searched at the creation of all things.

Thirdly, the intermediaries in Philo and Jewish theologians have no soteriological significance. While they serve for enlightenment and imparting knowledge, there is no mention of a connection between these intermediaries and the Messiah. They even push the doctrine of the Messiah as the revelation of truth and the acquirer of salvation into the background. Now, it is true that in the Old Testament, the connection between word and wisdom, servant of God and Messiah, Angel of Yahweh and Davidic figure, is not yet clearly fulfilled. The lines run parallel. But they are approaching each other. Elohim and Yahweh are the same God. He who, as Elohim, creates and sustains the world through Word and Spirit, is also the one who, as Yahweh, has led His people through His Angel, will save His people through the servant of Yahweh from David's house, will reign eternally, renew and sanctify them all through His Spirit. And these lines, which increasingly converge in the Old Testament, culminate in Him who is the Logos, the Prophet, Priest, and King, in whom God comes to His people and dwells among them eternally. For Philo, the incarnation of the Logos would have been an absurd thought. In the New Testament, however, this is precisely the highest revelation of God.

Finally, it can be added here that the doctrine of intermediaries in Philo, etc., is not complete and has no boundaries. Philo indeed brings some unity to the divine ideas by summarizing them in the Logos, but he attributes to the Logos the same qualities that he repeatedly attributes to all divine ideas. In Jewish theology, the

number of intermediaries continues to increase over time. It is an emanation, as in the case of the aeons in Gnosticism. The dualism persists to the end. The intermediaries do not establish communion between God and the world because they are not actually either. The world always remains outside and opposed to God. The significance of the Spirit of God is not understood. In the Old Testament, the doctrine of the Spirit occupies a significant place. In the apocryphal literature, in Philo, and in Jewish theology, it is almost entirely neglected. At most, the Spirit is only a Spirit of prophecy, bestowed upon a few, but no longer the Spirit of the Old Testament, who completes and perfects creation and recreation. For all these reasons, there is a fundamental distinction between the development of the trinitarian thoughts of the Old Testament found in the apocryphal literature, in Philo and the Jews, and that given to them in the New Testament. The New Testament may share some words with Philo, etc., and may also speak of Christ as logos, apaugasma, Son, God, etc.; however, the agreement goes no further. The New Testament was written in Greek, in the common dialect, in the language that existed and was spoken everywhere. It did not create a new language. The thoughts of God have assumed the flesh of human language. But in those words, God has placed a new content. There is agreement in form, but the content differs. Philo and John have nothing more in common than the name of Logos. More and more, this is also being understood and recognized.

The New Testament

The New Testament contains the pure development of the trinitarian thoughts of the Old Testament. But now these emerge in a much

clearer light, not through abstract reasonings about the Being of God, but through God's self-revelation in appearance, word, and deed. Just as strongly as in the Old, in the New Testament the Unity of God is proclaimed. There is only one Being that can be called God, yeov, Elohim, Job. 17:3, 1Cor. 8:4, but this one true God reveals Himself in the economy of the New Testament, particularly in the events of incarnation and outpouring, as Father, Son, and Spirit. In these events, no absolutely new principles emerge. They are the same ones that were at work in the creation and economy of the Old Testament. The Father, who most often carries this Name in relation to the Son and to His children, is the same One who can also be called Father as the Creator of all things, Matthew 7:11, Luke 3:38, Job 4:21, Acts 17:28, 1Cor. 8:6, Hebrews 12:9; all things are from Him, 1Cor. 8:6. The Son, who is especially called by His unique relationship to God, is the same One who, as the Logos, created all things with the Father, John 1:3, 1Cor. 8:6, Colossians 1:15-17, Hebrews 1:3. And the Holy Spirit, who has received His name especially with regard to His work in the church, is the same One who, together with the Father and Son, adorned and completed all things in creation, Matthew 1:18, 4:1, Mark 1:12, Luke 1:35; 4:1,14; Romans 1:4. Furthermore, it is the general teaching of the New Testament writers that these three, Father, Son, and Spirit, are no other than those who also revealed themselves to the fathers in word and deed, in prophecy and wonder, in the economy of the Old Testament. The Old Testament name Yahweh, inadequately rendered by kurios, fully unfolds its content in the New Testament name pater. In the incarnate Son of God, the fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecy and shadow is seen, of Prophet and King, of Priest and offering, of servant of God and Davidic figure, of Angel of Yahweh and wisdom. And in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, what the Old Testament had promised has been fulfilled, Acts 2:16ff.

But the New Testament, although closely connected to the Old Testament, does not stop there; it goes far beyond. Much clearer than in the Old Testament, it now becomes apparent that the God of the Covenant is a triune God and must be so, that there are three principles at work in the work of salvation. Not just a few texts, but the entire New Testament is trinitarian in this sense. All grace, blessing, and salvation have their threefold cause in God, Father, Son, and Spirit. We see these three immediately at work at the birth of Jesus, Matthew 1:18 ff., Luke 1:36, and at His baptism, Matthew 3:16-17, Mark 1:10,11, Luke 3:21-22. Jesus' teaching is entirely trinitarian. He reveals the Father to us and describes Him as Spirit, who has life of Himself, Job 4:4, 6:26, and in a unique sense is His Father, Matthew 11:27, John 2:16, 5:17. He distinguishes Himself from the Father, but is nevertheless His only begotten, own, beloved Son, Matthew 11:27, 21:37-39, Job 3:16 etc., one with Him in life, glory, power, John 1:14, 5:26, 10:30. And He speaks of the Holy Spirit, who leads and equips Him Himself, Mark 1:12, Luke 4:1,14, John 3:34, as of another Paraclete, whom He will send from the Father, John 16:26, and who will convict, teach, lead in truth, comfort, and remain forever, John 14:16. And before He departs, Jesus sums all this up in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, that is, in the one Divine Name, to onoma in the singular, in which three distinct subjects, o pathr, o uion, and to pneuma, all deliberately named with the article, reveal themselves. This teaching is continued and expanded by the apostles; all acknowledge and extol a threefold, divine cause of salvation. The good pleasure, foreknowledge, election, power, love, kingdom belong to the Father, Matthew 6:13, 11:26, John 3:16, Romans 8:29, Ephesians 1:9, 1 Peter 1:2 etc. Mediation, reconciliation, salvation, grace, wisdom, righteousness belong to the Son, Matthew 1:21, 1 Corinthians 1:30, Ephesians 1:10, 1 Timothy 2:5, 1 Peter 1:2, 1 John 2:2 etc. And regeneration, renewal, sanctification, communion are

through the Holy Spirit, John 3:5; John 14; 15; 16; Romans 5:5; 8:15; 14:17; 2 Corinthians 1:21,22, 1 Peter 1:2, 1 John 5:6. And just as Jesus finally summarizes His teaching in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, so the apostles also repeatedly place these three side by side and on equal footing, 1 Corinthians 8:6; 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:13, 2 Thessalonians 2:13,14, Ephesians 4:4-6, 1 Peter 1:2, 1 John 5:4-6, Revelation 1:4-6. The authenticity of the text 1 John 5:7 is still doubtful. It is absent from all Greek codices except a few from the 16th century, from all Latin codices before the 8th century, and from almost all translations. Furthermore, it is never cited by the Greek Fathers, not even in the Arian controversy, nor by the Latin Fathers Hilary, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, etc. If it is cited or presumed by Tertullian, it must have existed around the year 190; and if Cyprian quotes it, it was known around the year 220. If it appeared in the Afra, according to a manuscript from the 6th century and one from the 7th century, one can climb even higher. For the Afra arose around the year 160 and came to Italy around 250. Certainly, the text appears in Vigilius towards the end of the 5th century. In the 16th century, it was included in the Complutensian edition, by Erasmus in his third edition, by Stephanus, Beza, and in the Textus Receptus. It is not decisively demanded in the context, and its omission and disappearance are very difficult to explain. However, the authenticity is still defended by some, and the congregation of the Holy Office in Rome gave a negative answer in 1897 to the question whether 1 John 5:7 tuto negari aut saltem in dubium revocari possit, to which the Pope later gave his approval. But it seems that this pronouncement of the Holy Office did not include the authenticity of 1 John 5:7, or was silently revoked later. At least many Roman scholars maintain the spuriousness of 1 John 5:7 with many arguments. Künstle, for example, disputes the authenticity and says that this text originated from a sentence by Priscillianus in an apology of the year 380.

Father

However, the Holy Scripture does not stop at these data; it offers us more and also reveals to us something about the relationships in which these three distinct subjects, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, stand to each other. First and foremost, the name Father comes into consideration. This name, in the general sense, denotes God as the Creator of all His works, especially of humanity, Numbers 16:22, Matthew 7:11, Luke 3:28, John 4:21, Acts 17:28, 1 Corinthians 8:6, Ephesians 3:15, Hebrews 12:9. In the Old Testament, this name assumes a theocratic meaning; God is the Father of Israel because by His wonderful power He created and preserved it, Deuteronomy 32:6, Isaiah 63:16, 64:8, Malachi 1:6, 2:10, Jeremiah 3:19, 31:9, Psalm 103:13, Romans 9:4; in the New Testament, this meaning transitions to the ethical, in which God is the Father of His children, Matthew 6:4, 8-9, Romans 8:15, etc. But in a unique, metaphysical sense, God is the Father of the Son. Jesus always makes a fundamental distinction between the relationship in which He Himself and in which others, the Jews, the disciples, stand to the Father, Matthew 11:25-27, Luke 22:29, John 2:16, 5:17, 20:17, etc. He called God His own Father, patera idion, John 5:18. And the Scripture clearly indicates that the name Father does not primarily apply to God in relation to Israel and the believers, but on the contrary, originally to the relationship of the Father to the Son, John 14:6-13, 17:26. In the true, original sense, God is the Father of the Son; He loves the Son, John 5:19 ff., John 10:17; 17:24, 26, and this love extends from the Father through the Son to others, John 16:27, 17:26. This relationship of the Father to the Son did not come into being in time, but it is from eternity, John 1:14; 8:38; 17:5, 24, and therefore, God is repeatedly called by the apostles in a special sense the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Romans 15:6, 1 Corinthians 15:24, 2 Corinthians 1:3, Galatians 1:1, Ephesians 1:3, etc. The Son's

Fatherhood is His special, personal attribute. He alone is of Himself, the first in the order of existence, John 5:26, and therefore also the Father, both in creation and recreation, from whom all things are, 1 Corinthians 8:6.

Both in the Old and in the New Testament, it is the Father who holds the first place. From Him comes the purpose, Acts 4:28, Ephesians 1:11, the pleasure, Matthew 11:26, Ephesians 1:9, the initiative in creation and redemption, Psalm 33:6, John 3:16, the authority and the power, Matthew 6:13, Romans 1:20, Ephesians 1:19, the righteousness, Genesis 18:25, Deuteronomy 32:4, John 17:25, Romans 3:26, 2 Timothy 4:8, the goodness, the wisdom, the immortality, the inaccessible light, Matthew 19:17, Romans 16:27, 1 Timothy 6:16. Therefore, He also bears the name of God in a special sense. He is Elohim, Yahweh Elohim, El Elyon, El Shaddai, monos alēthinos theos, John 17:3, ho theos, 1 Corinthians 8:6, 1 Timothy 2:5, who is called God and Father alongside the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 12:6, 2 Corinthians 13:13, 1 Thessalonians 1:3, Revelation 1:6. Even Christ Himself does not only call Him His Father but also His God, Matthew 27:46, John 20:17, Hebrews 1:9; 2:17; 5:1; 10:7, 9, and He is called the Christ of God, Luke 9:20, 1 Corinthians 3:23, Revelation 12:10. However, it has been wrongly inferred from this by the Arians of both earlier and later times that only the Father is God, and the Son and the Spirit, although related to God, stand outside the divine essence. For, first of all, as will soon become clear, Scripture assigns to the Son and the Spirit divine names, attributes, works, and honor just as much as to the Father. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that Scripture nowhere says that the Father alone is the true God, but rather that the Father is the only true God, something that is fully recognized in the church's trinitarian doctrine. Moreover, all those passages do not present a contrast between the Father on one hand and the Son and

the Spirit on the other hand, but between the Father, as the only God, and the gods of the nations. Then it follows from the statements that the Father alone is the only true God, only wise, only good, only immortal, not that the Son and the Spirit are not also the same divine beings and share the same unity, wisdom, goodness, and immortality, just as it does not follow from 1 Corinthians 8:6 that only Christ and not God our Lord is through whom all things are and we through Him. And finally, the Father alone can be called wise, good, etc., because He possesses everything from Himself, phgh theotētos is, whereas the Son and the Spirit possess the same essence and the same attributes through communication. The name of God, particularly attributed to the Father, indicates that He is the first in the divine economy; it is, as it were, an official name, an indication of His rank and position, just as among humans, who all share the same nature, there is also a distinction of status and honor.

Son

Furthermore, light is also shed on the immanent relations of God through the names borne by the Son in Scripture; These names are numerous, mostly related to His historical appearance, and therefore will be discussed later in the locus concerning Christ. However, there are also among them those that belong to Him before and apart from His incarnation. First, the name Logos comes to mind. Various reasons have been given as to why Christ bears this name. The word is translated as ratio, sermo, verbum, and then understood again as verbum interius or exterius. However, the starting point for the designation undoubtedly lies in the continuous teaching of Scripture that God reveals Himself in creation and re-creation through the Word. Through the Word, God creates, sustains, and governs all things, and through the Word, He also renews and recreates the world. Therefore, the Gospel is also called the Word of God, logos tou

theou. John calls Christ the Logos because He is the one through whom God reveals Himself, both in creation and in re-creation, John 1:3, 14. In the Old Testament, however, the Word through which God reveals Himself first appears at creation. The hypostasis and the eternal existence of that Word are not explicitly stated. In Proverbs 8, wisdom is indeed presented as personal and eternal, but it is also closely associated with creation; with regard to this, she was prepared, appointed, searched out by God, vs. 22, 23. The Arians deduced from the ynnq of vs. 22, LXX ektise me, Syr. Trg. ynarb, cf. Sirach 1:4, 9, 24:8, that the Son was not eternally begotten but created before all things. And the church fathers argued in opposition that ynnq should be translated as ekthsato, Aq. Symm., or possedit, Jerome, or that this word did not refer to the essence of the Son but to His office and dignity in creation and re-creation. Without doubt, the latter is the case. There is no mention here of an eternal generation; it is only said that God prepared wisdom, ynnq, and appointed it, ytkon, that it was born, ytllx, before and with a view to creation. But the New Testament goes far beyond this. John not only says that He, through whom God reveals Himself, is a Person, but he explicitly declares that this Logos was in the beginning, kai arxh hn o Logov. He did not become the Logos; He was not prepared and appointed at creation; He was as a Person and by nature the Logos, the Logos from eternity. And furthermore, He Himself was God, yeov. He was in communion with God, hn and argh prov ton yeon vs. 2, eiv ton kolpon tou patrov, vs. 18, the object of His eternal love and self-communication, 5:26, 17:24. Therefore, He could fully reveal the Father because He was inherently the Logos, sharing God's divine nature, divine life, divine love, etc., from eternity. God communicated Himself to Him; therefore, He can communicate God to us. The Logos is the absolute revelation of God because God has eternally communicated Himself to Him with all His fullness.

Another name is that of the Son of God. In the Old Testament, this name mostly carries a theocratic significance. Israel is called so because it is chosen, called, and adopted by God, Ex. 4:22, 19:5, Deut. 1:31; 8:5; 14:1; 32:6, 18; Isa. 63:8, Jer. 31:9, 20, Hos. 11:1, Mal. 1:6, 2:10. In the New Testament, this is replaced by the church, which consists of uioi yeou by adoption or tekna yeou by birth. Specifically, the title Son of God is also often a title of office, for the judges Ps. 82:6, for the angels, Job 38:7, and especially for the king, 2Sam. 7:11-14, Ps. 89:27-28. In Psalm 2:7, the Lord says to the anointed King over Zion: "You are my Son, today I have begotten you," LXX gegesshka se, Vulg. genuite; on the day when the Lord anointed Him and appointed Him as king, He begot Him as Son and gave Him the right to rule the world. In relation to David, this refers back to God's decision in 2Sam. 7, and concerning the Messiah, foreshadowed by David, it is explained in Heb. 1:5, 5:5 as pertaining to eternity, cf. Heb. 1:2-3, in which Christ as the Son is begotten by the Father, i.e., in which He is brought forth as the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His nature. And that He was this is now powerfully demonstrated in His resurrection according to Acts 13:33, Rom. 1:3. A related thought is expressed in Micah 5:1 [Micah 5:2]. The Ruler over Israel, who will come forth from the small Bethlehem, has existed from of old. His goings forth as Ruler, from God, are from the days of eternity. He was Ruler from eternity; He has shown this in the history of Israel, and thus He will visibly emerge from Bethlehem. The designation Son of God, applied to the Messiah, undoubtedly stems from the theocratic significance of this expression in the Old Testament. It is not likely that the possessed, Mt. 8:29, cf. Mt. 4:3, the Jews, Mt. 27:40, the High Priest, Mt. 26:63, or even the disciples, at least initially, Joh. 1:50, 11:27, Mt. 16:16, understood the full content of this designation. But with Christ, this Name nonetheless acquires a much deeper meaning. While He is sometimes called the Son of God as Mediator and king in a theocratic

sense, Luk. 1:35, even then the adoptionist idea, that He is Son by generation according to His divine nature and by adoption according to His human nature, as later claimed by the Socinians and Remonstrants, finds no support in Scripture. But Christ was not first adopted as Son of God in time as a king among Israel. He is not called Son of God because of His supernatural birth, as the Socinians taught and as Hofmann still tries to argue. Nor does He bear that Name in an ethical sense, as others suppose. Nor did He become so through His mediation and resurrection, for which one appeals to Joh. 10:34-36, Acts 13:32-33, Rom. 1:4. But He is the Son of God in a metaphysical sense, by nature and from eternity. He is exalted far above angels and prophets, Mt. 13:32, 21:27, 22:2, and stands in a unique relationship to God, Mt. 11:27. He is the beloved Son, in whom the Father is well pleased, Mt. 3:17, 17:5, Mark. 1:11, 9:7, Luk. 3:22, 9:35, the only begotten Son, Joh. 1:18; 3:16; 1Joh. 4:9, the unique Son, Rom. 8:32, the eternal Son, Joh. 17:5, 24, Heb. 1:5, 5:5, to whom the Father gave to have life in Himself, Joh. 5:26, who is equal to the Father in knowledge, Mt. 11:27, in honor, Joh. 5:23, in power in creation and re-creation, Joh. 1:3; 5:21, 27, in activity, Joh. 10:30, in dominion, Mt. 11:27, Luk. 10:22, 22:29, Joh. 16:15, 17:10, and precisely because of this Sonship, He was condemned to death, Joh. 10:33, Mt. 26:63v.

Thirdly, here the name "Image of God" deserves consideration. While humanity can be so named by analogy, Christ is so in an absolute sense. He existed before His incarnation as the Logos, as the Son, Rom. 1:3-4; 8:3; Gal. 4:4, and morfh yeou, Phil. 2:6, rich, 2Cor. 8:9, clothed in glory, Joh. 17:5, and has now returned to that state through His resurrection and ascension. Thus, He was and still is eikwn tou ueou tou aoratou, Col. 1:15, 2Cor. 4:4, apaugasma thv doxhv kai carakthr thv upostasewv autou, Heb. 1:3, i.e., not the radiance itself, apaugasmov, but the image, apaugasma, of God's

glory and the expression, the imprint of His essence, of the Father's nature that resulted from the radiance. As such, He is prwtotokov pashv ktisewv, Col. 1:15, Rev. 1:16, the Firstborn in comparison to all creatures, and therefore existing before all creatures, and not like creatures made or created, prwtoktistov, prwtoplastov, but born, prwtotokov, in whom all things were created; and He is also arch, prwtotokov ek twn nekrwn, and pasin prwteuwn Col. 1:18, prwtotokov en polloiv adelfoiv, Rom. 8:29, according to whose image believers are renewed, 2Cor. 3:18, Phil. 3:21. The expression prwtotokov does not include Christ among creatures but rather excludes Him from them. As the only and firstborn, as Son and Logos, He stood in a completely unique relationship to the Father from eternity. And while Christ is now presented as Mediator as dependent on the Father and standing under the Father, so that He is a messenger, a servant, an executor of the Father's work, obedient unto death and eventually handing over His kingdom to the Father, this never detracts from His essential unity. In Joh. 14:28, Jesus says that His going to the Father is a cause of joy for the disciples, oti o pathr meizwn mou estin. He does not express that the Father is greater in power, which is expressly contradicted by Joh. 10:28-30; rather, He considers the relationship in which He now stands to the Father in His humiliation. Now this relationship is greater. But this lesser stature of Jesus will cease when He goes to the Father, and therefore His disciples can rejoice in His departure; He is truly equal to the Father in essence and nature, although now in office and status lesser than the Father. He is not a creature but was and is and remains God, to be praised above all forever, Joh. 1:1, 20:28, Rom. 9:5, Heb. 1:8,9, 2Pet. 3:18, 1Joh. 5:20, Rev. 1:8, 11, cf. possibly also 2Thess. 1:2, Tit. 2:13, 2Pet. 1:1. The attempt, previously made by the Socinians and now by Ritschl, Schultz, Kaftan, Pfleiderer, and others, to interpret the name yeov, used for Christ, not as a name of essence but as an office name, requires broader discussion later in the

doctrine of Christ. For now, it should only be noted that this designation in Christ is untrue if He does not truly share the divine nature.

Holy Spirit

Finally, Holy Scripture also gives us some insight into the immanent relations of God through the Name of the Holy Spirit. It is worth noting beforehand that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is consistent throughout all the Scriptures of the Old and New Covenants. Although much clearer in the New Testament, it is present in principle in the Old Testament as well. The New Testament is conscious of not presenting a different doctrine of the Spirit than that found in the Old Testament; it was the same Holy Spirit who spoke through the prophets of old, Mt. 22:43, Mk. 12:36, Acts 1:16, 28:25, Heb. 3:7; 10:15; 1Pet. 1:11, 2Pet. 1:21, testified in the days of Noah, 1Pet. 3:19, resisted by Israel, Acts 7:51, who worked faith, 2Cor. 4:13, who would descend on the Messiah and dwell in the church, Mt. 12:18, Luk. 4:18,19, Acts 2:16. Although the divine essence is Spirit, Joh. 4:24, and holy, Isa. 6:3, in Scripture, the Holy Spirit is an indication of a distinct Person in the divine essence, distinct from Father and Son. He bears this Name because of His particular mode of subsistence. Spirit actually means wind, breath. The Holy Spirit is the breath of the Almighty, Job 33:4, the Spirit of His mouth, Ps. 33:6, which Jesus compared to the wind, Joh. 3:8, and breathed upon His disciples, Joh. 20:22, cf. 2Thess. 2:17. The Spirit is God as the immanent life principle in all creation. And He is called holy because He Himself stands in a special relationship to God and places all things in a special relationship to God. He is not the Spirit of a human, of a creature, but the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, Ps. 51:13 [Ps. 51:11], Isa. 63:10-11. Just as breath comes from our mouths, so the Spirit comes from God and sustains all creatures.

Therefore, He is called the Spirit of God, the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of the Father, Gen. 1:2, Isa. 11:2, Mt. 10:20, and also the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of the Son, Rom. 8:2,9, 1Cor. 2:6, 2Cor. 3:17,18, Phil.1:19, Gal.3:2; 4:6; 1Pet. 1:11, standing before the throne of God and the Lamb, Rev. 1:4, 3:1, 4:5, 5:6. This outpouring of the Spirit is expressed in various ways in Scripture. Most often, it is expressed that the Spirit is given by God or by Christ, Num. 11:29, Neh. 9:20, Isa. 42:1, Ezek. 36:27, Joh. 3:34, 1John 3:24, 4:13, sent or dispatched, Ps. 104:30, Joh. 14:26, 15:26, 16:7, Gal. 4:6, Rev. 5:6, poured out or poured forth, Isa. 32:15, 44:3, Joel 2:28, Zech. 12:10, Acts 2:17-18, descended from God, Mt. 3:16, placed in the midst of Israel, Isa. 63:11, Hag. 2:6 [Hag. 2:5], laid upon someone, Mt. 12:18, breathed upon someone, Joh. 20:22, etc. But it is also said that the Spirit proceeds, ekporeuetai, Joh. 15:26. This happened specifically on Pentecost. Therefore, the Personality of the Holy Spirit becomes clear only now. In the Old Testament, there is indeed a distinction between God and His Spirit. But the nature of that distinction remains obscure. Oupw gar hn pneuma, oti Ihsouv oudepw edoxasyh, Joh. 7:39. But now He is spoken of as a Person. He is referred to as ekeinov, Joh. 15:26; 16:13-14, paraklhtov, Joh. 15:26, cf. 1Joh. 2:1, allov paraklhtov aaTO, Joh. 14:16, speaking of Himself in the first Person, Acts 13:2, to whom various Personal faculties and activities are ascribed, such as searching, 1Cor. 2:10-11, judging, Acts 16:28, hearing, Joh. 16:13, speaking, Acts 13:2, Rev. 2:7, etc. Rev. 14:13; 22:17, willing, 1Cor. 12:11, teaching, Joh.14:26, praying, Rom. 8:27, testifying, Joh. 15:26, etc., and who is coordinated and placed on par with the Father and the Son, Mt. 28:19, 1Cor. 12:4-6, 2Cor. 13:13 vs. Rev. 1:4. And this cannot be unless He is truly God.

Just as His personality, so also the deity of the Holy Spirit becomes clearly evident in the New Testament. This is primarily evidenced by the fact that, despite the distinction between God and His Spirit, it is

entirely the same whether God or His Spirit speaks, dwells in us, is despised by us, Isa. 6:9; Acts 28:25, Jer. 31:31; Heb. 10:15, Ps. 95:7-8; Heb. 3:7-9, Acts 5:3-4; Rom. 8:9-10; 1Cor. 3:16; 6:19; Eph. 3:21. This is fully realized only when personal distinction is accompanied by essential unity. Furthermore, various divine attributes are attributed equally to God's Spirit as to God Himself: for example, eternity, Heb. 9:14, omnipresence, Ps. 139:7, omniscience, 1Cor. 2:10,11, omnipotence, 1Cor. 12:4-6, and again, this presupposes that the Spirit is essentially one with God Himself. The same is true of the divine works of creation, Gen. 1:2, Ps. 33:6, Job 33:4, Ps. 104:30, and of recreation. Indeed, in these, His deity is especially evident. He is the one who empowered Christ for His office through His anointing, Isa. 11:2, 61:1 Luke 4:18, Isa. 42:1; Mt. 12:18, Luke 1:35, Mt. 3:16, 4:1, Joh. 3:34, Mt. 12:28, Heb. 9:14, Rom. 1:4, who equips the apostles for their particular task, Mt. 10:20, Luke 12:12, 21:15, 24:49, Joh. 14:16ff., Joh. 15:26; 16:13ff., etc., who bestows various gifts and powers on believers, 1Cor. 12:4-11, and who, above all, brings about in the church the fullness of Christ. The Holy Spirit stands in the same relationship to Christ as Christ does to the Father. Just as the Son has nothing and does nothing and speaks nothing of Himself but receives everything from the Father, Joh. 5:26, 16:16, so the Holy Spirit takes everything from Christ, Joh. 16:13-14. Just as the Son testifies of the Father and glorifies the Father, Joh. 1:18; 17:4,6; so, in turn, the Holy Spirit testifies of the Son, Joh. 15:26; 16:14. Just as no one comes to the Father except through the Son, Mt. 11:27, Joh. 14:6, so no one can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit, 1Cor. 12:3. There is no communion with God except through the Spirit. But that Spirit also bestows all the blessings that Christ has acquired: regeneration, Joh. 3:3, conviction of sin, Joh. 16:8-11, adoption, Rom. 8:15, renewal, Tit. 3:5, the love of God, Rom. 5:5, various spiritual fruits, Gal. 5:22, sealing, Rom. 8:23, 2Cor. 1:22, 5:5, Eph. 1:13, 4:30, resurrection, Rom. 8:10. Indeed, through the Spirit, we

have direct, immediate communion not with anyone less than the Son and the Father themselves. The Holy Spirit is God Himself within us, Joh. 14:23ff., 1Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 2Cor. 6:16, Gal. 2:20, Col. 3:11, Eph. 3:17, Phil. 1:8,21. Who else can grant us all this, who else can cause God Himself to dwell in our hearts, but One who is Himself God? Therefore, divine honor is due to Him. He stands alongside the Father and the Son as the cause of all salvation, Mt. 28:19; 1Cor. 12:4-6; 2Cor. 13:13; Rev. 1:4. In His name we are baptized, Mt. 28:19. From Him comes all life and power. He is the Author of our prayers, Zech. 12:10, Rom. 8:15-16. And in contrast, the church is warned not to grieve Him, Isa. 63:10, Eph. 4:30; indeed, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is unforgivable, Mt. 12:31-32.

Theological Development of Trinitarianism

In all these moments of revelation, Holy Scripture naturally does not yet offer us a fully developed dogma of the Trinity. However, it teaches that the one name of God unfolds fully in that of Father, Son, and Spirit. It clearly and distinctly affirms that all of God's external works, both in creation and recreation, have a threefold divine cause. It leaves no doubt that these threefold causes are three distinct subjects standing in personal relation to each other. And thereby, it contains all the data from which theology has constructed the dogma of the Trinity. Philosophy had nothing essential to add to it; even the Logos doctrine is New Testamental. It all awaited the time when the Christian reason would be sufficiently developed to comprehend the

sacred mystery presented here. There is no mention of this in the apostolic fathers. They echo Holy Scripture without yet understanding the deep meaning and interconnectedness of the truths, and they use expressions that would no longer be defensible in later times. Yet, they are also of the utmost importance for the dogma of the Trinity, insofar as they combat both the Ebionite and the docetic tendencies and, in stronger or weaker terms, affirm the high, nature of Christ, exalted above the angels. The dogma of the Trinity, as is evident from the outset, did not arise from a philosophical reasoning about the Being of God, but from reflecting on the facts of revelation, on the Person and work of Christ. In the dogma of the Trinity, it was from the beginning about the Deity of Christ, about the absolute character of Christianity, about the truth of God's revelation, about the true reconciliation of sins, about the absolute certainty of salvation. In the apostolic fathers, Christ occupies a completely unique place; predicates are ascribed to Him that belong to no creature. He is called Son, unique, only begotten Son of God, Clement, 1Cor. 36. Ignatius, Rom.1. Eph.20. Smyrn.1. Diognetus, 9.10. Barnabas, 7.12., the effulgence of God's Majesty, the scepter of His Majesty, Clement, 1 Cor. 16.36. Lord of the earth, to whom everything is subjected, Creator of all things, Judge of the living and the dead, Barn. 7.12. Diogn. 7. Did. Apost. 16. Polyc. Phil. 1.2.6.12, holy, incomprehensible Logos, who as God, wv yeov, was sent to earth, Diogn. 7. and may be called God, Clement, 2Cor. 1. Ign., Rom. 3. Smyrn. 1. 10. Eph. 1.18.19. And Father (God), Son (Christ), and Spirit are mentioned together, Clement, 1Cor. 46. Ign. Eph. 9. Magn. 13. There is little mention of the Holy Spirit among the apostolic fathers, but He is nevertheless distinguished from and placed alongside the Father and the Son; only regarding the Shepherd of Hermas, Sim. V 5.6., there is a difference, whether he identifies the Holy Spirit with the Son or distinguishes Him from it.

When in the second century Gnosticism emerges, Christian thought also awakens. The divinity of Christ becomes of doctrinal importance and is therefore expressed much more clearly. Justin Martyr repeatedly attributes the name of God to Christ, even calling Him o yeov, c. Tryph. 34.56.58.113.126, etc., and assigns Him various lofty predicates. He is the Firstborn of creation, the beginning of another race, equipped not with a single charisma but with all the powers of the Spirit, possessing not a mere seed of the Logos, but the entire Logos, logikou to olon powerful to deify the human race and therefore Himself God, c. Tr. 87. 138. Apol. II 10. 12. He clearly teaches the preexistence of Christ, not merely as a force, but as a Person, c. Tr. 128. Because the Father is hidden, ineffable, transcendent beyond time and space, c. Tr. 127. Apol. II 6., all revelations under the Old Testament and also in the Gentile world are revelations of the Logos, c. Tr. 127. Apol. I 46. 61. 63. Apol. II 10. 13. He even existed at creation; the Word Gen. 1:26 was spoken to Him, c. Tr. 62. However, the immanent relationship between Father and Son is not yet clear in Justin Martyr. It seems that the Logos, though distinct from the Father ariymw all ou gnwmh, was first generated by the Father for and on behalf of creation, not arising from division but nonetheless being produced by the power and will of the Father, like one light kindled by another and like the word issuing from our mouth, Apol. II 6. c. Tr. 61. 100. 128. Therefore, he is called prwtogonov, prwtotokov tou yeou, Apol. I 46. 68. Generation is called proballein, but mostly gennan, c. Tr. 62.76.129. Apol. I 23. 2.6, and the Logos is called insofar a gennhma or ergasia, c. Tr.62. 114.129. Justin seeks to maintain the unity of God by stating that the Son is indeed distinct from the Father ariymw all ou gnwmh, c. Tr.56, and subordinate to the Father. The Son is h prwth dunamiv meta ton patera, Apol. I 32; He occupies the second place, deutera cwra, Apol. I 13; He has received everything from the Father, c. Tr. 86, is God and Lord because the Father has willed it, c. Tr. 127, and is

under the Father and Lord's command, c. Tr. 126. Thus, Justin still has an imperfect understanding on several points. The hidden nature of the Father contrasted with the Son, the generation of the Son by the will of the Father and for the sake of creation, the subordination of the Son to the Father, were later rejected by the church. Some have therefore called Justin an Arian, but wrongly so. Firstly, this issue did not exist in Justin's time; and secondly, there are several elements in him that go directly against the views of Arius; he clearly and unequivocally teaches the deity of the Son, stating that the Son is not created but begotten, and clarifies this with the later common metaphors of word and light; he sees the importance of the deity of Christ for the entire work of salvation, for the truth of Christianity. Therefore, he also repeatedly names the Father, the Son, and the Spirit together as the object of our worship, Apol. 16. 13. 60. 61. 65. 67; and while he assigns the second place to the Son and the third rank to the Spirit, Justin clearly expresses the personality of the Holy Spirit and His distinction from the Son in these passages. Some have objected to this based on Apol. 133, but this passage teaches nothing else than that Justin does not understand to pneuma in Luke 1:35 to refer to the Person of the Holy Spirit, but to the Logos, an exegesis found in others as well. Furthermore, it is also certain that Justin does not include the Spirit among the angels or in general among the creatures. However, Justin provides almost no insight into the divine nature of the Holy Spirit and His ontological relationship to the Father and Son. The religious significance of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit was not yet felt. The Spirit is still only understood as the Spirit of prophecy, who inspired the prophets and apostles and empowered Christ. But Justin has no awareness of a continuous necessary operation of the Holy Spirit in the church. The objective revelation of God in the Logos seems sufficient; the subjective illumination is not perceived in its necessity. Finally, it becomes very clear in Justin Martyr what kind of influence Greek philosophy has had on Christian

theology. That such an influence has been exerted, and not least on Justin, is denied by no one. However, this influence is most noticeable in those elements of Justin's teaching which were later expelled by the church, namely, in his distinction between the logov endiayeov and proforikov, in his presentation of the Son as deuterov yeov, in his doctrine of the hidden God, in his positioning of the Son outside the divine essence. All other elements, the Logos nature of Christ, preexistence, generation, creation of all things by the Logos, sonship, and the deity of Christ are consciously derived by Justin from Scripture and argued from Scripture.

The deficiencies inherent in the trinitarian doctrine of Justin Martyr are not avoided by the following apologists, Theophilus, Tatian, and Athenagoras. Tatian, in Oratio ad Graecos 5, indeed states that, insofar as all things have their foundation in God, they all exist ideally, as Logos, in Him, but this Logos is brought forth by the will of God and is the first-born work of the Father; according to distribution, not by division. In Theophilus, the Logos exists before creation as the internal Word because He is the mind and intelligence of God, yet He is generated by the Father as the external Word for the sake of creation. Similarly, Athenagoras, in Legatio pro Christianis 10, teaches that the Logos indeed existed eternally because God is the eternal mind, yet He is the first offspring of the Father because He emanated from God as the idea and energy of things. Just as Theophilus first spoke of a triad in God, so also Athenagoras associates God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who was active in the prophets and is an emanation of God, proceeding from God and returning to Him, like a ray from the sun, and calls them the object of Christian worship. However, in the distinction of the three Persons, their Unity is not sufficiently maintained. The Father is the one, ungenerated, eternal, invisible

God, and the Son and the Spirit are one with Him not in essence, but in spirit and power.

The next development of the trinitarian doctrine, particularly involving the expulsion of philosophical elements, is owed to three men, each of whom contributed to the construction of Christian dogma. Irenaeus is the powerful opponent of the Gnostic conception of God and the idea of the Logos as the world idea. Occasionally, he shows that he has not entirely overcome the old conception; he still calls the Father the invisible, hidden God in contrast to the Son. Nevertheless, he vehemently opposes the notion of God as chaos and the emanation of aeons, and upholds the scriptural distinction between Creator and creature. The Logos is as it were divested of its ambivalent nature and entirely transferred to the side of God. The Logos is not a creature but a hypostatic word, preexistent, truly God, and so forth. The distinction between the internal and external Word is also to be rejected. For besides the fact that this distinction detracts from the personality of the Logos and associates His generation with creation, the Logos must not be represented as the understanding and reason of God. God is simple, entirely Spirit, entirely understanding, entirely thought, entirely Logos, so that both the Son and the Father are truly God. The Unity of Father, Son, and Spirit is clearly affirmed by Irenaeus, their divine nature is emphatically maintained, they are consistently mentioned together. The generation of the Son did not occur in time; the Son had no beginning; He existed eternally with God.

But Irenaeus falls short in indicating how the Unity nevertheless consists of the Trinity and how Father, Son, and Spirit, though sharing one divine nature, are yet distinct. Tertullian supplements and improves upon this. Although he lags behind Irenaeus in overcoming Gnostic dualism, he distinguishes between Father and

Son as between a Deus invisibilis et invisus and a Deus visibilis et visus, adv. Prax. 14.15. In various ways and with various arguments, he argues for that distinction, using the name Logos, the incarnation, the theophanies, and so forth. Indeed, the Logos, in Tertullian, only attains full Sonship and independent personality through the three moments of God's speech, generation, and incarnation, adv. Pr. 6. 7, such that there was a time when the Son was not, adv. Hermog. 3. But while he goes too far against Patripassianism in the distinction of persons, he tries all the more to maintain the Unity in the Trinity and the Trinity in the Unity. The Three Persons are of one substance, one status, one power, one God. They are distinct in terms of order and economy; Oeconomia sacramentum unitatem in trinitatem disponit. They are three not in status but in degree, and yet they are one God, from whom these degrees and forms and species are assigned in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Just as a ray of the sun is also sun, so there are different species, forms, images, modes in the one and undivided substance. Thus, the three Persons are unum, not unus. The Son is different from the Father, and the Spirit is again another, but the name God and Lord is common to them. They are one God; they cannot be separated. Just as the root and branch, source and stream, sun and ray cannot be separated, so also the Father and the Son. Thus, the Trinity does not nullify the monarchy. The Son is indeed different from the Father but not divided, separated. There is distinction, distribution, not diversity and division. It is a unity deriving from itself into Trinity, adv. Prax. 2 v. Thus, Tertullian molds the rigid Latin language to uphold both the unity and the trinity in God equally; both formally and materially, he has been of the greatest significance for the dogma of the Trinity. Despite not always overcoming subordinationism and not sufficiently distinguishing the ontological, cosmological, and soteriological aspects in the doctrine of the Trinity, he provided the concepts and words necessary for expressing the true meaning of the

dogma of the Trinity. He replaced Logos speculation with filiation, thereby definitively separating ontological Trinity from cosmological speculation. And he was the first to attempt to derive the Trinity of Persons not from the Person of the Father, but from the Being of God.

However, while Tertullian does not yet entirely free the ontological Trinity from the cosmological and soteriological process, it is Origen who conceives of it entirely as an eternal process within the Being of God itself. Generation is an aiwniov gennhsiv, the princ. 12,4. Light cannot exist without shining; likewise, the Father cannot be without the Son, ib. 12.2.4.7.10. There was no time when the Son was not, ib. 12.2.4. c. Cels VIII 12. The Father is not Father before the Son but per filium, the princ. 12.10. There is no separation, acwristov esti tou uiou o pathr, c. Cels. IV 14.16. All divine attributes are common to Father and Son; the Son is one with the Father; we worship the Son not alongside but in God, c. Cels. VIII 12.13. The Son possesses the same wisdom, truth, reason as the Father, He is autosofia, autolhyeia, autologov, c. Gels. V41. However, in order to maintain distinction within this unity and equality, Origen invokes subordinationism and regresses behind Tertullian in deriving the Trinity not from the Being of God but from the Person of the Father. And thus Origen came to present the Father as o yeov, autoyeov phgh, or riza yeothtoc, megistov epi pasi yeov, as greater than the Son, as the one whole Godhead, above all being, unseen, incomprehensible; and the Son as yeov without article, as eterov tou patrov kai ousian, as much less than the Father as the world is less than the Son.

The church, however, did not follow Origen. It rejected his subordinationism and affirmed at Nicaea the true, full divinity of the Son. This confession was entirely of a religious character. It upheld

the soteriological principle of Christianity. But from now on, the significance of the doctrine of the Trinity changed. Nicaea articulated the distinction within God and taught that Father, Son (and Spirit) were God; from now on, the challenge was to maintain unity within this distinction. Before Nicaea, there was difficulty in moving from the unity of God to a Trinity; now, it was the reverse. Henceforth, the trinitarian dogma acquired its own, independent value, a theological significance. Athanasius, along with the three Cappadocians and Augustine, are those who develop and complete this doctrine in this manner. Athanasius understood better than anyone in his time that Christianity stood or fell with the divinity of Christ and the Trinity. He dedicated his entire life and all his energies to defending this truth. He fought not for a philosophical problem but for the Christian religion itself, for the revelation of God, the teaching of the apostles, the faith of the church. The Trinity is the heart of Christianity. Therefore, it is fundamentally distinct from Judaism, which denies the distinction in God, and from paganism, which denies the unity of God, ad Serap. I 28. With Athanasius, the philosophical blending of ontology and cosmology is entirely banished. He rejects the Gnostic dualism between God and the world, adopted by Arius, and all kinds of intermediaries, c. Ar. II 26. The Trinity, he says, has nothing foreign mixed in it; it does not consist of the Creator and something created, but it is entirely and perfectly divine, ibid. Therefore, the Trinity is also eternal. There is nothing contingent in God; He does not become anything; He is eternally everything. Just as the Trinity always was, so it is and remains, and in it the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, ad Serap. III 7. c. Ar. I18. The Father was always Father; unlike us, it belongs to His nature to be Father, decr. nic. syn. 12. Just as the sun cannot be thought of without light and the source without water, so the Father cannot be thought of without the Son; God is not agonov; He always speaks, c. Ar. II 2. ad Serap. II 2. Whoever denies the Trinity makes God a lifeless principle or comes

to the doctrine of the eternity of the world, c. Ar. I 14. And therefore, the generation and existence of the Son are also eternal. There was no time when neither the Father nor the Son existed, c. Ar. I entirely. This Son cannot be a creature and is not produced by the will of God, but is generated from His essence, c. Ar. I 25. And the same is said, although less frequently and elaborately, of the Holy Spirit, ad Serap. I 20,21, etc. These Three Persons are truly distinct; they are not three parts of one whole, not three names for one thing. The Father is only Father, and the Son is only Son, and the Spirit is only Spirit, c. Ar. III 4. IV 1. ad Serap. IV 4,6,7. But in this, he maintains the Unity, so that all three are omoousioi and one upostasiv (at Athanasius almost equivalent to ousia) and have the same attributes, c. Ar. III 3, 4. decr. nic. syn. 19-25; that the Father is the arx and the phgh yeothtov, c. Ar. IV 1.; that the Three Persons exist in each other, ad Serap. I 14.III 6. c. Ar. III 6, and are one in their operation, ad Serap. I 281. This doctrine of the Trinity of Athanasius is also found essentially, only elucidated by names, images, comparisons, in Basil in his Libri V against Eunomius, in his work de Spiritu Sancto and in many of his letters and homilies, in Gregory Nyss. in his Libri XII c. Eunomium and in his oratio catechetica, and in Gregory Naz. in his 5 Orationes theologicae. John Damascene summarizes the result and is especially aligned with Gregory of Nazianzus. The entire Greek church has accepted this doctrine in the councils, of which it acknowledges the first seven, and deviates from the West only in the filioque.

In the West, after Tertullian and Cyprian, the doctrine of the Trinity was especially vigorously defended and proven from Scripture by Hilary in his 12 books on the Trinity, which, however, contain very little about the Holy Spirit and therefore probably earlier bore the title: On Faith Against the Arians; and then more speculatively and profoundly by Augustine. His 15 books on the Trinity are the deepest writings on this dogma. In them, he not only summarizes what

earlier fathers have said on this subject, but he also treats it independently and introduces significant modifications. Firstly, Augustine starts not from the Person of the Father but from the one simple, excluding all composition, Essence (essentia) of God, and therefore expresses the absolute Unity of the three Persons more strongly than ever before. Each Person is as great as the entire Trinity, trin. VIII 1.2. In each Person is the whole, same, Divine Essence, so that there are not three Gods, three Almighties, etc., but only one God, one Almighty, etc., ib. V 8. Therefore, the distinction of the Persons cannot lie in attributes or accidents that one Person would have and the other would not, but only in the relations among them. The Father is and is called the first Person because He stands in a particular relation to the Son and the Spirit, etc., ib. V 5, just as the designation Lord, Creator, etc., indicates God's relation to creatures but does not bring about any change in Him, ib. 16.17. Secondly, Augustine thus had to reject any opposition that had previously been made between the Father and the Son. The Son, as true God, is no less hidden and invisible than the Father and is perfectly equal to the Father. Any subordinationism is banished. Augustine goes even further than Athanasius. Athanasius still maintained some subordination, c. Ar. I 59, but Augustine has overcome all thought as if the Father were the true, original God. He starts from the essentia Dei, which dwells equally in all three. Although he still uses the expression fons or principium deitatis for the Father, trin. IV 20, it has a different meaning for him. It does not indicate that the Godhead logically existed first in the Father and was communicated to the Son and the Spirit by Him, but the Father can only be called so because He is not God but as Person, Father of the Son. And in this sense, the formula of Nicea Deus de Deo is also explained by him, trin. VII 2.3. Therefore, Augustine also came to a different understanding of the theophanies in the Old Testament. Previously, they had always and exclusively been seen as revelations

of the Logos because the Father was hidden, but Augustine also ascribes them to the Father and the Spirit, who can manifest themselves just as well as the Son and indeed cannot be separated from His, trin. II and III. Finally, Augustine, more than any church father before him, sought images, similitudes of the Trinity, vestiges of the Trinity, and elucidated the connection between the doctrine of God and that of the entire cosmos, trin. IX-XV2.

Augustine completed what Tertullian had begun. In the West, despite agreement, there is a different understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity than in the East. While here it was confessed that the Son and the Spirit both proceed from the Father but otherwise exist separately, in the West it was felt that the essential equality and the mutual relation of the three Persons came to their full expression only in the filioque. The West aligned itself with Augustine and, while elaborating his doctrine of the Trinity more closely in some points, did not alter it or add anything new to it. The Athanasian Creed, wrongly attributed to Athanasius and certainly originating after 400, is entirely in the spirit of Augustine and therefore found acceptance in the West but not in the East. The Reformers also expressed their agreement with it. The Lutheran and Reformed confessions align with the three ecumenical symbols; in the Belgic Confession Article 9, the faith summary of Athanasius is also mentioned, and in the Anglican Church, it even found a place in liturgical use. However, in recent times, there has been a strong opposition against it. And generally, there is a not insignificant difference in the attitude that Roman Catholics and Protestants adopt towards the Athanasian Creed. The Reformation highlighted that historical belief in the doctrine of the Trinity, no matter how pure, does not save, but only sincere belief of the heart in God Himself, who has revealed Himself as triune God in Christ.

This dogma, however, has always encountered serious opposition. Not only from outside, from the side of the Jews and the Muslims, against whom Christians then defensively acted. But also within the bounds of Christianity, this dogma was resisted by many both before and after its establishment. In the confession of the Trinity beats the heart of the Christian religion; every error stems from, or can be traced back to, a deviation in the doctrine of the Trinity upon deeper reflection. It is such an essential component of the Christian faith that it continues to echo in the confession of the Unitarians. All who are attached to the name of Christians continue to speak of the Father, Son, and Spirit. However, the doctrine of the Trinity, in its ecclesiastical form, has been contested and presented differently over time. But the history of this dogma clearly shows that the ecclesiastical form in which this truth is contained alone is capable of preserving the matter for which it exists, unadulterated. The great problem with this dogma is that the Unity of Essence does not annul the Trinity of Persons, nor conversely does the Trinity of Persons abolish the Unity of Essence. And therefore, there is always the danger of deviating and falling into Sabellianism or Arianism, either to the right or to the left.

Arianism was prepared in the 2nd and 3rd centuries by the Ebionites, the Alogi, Theodotus, Artemon, Paul of Samosata, who saw in Christ a man, born supernaturally and anointed with the Holy Spirit at baptism, empowered for His work and exalted as Lord, but who decisively denied His pre-existence and deity. They were adherents of an adoptionist christology. In the fourth century, it was advocated by Lucian and his disciple Arius, and then further by Aetius and Eunomius. Arius taught, according to a work called Thalia, of which Athanasius, in Against the Arians, has preserved fragments, that God, being without generation and without beginning, is absolutely unique. He is ineffable, incomprehensible,

unable to have direct communion with the finite, unable to communicate His Essence, which consists precisely in being without generation. Therefore, everything outside of Him is created, brought into being by His will. He is not eternally Father but becomes Father through and by means of creatures. But before God proceeded to the creation of the world, He brought forth, as a means of mediation, as a kind of intermediary, an independent hypostasis or essence, which in Scripture bears the Name of Wisdom, Son, Logos, Image of God, etc., and through whom God created all things, and also a third, lower hypostasis, namely the Holy Spirit. This Logos is not generated from the Essence of God and does not share the Essence with the Father, for then there would be two Gods, but is created or born from non-existence, is a creature or product of God, brought forth by will and counsel. There was, therefore, a time when He was not, although He was created before the ages and before the world. This Logos was therefore not consubstantial with the Father but completely separate from Him, changeable, able to choose both good and evil. But He became immutable by choosing the good, and, as it were, became a god. This Logos also became human, proclaimed the truth, effected our salvation, and is now our honor but not worthy of our worship.

Arianism was strong and found many adherents, not least among those who, for various reasons, had converted to Christianity after the conversion of Emperor Constantine. Moreover, the writings of Athanasius show us what formidable weapons they brought to the battle. Firstly, they appealed to a series of scriptural passages that emphasize the Unity of God, such as Deuteronomy 6:4, 32:39, John 17:3, 1 Corinthians 8:6, the birth or generation of the Son, Proverbs 8:22, Colossians 1:15, His subordination to the Father, John 14:28, 1 Corinthians 15:28, Hebrews 3:2, His ignorance, Mark 13:32, John 11:34, His limited power, Matthew 28:18, and goodness, Luke 18:19, His increase in wisdom, Luke 2:52, His suffering, John 12:27, 13:21,

Matthew 26:39, 27:46, His exaltation to Lord and Christ, Acts 2:36, Philippians 2:9, Hebrews 1:4, etc. Furthermore, they argued with numerous quotations that they had many early church fathers on their side. Then they derived various arguments from Aristotelian, nominalistically interpreted, philosophy, thereby arguing for the unity and agennesis of God. Finally, they pointed out the weaknesses and contradictions inherent in the Christology of Nicaea, with this argument in particular occupying a significant place: that if the Son was generated, He thereby differed essentially from God as the unborn, agennetos, and therefore came into existence in time.

Sabellianism was prepared in the second and third centuries by Noetus, Praxeas, Epigonus, Cleomenes, who taught that in Christ the Father Himself was born, suffered, and died, that Father and Son were thus names for the same person in different relationships, before and in the incarnation, in itself and in His historical appearance, or also that the Divine nature in Christ was the Father, and the human nature, the flesh, was the Son. This monarchianism, patripassianism, or modalism was advocated and further developed in the third century by Sabellius. Father, Son, and Spirit are the same God; they are three names for one and the same Essence, which he called the hypostasis, but which was not simultaneously, but successively, called by three energies or stages. God first existed in the prosopon, the appearance, the mode of the Father, namely as Creator and Lawgiver; then in the prosopon of the Son as Redeemer from incarnation to ascension; and finally in the prosopon of the Holy Spirit as Life-Giver. Sabellius relied especially on Deuteronomy 6:4, Exodus 20:3, Isaiah 44:6, John 10:38. Sabellius thus included the Holy Spirit in the Essence of God, placed Son and Spirit on an equal footing with the Father, and further taught a historical succession in the revelations of God, a becoming in God Himself.

Arianism and Sabellianism

Both directions have continued to exist in the Christian church, to the right and left of the ecclesiastical doctrine of the Trinity, throughout all ages. The essence of Arianism lies in the denial of the homoousion of Father and Son, in the assertion that the Father alone and in an absolute sense is the only true God. Naturally, then, the Son is a lesser and lower Being, standing outside the nature of God; but there can be differences over the place that the Son occupies between God and the world of creatures; Arianism allows for all sorts of latitude. The distance between God and the world is endless, and at every point along that distance, a place can be assigned to the Son, from the place next to God on His throne down to that next to the creatures, angels, or humans. Thus, Arianism has appeared in various forms. First, in the form of subordinationism: the Son is indeed eternal, generated from the Essence of the Father, not a creature and not brought forth from nothing, but He is nevertheless inferior to the Father and subordinate to Him. The Father alone is o theos, the source of divinity; the Son is theos, having received His nature by communication from the Father. This was taught by Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Clement, Origen, and others, also by the Semiarians, Eusebius of Caesarea and Eusebius of Nicomedia, who placed the Son outside the Father and called Him homoiousios to the Father, later by the Remonstrants, by the supranaturalists, and by many theologians in modern times. Furthermore, in its old form, which it had with Arius, it reappeared among many theologians after the Reformation, especially in England. For example, Milton taught

that the Son and Spirit were created by the free will of the Father before creation, and bore only the Name of God for Their office, just as the judges and rulers in the Old Testament did, and likewise with minor modifications W. Whiston, whose Arianism sparked many rebuttals, S. Clarke, P. Maty, Dan. Whitby, Harwood, many Remonstrants here in the Netherlands, and in later times, the Groningen theologians. A third form of Arianism emerged in Socinianism. The Father is the only true God. The Son is a holy Man created immediately by God, through supernatural conception, who did not exist before His conception and was brought forth by God for this purpose, to preach a new law to humanity. After fulfilling this mission, He was exalted in heaven and became partaker of divine grace. The Spirit is nothing but a power of God. This Socinianism spread from Poland to Germany, the Netherlands, England, and America, finding interpreters in these latter two countries in John Biddle, Nathanael Lardner, Theophilus Lindsey, Joseph Priestley, founder of the Unitarian Society, etc., and evolved into unitarianism. Socinianism could not maintain supernaturalism, which it initially adopted; Jesus became an ordinary Man, albeit an example of piety and morality, and Christianity became entirely detached from His Person. The same thing happened in rationalism and in modern theology. There is no place here for the Trinity, for the Triad, Father, Son, and Spirit. God is one, and Jesus is an ordinary yet great human being; even Ritschl has essentially done nothing different from renewing Socinianism. Jesus was a human being, enabled by God to establish the kingdom of heaven on earth and was then elevated to the rank of God and Lord of the church. In this entire rationalistic view of the doctrine of the Trinity, there is of course even less need for divine grace, and therefore the Holy Spirit is hardly mentioned; His divinity and usually His personality are denied.

Sabellianism can also appear in various forms. It shares with Arianism the denial of the Trinity in the Divine Being but seeks to achieve the unity of God not by placing the Son and Spirit outside the Divine Essence, but by incorporating both in such a way that all distinction between the three Persons disappears. According to the church's doctrine of the Trinity, the distinction between the persons lies in personal properties, particularly in eternal generation and spiration. If these are denied, the Persons become detached from each other, and tritheism emerges. In ancient times, the Monophysites, Johannes Askusnages, Johannes Philoponus, and in the Middle Ages, Roscellinus were accused of this. Later, similar charges were brought against Th. Sherlock for positing three infinite spirits in the Divine Being; against Roëll for disputing generation; and against Lampe and Sibelius for objecting to the formula per communicationem essentiae. Furthermore, if the Divine Essence is conceived in a Platonic-realistic sense, tritheism transitions into tetratheism, which was attributed to Damianus of Alexandria. However, since such a trinity of individual, separate beings, merikai ousiai, idikai fuseiv, cannot be reconciled with the unity of God, it can also be maintained that Father, Son, and Spirit are the same Person and the Same Essence; this was taught by Praxeas in the second century. Alternatively, one can view Son and Spirit as attributes in God, which went forth from God only for the purpose of creation and recreation and became independent and personal. The Logos was indeed eternal as logos endiathetos; the Father was never without the Logos; He was always Father; but this Logos became Son, proforikos, in time; God extends Himself in time to become Son and Spirit and then returns to Himself. From this naturally arises modalistic monarchianism, which sees in the Three Persons only three modes of revelation of the one Divine Being.

This was the actual doctrine of Sabellius, and later this conception of the doctrine of the Trinity repeatedly reemerged. Speculation on the Trinity by Erigena and Abelard is not free from modalism either. But this becomes clearer in the pantheistic sects of the Middle Ages, in Joachim of Floris, Amalrik of Bena, David of Dinant, who distinguished between periods of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit and considered the last one near. During the Reformation century, Anabaptism opposed the church's doctrine of the Trinity. The true God is the God within us; this is the Essential Christ, and the Word, the Spirit within us, is the true God. David Joris taught that God was one and revealed Himself successively as Father, Son, and Spirit in three eras of faith, hope, and love, which began with Moses, Christ, and himself. But above all, Servetus devoted all the power of his thinking to this dogma; in three writings, he subjected it in its ecclesiastical form to sharp criticism and also tried to rebuild it positively. Servetus has no words sharp enough to condemn the church's doctrine of the Trinity. In his eyes, it is tritheistic, atheistic, a three-headed monster, a triple Cerberus, a tripartite God. In opposition, he starts from the proposition that the Divine Essence cannot be divided, and therefore, to maintain the divinity of Christ and the Holy Spirit, only dispositions, apparitions, modes of God may be assumed, not persons. The Father is the entire Divine Essence, the only God. But He makes use of the Logos, which existed before Christ, however, not as a Person but as Word, reason, thought, to reveal Himself in creation and under the Old Testament and to become human in Christ. The Logos did not assume human nature in Christ but became flesh in Him. Therefore, the human Christ is the true Son of God; God dwells fully in Him. Similarly, the Holy Spirit, who is not really distinct from the Logos but included in Him, is the mode of God's self-communication. Through Him, God dwells in all creatures and shares His life with all. At the end of the process, the Trinity ceases again.

The Gnostic and theosophical elements that reappeared in the doctrine of the Trinity were further developed later by Boehme, Zinzendorf, and Swedenborg. In Boehme's thought, the Trinity is the result of a process in which the dark nature, the light of idea, and the will in the Godhead are the foundations and factors. Zinzendorf, while calling himself "most trinitarian," actually operated from a gnostic conception of God. God in Himself was unreachable, hidden, unfathomable, but He reveals Himself in Christ. Christ is the true Creator of all things, the Jehovah of the Old Testament who became flesh and is the object of our worship. In Him, the Trinity is also revealed, but not with immanent relations of generation, spiration, etc., but as a holy family. The first Person is the Father, the Holy Spirit is the mother, Christ is the Son, and in that family, the individual believer and the church are included as the bride of the Son, who, like Eve from Adam's side, is created in a wholly realistic manner from the side and blood of Christ.

Swedenborg, even more strongly than Servetus, opposed the doctrine of the Trinity, seeing nothing but tritheism in it. God is one, but He has been revealed in Christ as Father, Son, and Spirit, which are related as soul, body, and the activity emanating from both. This theosophy prepared the doctrine of the Trinity for the new philosophy. In Spinoza's system with its one unchangeable substance, there was still no place for it. In Kant, the three persons are replaced by three qualities; true religion consists in believing in God as holy Lawgiver, good ruler, and just judge. Schleiermacher subjected the dogma of the Trinity to strict criticism and only recognized in it the truth that God is united with humanity, both in the person of Christ and in the communal spirit of the church. According to Schelling and Hegel, the dogma contained a profound philosophical thought, which they interpreted thus: God is Spirit, thought, idea, and it is therefore part of His nature to represent

Himself, to think, to objectify. However, the content of that thought cannot be a thought as with humans but must be reality. Therefore, God brings forth thinking Himself, objectifies Himself, in the world, which is the true Son of God, and then returns from this self-alienation through the consciousness of humanity back to Himself in the Spirit.

The significant difference between this speculation and the church's doctrine of the Trinity was recognized by Strauss. Nevertheless, many still take pleasure in such philosophical constructions. Others content themselves with distinguishing three potencies, moments, forces in the one Personality of God, and thus come to recognize a revelation trinity of God in nature (creation), history (Christ), and conscience (church). Averse to metaphysics, which they consider worthless and even harmful for the life of faith, they refuse to conclude from God's self-revelation in Christ and His self-communication in the Holy Spirit to immanent, ontological relations in the Divine Being. They neglect the theological elements, which are undoubtedly contained not only in the church but also in Scripture, and try to present these as useless speculation.

The Terminology of the Trinity

From the very beginning, the Christian church followed a different path. The doctrine of the Trinity was, for it, the dogma and therefore the mystery par excellence. The essence of Christianity, the absolute self-revelation of God in the person of Christ and the absolute self-communication of God in the Holy Spirit, could only be upheld if it had its foundation and principium in the ontological Trinity. As soon as the data that Holy Scripture offered for this purpose became the

object of theological thought, there arose an immediate need for all sorts of names and expressions that did not occur in Holy Scripture but proved indispensable for expressing the truth to some extent, albeit imperfectly, and for defending it against misunderstanding and opposition. The Arians and many later movements, such as the Socinians, the Anabaptists, the Remonstrants, the biblical theologians, etc., disapprove of the use of such unscriptural names. But Christian theology has always defended their right and their value. After all, the Scripture was not given to us merely to be repeated but to be pondered and expressed in our own language; Jesus and the apostles used it and derived further conclusions from it through reasoning; the Scripture is not a legal code or a systematic theology but the principium of theology; as the Word of God, it binds us not only in its literal words but also in what is legitimately deduced from it. Moreover, no reflection on the truth of Scripture and therefore no theological activity is possible without using such words that do not occur in Scripture. Not only in the doctrine of the Trinity but also in every other dogma and in the entire field of theology, expressions and terms are used that are not found in Scripture. With these names, therefore, the autonomy of the Christian, the right of theology, is involved. And finally, these do not serve to introduce new dogmas outside of Scripture or in conflict with it but precisely to maintain the truth of Scripture against heresy. They have much more negative than positive significance. They indicate the lines within which Christian thought must move in order not to lose the truth of revelation at the hands of heresy. Under the guise of scripturalness, biblical theology has always drifted further from the Scripture, and with its non-biblical terms, ecclesiastical orthodoxy has always been justified in its scriptural character. Thus, gradually, various unusual names also appeared in the doctrine of the Trinity, such as homoousios, ousia, hyparxis, hypostasis, prosopon, gennesis, trias, trinitas, substantia, personae, nomina,

gradus, species, formae, proprietates, etc. However, the meaning of these terms was by no means fixed at first. The word ousia was commonly used for the one essence of God but was still often used by Origen, Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa to refer to the three Persons in that one essence. Athanasius explicitly defended himself against Sabellianism by naming the Son not monoousios but homoousios with the Father. Similarly, the word hypostasis was sometimes used of the essence and sometimes of the three Persons, so it was said that there was only one and then again that there were three hypostases in God. But Sabellianism saw the Persons only as forms of revelation of the one essence. In contrast, the church had to emphasize that those Persons were indeed existing substances in the Divine Being. And for this purpose, the name hypostasis was used. Basil in his letter peri ousias kai hypostaseos brought more uniformity to this by designating the essence of God with ousia and the three Persons with hypostasis or prosopon; thus, each hypostasis has its own existence, idia hyparxis, is subsistent, and is distinguished from the others by idiothtes, idiwmata, idiazonta, shmeia, idia gnwrismata, charakthres, morfai. And the usage of the two Gregories, John of Damascus, and the Greek theology and church adheres to this.

In the West, the confusion was not as great. Through Tertullian, the term essentia or substantia was established for the Essence, and the name persona or subsistentia for the Persons. Later church teachers and symbols adopted this terminology. Hilary, in his work on the Trinity, speaks constantly of una essentia, substantia, natura, genus, and of tres personae, which are distinguished from one another by their proprieties. Augustine disapproved of using the Greek hypostasis translated as substantia. Substantia and essentia could not be distinguished in Latin as hypostasis and ousia could in Greek. One could not speak in Latin of una essentia and tres substantiae. Rather, substantia was equivalent to the Greek ousia, and essentia

always sounded strange and unusual in Latin ears. Latin, therefore, retained the expression una substantia and tres personae. However, Augustine preferred to avoid the word substantia altogether, both for the Essence and for the Persons. Because in Latin, substantia, as distinct from accidens, indicated the bearer of attributes as existing in itself. Since this opposition cannot apply to God, where Essence and attributes are one, Augustine considered it better to refer to the Divine Essence as essentia. Just as in the East it was necessary to emphasize the self-subsistence, the hypostasis, of the three Persons in the face of Sabellianism, so the Latins, in opposition to Arianism, insisted that the three Persons were not three substantiae but three personae. Scholasticism further elaborated this terminology and provided a fixed schema that was later universally adopted, even in Reformation theology. In God, there is one Essence, una essentia, unitas naturae, and three Persons, tres personae, trinitas personarum. These three Persons are one in that Essence, homoousioi, coessential, and exist reciprocally in one another (perichoresis personarum). But they are distinct. For there are in God two emanations: per modum naturae and per modum voluntatis; three hypostases: Father, Son, Holy Spirit; four relations: paternity, filiation, active and passive spiration; five notions: innascibility, paternity, filiation, active and passive spiration; three personal properties: Father, who is unbegotten, Son, who is begotten, Holy Spirit, who proceeds.

To understand the doctrine of the Trinity properly, three questions must be answered: What does the word essence signify? What is denoted by the word person? And what is the relationship between essence and person and among the persons themselves? As for the concept of essence, Aristotle defined ousia as a substance, h mhte kay upokeimenon tinov legetai mhte en ipokeimenw tini estin, such as a human or a horse. And so the word was first used in theology

and applied to the three Persons as well as to the one Essence. But gradually ousia came to be used in a different sense and became the designation for the Essence, the nature, the essence of a thing, which Aristotle called to ti hn einai. Thus, it became synonymous with fusis. Some consider this word, because it is derived from funai, like natura from nasci, less suitable for denoting the Divine Essence. But this word was nevertheless adopted in theology, as was the word natura, and found support in 2 Peter 1:4. Ousia, fusis, substantia, essentia, natura became the constant name for the one Divine Essence, Godhead in general, apart from its subsistence and its modes of subsistence, therefore, for the Divine nature, as it is common to all three Persons. This Divine Essence is one and simple, essentially distinct from all creatures and possessing all those attributes that have been discussed earlier.

The distinction between this essence and the three Persons in God finds its analogy in creatures. In them, we distinguish between the essence and the individuals. Paul, John, Peter, all share the same human nature but are distinguished as persons from the essence and from each other. However, there are immediately two dangers here. Nominalism views the essence, the universal, merely as a name, a concept, and thus falls into tritheism in the doctrine of the Trinity; excessive realism, on the other hand, imagines the essence as a substance standing behind and above the persons, leading to tetradism or Sabellianism. Even Gregory of Nyssa did not entirely overcome this exaggerated realism. To argue that the Godhead is one and should not be spoken of as three Gods, he denied the applicability of number even to finite creatures. According to him, it was an abuse to speak in the plural of those who share one nature and thus to speak of many humans. However, in doing so, the distinction between the Essence in God and in creatures is overlooked. There is undoubtedly an analogy, and because of that

analogy, we may also speak of His Essence in God. But that analogy presupposes a very important difference. The concept of human essence is a kind of concept; human nature does have real existence and is not a mere verbal sound; it is present, not outside and above humans, but in each human. Yet it exists in each human in its own finite way; humans, like the gods in polytheism, are indeed alike (omoi-) but not identical (omo- or monoousioi). Human nature is not the same (tota en numero eadem) in different humans, and humans are therefore not only distinct but also divided. In God, however, everything is different. The Divine nature cannot be conceived as an abstract kind of concept, nor as a substance outside, above, or behind the Persons; it exists in the Persons and in each of them completely and identically (tota en numero eadem). The Persons are thus distinct but not divided. They are alike, of the same essence. They are not separated by place or time or anything else. They all possess the same Divine nature and perfections. It is one and the same Godhead that exists in the three Persons, in all and in each specifically, so that in God there is only one Eternal, one Almighty, one Omniscient, one God with one understanding, one will, one power. The word Essence thus maintains the truth of the Unity of God, which is constantly emphasized in Scripture, implicit in monotheism, and defended by unitarianism. Whatever distinctions may exist in the Divine Essence, they may not and cannot detract from the unity of nature. For in God, Unity is not deficient and limited but perfect and absolute. Among creatures, all diversity inherently involves more or less separation and division. Everything that is a creature necessarily exists in the forms of space and time and thus alongside and after each other. But eternity, omnipresence, omnipotence, goodness, etc., by their very nature, exclude all separation and division. God is absolute Unity and simplicity, without composition or division, and that Unity is not ethical, not contractual in nature, as among humans, but absolute,

and therefore not an accident to the essence, but one with the Essence of God Himself.

But now, the glory of the confession of the Trinity lies precisely in this, that this Unity, however absolute, includes diversity, not excluding it. The Essence of God is not an abstract Unity, not a detached concept, but a fullness of Being, an infinite richness of life that unfolds the highest unity in diversity. These self-distinctions, which Holy Scripture reveals to us under the Name of Father, Son, and Spirit in the Divine Essence, are indicated in theology by the term Person. In the East, the term used was first prosopon, corresponding to the Hebrew "panim," meaning face, outward appearance, role. But this word was susceptible to misunderstanding; Sabellius said that the one Divine ousia or hypostasis assumed different prosopa. In opposition to this, the church fathers argued that the three prosopa in the Divine Essence were not just appearances, manifestations, but that they were prosopa en hypostasei, that they existed and were hypostases. Thus, the word prosopon was replaced by hypostasis, which first means foundation, basis, firmness, and then denotes what is real and not merely apparent, or also what exists in itself as opposed to accidents inhering in something else. In Latin, the word used was persona, which originally indicated the mask, then the role of an actor, then the condition, quality, status in which someone appears, and thus in legal language indicated the right to stand in court. This concept was also quite fluid, and in Tertullian it alternates with various other words, nomen, species, forma, gradus, res. Nevertheless, this word remained in Latin, even when in the East prosopon had already been replaced by hypostasis; for there was no suitable Latin word for hypostasis; substantia could not be used because it was already in use for essence. But this difference in expression repeatedly led to misunderstandings between the East and the West. The Greeks

thought of the Latin persona in terms of their word prosopon, and the Latins understood the Greek hypostasis in the sense of their substantia. Each side accused the other of linguistic poverty. Nevertheless, they learned essentially the same thing, namely, that the three Persons were not modes but substances. Thus, the word prosopon, persona in ecclesiastical language, acquired as its essential characteristic the concept of self-subsistence, hypostasis, subsistence, suppositum. This meaning of hypostasis persisted even in Athanasius and the Cappadocians. But later, the word persona acquired another characteristic. If persona indicated nothing but hypostasis, self-subsistence, over against accident, then it could also be used for things. In the christological struggle, faced with Nestorianism and Monophysitism, there was a need for sharper definition of nature and person; and thus, in the definition of persona as "the individual substance of a rational nature," attributed to Boethius, the word acquired the meaning of self-subsistence and rationality or self-consciousness. This meaning persisted in scholasticism and also in the older Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed dogmatics.

In modern philosophy and psychology, a completely different conception of personality emerged. First of all, the opinion began to prevail that personality can only be the mode of existence of a finite and limited being, and therefore there can be no question of personality, and consequently of self-consciousness and self-determination, in God. If God exists, He is nothing other than the Almighty, Omnipresent, unconscious force and impulse in all things. Secondly, in psychology, it was thought that personality in humans hardly includes independent existence at all; egoity, the soul, is not a substance, but merely the nominalistic summary of psychic phenomena, and what is called personality is only the temporary passing form of existence of the individual being called human.

Thirdly, it was deduced from this that personality, as the blossom and highest development of human beings, was the ultimate goal for which humans should strive, the highest good that they could acquire for a time. "The highest happiness of earthly children is only personality" (Goethe). Fourthly, this brought about a cult of heroes and deification of humans with regard to those who had reached such a pinnacle of development and had formed themselves into a personality. For some, this also connected with the hope that such individuals, who have elevated themselves to this height of personality here or hereafter, will also continue to exist eternally (conditional immortality). Now, this concept of personality does not apply to humans, because personality, egoity, is something different and more than the summary of psychic phenomena. But it is even less applicable in the doctrine of the Trinity. Here, person has its own meaning. Even Boethius's definition fits much more into the doctrine of Christ than into that of the Trinity. This has always been felt by the most solid theologians. Richard of St. Victor opposed this definition because it spoke of individua substantia and therefore defined person as divinae naturae incommunicabilis existentia. Calvin only spoke of subsistentia in Dei essentia. All recognized the truth of Augustine's words: "we speak of persons, not that it should be said, but lest it should be passed over." In the doctrine of the Trinity, person signifies nothing other than that the three Persons in the Divine Being are not modes but exist in their own way. Even the emphasis on the rational and self-conscious in this concept is absolutely not paramount; for this naturally follows from the fact that they share the same Essence and all virtues, thus also knowledge and wisdom. However, what the word person expresses is that the Unity of the Divine Being unfolds in a threefold existence. It is a unity deriving trinity from itself. The Persons are not three modes of revelation of the one Divine Personality, but the Divine Being exists no differently than as Tri-Personal, precisely because they are

absolute, Divine Personalities. In humans, we have only a weak analogy of this. Personality in humans is only established because there is a subject that sets itself as an object over against itself and summarizes itself with itself; three moments constitute the essence of human personality, but in us they are only moments; in God, because there is no time or space, no extension or division in Him, they are three hypostases, three ways of existence of the one and the same Essence. However, this analogy of human personality must be supplemented in another way. Human nature is too rich to be embodied in a single human or person; therefore, it extends to many humans and only comes to full fruition in humanity. Thus, the Divine Being unfolds its fullness in three Persons, but these are not three individuals alongside and separate from each other, but within the Divine Being, the threefold self-distinction, which incorporates the unfolding of Being into personality and makes it tri-personal. The unfolding of human nature is of two kinds; in the individual human to personality and in humanity to many individuals, who together also form a unity, a personality, just as Christ with the Church is one perfect man, 1 Corinthians 12:12, Ephesians 4:13. This double unfolding, which cannot be otherwise in humanity, is one in God; the unfolding of His Being into personality coincides with that of His Being into Persons. The three Persons are the one Divine Personality brought to complete self-unfolding within and from and through and within the Essence.

From this, it can be inferred in what sense the third aforementioned question regarding the relationship of Essence and Person, and of the Persons among themselves, must be answered. With Tertullian, the three Persons are of one substance, one status, one power, but one God; they are three—not in status but in degree—one, not identical, but united; they are one God, from which these degrees, forms, and species are designated by the names Father, Son, and

Holy Spirit. There is distinction, distribution, but no diversity and division. Athanasius and the Cappadocians described the hypostases as modes of existence, thereby indicating that, although one in Essence, they each had their own existence and differed in mode of existence. Thus, the distinction between Essence and Person and among the Persons lay in the reciprocal relation, in the Father, Son, and Spirit-being, in the properties of paternity (unbegottenness), filiation (generation), and procession (emanation). Augustine further elaborated on this. He did not derive the Trinity from the Father but from the Unity, from the deity, and did not consider it accidental, but essential to God. It belongs to His Essence to be triune. In this sense, being a Person is identical with the Essence itself. For there is no difference between God's being and being a person, but they are entirely the same, of the Trinity VII 6. Indeed, if being belonged to God in an absolute sense and being a Person in a relative sense, then the three Persons could not be one Essence. Therefore, each Person is equal to the whole Essence and as much as the other two or all three together. This is not so with creatures. A human is not as much as three humans. But in God it is not so; for neither is the essence of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit together greater than that of the Father alone or the Son alone, but those three substances or persons, if they may be so called, are equal to each one individually, of the Trinity VII 6. In the summary of the Trinity, there is as much unity as there are three together, and two are not more than one, and within themselves, they are infinite. Thus, each one is in each one, and all are in each one, and each one is in all, and all are in all, and all are one, ib. VI 10. The Trinity itself is as great as each individual person there, ib. VIII 1. Therefore, the distinction between essence and person and among the persons themselves cannot lie in any substance but only in the mutual relations. Whatever is said of God Himself, and is said individually of each Person, that is, of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, and at the same time is said of the Trinity

itself not in a plural but in a singular sense, of the Trinity V 8. But whatever is properly said of each individual in the same Trinity is by no means said of themselves but of each other, or of the creature, and therefore it is evident that they are said relatively, not substantially, ib. ch. 11. And accordingly, later theology said that essence and person differed not re but ratione, however not by a reasoning reason, i.e., rationally, nominally, as Sabellius thought, but reasoned by reason. The distinction did not consist in any substance but only in relation, yet this distinction was nevertheless real, objective, grounded in God's revelation. Essence and Person do not differ re but still really; the difference consists in a mode of subsistence, yet it is a real difference. The person is a mode of existence of the Essence; and therefore, the Persons differ from each other, just as one mode of existence differs from another, or according to the common example, just as the open hand differs from the closed hand.

The Distinctions Among the Three Persons

If this distinction between Essence and Person and among the Persons themselves is to be expressed in a single word, there is indeed not much more to be said. However, this distinction becomes clearer when we imagine the relations themselves by which it is brought about in the Divine Essence. Although the Holy Scripture is strictly monotheistic, it attributes divine nature and perfections to the Son and Spirit and places them on par with the Father. Father, Son, and Spirit are distinct subjects in the same Divine Essence. And as such, they also bear different names, have particular personal

attributes, and always act in a certain fixed order, both ad intra and ad extra. Therefore, the distinction of Persons lies entirely in the so-called idioms, properties, personal characteristics, namely, paternity (unbegottenness, innascibility), active generation, active spiration, filiation (passive generation and active spiration), procession (passive spiration). These, by their very nature, do not add anything new, no new substance, to the Essence. A human who becomes a father does not change his essence but merely enters into a relationship that was previously foreign to him. The Divine Essence is distinguished in its Fatherhood, Sonship, and Spirituality not substantively, but only by reason, relation. The same Essence is and is called Father when it is conceived in its relation to that same Essence in the relation of the Son. And thus, the Persons differ only in that one is Father, another Son, and the third Spirit. Among humans, there is only a weak resemblance to this, but one that can still serve to clarify. Among humans, fatherhood and sonship are also nothing but a relationship, but that relationship presupposes a personal, individual subject that is the bearer of that relationship but otherwise exists in various ways apart from that fatherhood and sonship. Fatherhood is but an incidental attribute of human existence; some people never become fathers; those who do become fathers have not been fathers for a long time and gradually cease to be fathers, and so on. Human existence does not equate to fatherhood or sonship. However, it is not so in the Divine Essence. Being God entirely coincides with being a person. Just as this [being a person] is for them to be God, to be great, to be good, so also this [being a person] is for them to be a person. The Divine Essence, so to speak, is completely absorbed in each of the three Persons in their Father, Son, and Spirithood. Paternity, filiation, and procession are not additional attributes of the Essence but the eternal forms of, the eternal, immanent relations in the Essence. In humans, the unfolding of the one human nature diverges; it occurs partly in the

individual, as they become personalities; it also takes place in humanity, whose members all represent human nature in a particular way; it finally comes about in the relationships of gender and kinship, which in turn reveal aspects of human nature to us. In humans, this triple unfolding of nature is divided in space and time; it is essentially expansion. However, in God, there is no separation or division. The unfolding of His Essence into personality simultaneously encompasses His Essence into persons and also His Essence into the immanent relations expressed by the names Father, Son, and Spirit instantly, absolutely, completely within itself. Thus, God is the archetype of humanity; what in humanity diverges, lies side by side, is dispersed in the forms of space and time, is eternally and simply present in God. The processions within His Essence simultaneously bring about in God His absolute personality, His trinity, and His immanent relations. They are the absolute archetypes of all those processions through which human nature achieves its complete unfolding in the individual, in the family, and in humanity. Therefore, the three Persons are indeed each other, alius, but not aliud; the Trinity is from and in and to the Unity; the unfolding of the Essence occurs within the Essence and thus does not detract from the unity and simplicity of the Essence. Furthermore, the three Persons, although not aliud, are still alii, distinct subjects, hypostases, subsistences, which precisely bring about the absolute unfolding of the Essence of God within the Essence itself. And finally, these three Persons are absolutely related to each other through generation and spiration; their distinction as subjects perfectly coincides with their immanent relationships of kinship. The Father is solely and eternally Father, the Son is solely and eternally Son, the Spirit is solely and eternally Spirit. And because each is themselves in a simple, eternal, absolute manner, therefore, the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. The Father is so as Father, the Son as Son, the Holy Spirit as Holy Spirit.

And because all three are God, they share in one divine nature, and thus, there is one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to be praised forever.

After the doctrine of the Trinity has been outlined in general, it is now necessary to discuss the Three Persons separately. The first person is the Father, and His personal property is paternity or also agennēsia. In the Arian controversy, this word played a significant role. It was adopted from ordinary Greek usage. Plato called the ideas agennētous; Aristotle used it to refer to matter; the Gnostics spoke of God as the unborn or ingenerable. From them, Paul of Samosata and the Arians, such as Aëtius and Eunomius, adopted this terminology to combat the homoousion of the Son and the Spirit with the Father. The agennēsia expressed, in contrast to all creatures, the actual Essence of God. However, the Son is not agennētos; He is called monogenēs in Scripture, and orthodoxy also calls Him begotten; therefore, He cannot be God but must be a creature; we cannot accept two uncreated beings, that is, two gods. Now, in Greek, there are two words: gennētos, from gennan, gignere, generare, and genētos, from gignesthai, fieri; the latter is much broader than the former and refers to everything that is produced and has a beginning of existence, whether by creation, generation, or propagation. These two words were not always clearly distinguished at first; it was only pointed out that the word agennētos or agenētos could be used in different senses and could be applied to the Son in one sense but not in another. But gradually, the practice of distinguishing between these two words became established. All three persons could then be called agenētos, in contrast to all creatures; none of them were produced in the manner of creatures; none of them had a beginning of existence. The agenesie was a property of the Divine Essence and common to all Three Persons. But from this, the agennēsia had to be distinguished. This was a property of the Father alone. The Son could

be called gennētos, not because He was produced in time like a creature but because He was begotten from eternity from the Essence of the Father. But the church fathers also noted that this property, namely agennēsia, specifically belonged to the Person and not to the Essence. The Essence is one and the same in the three Persons, but the agenesie is a relation in the Essence. Just as Adam, Eve, and Abel share the same nature, though received in different ways, so also in God, the Essence is one, although it exists in the three Persons in different ways. Furthermore, the name agennēsia is negative and only states that the Father is above generation, but it says nothing positive about God's nature; actually, it is not even an indication of the Person of the Father, because being agennētos and being a Father are absolutely not the same. Therefore, the name Father is preferable to that of agennētos. The Scriptural name of Father much better indicates the personal property of the first person. In paternity, a positive relationship to the second Person is implied. The name Father is even more inherent to God than the name of God, because the latter is a general name, a nomen dignitatis, but the Father's name in the New Testament, like that of Yahweh in the Old Testament, is a proper name, indicating a personal property of God. Whoever denies God the name of Father does Him even greater dishonor than one who denies His creation. This Father name is not a figurative expression transferred from humans to God. Rather, the relationship is reversed. Fatherhood on earth is a distant, weak resemblance of God's Fatherhood, Eph. 3:15. God is Father in a true and complete sense. Among humans, a father is also a son of another, and a son in turn is also a father; among humans, a father alone is unable to produce a son; among humans, fatherhood is temporary and in a sense accidental, not essentially connected with being human; it only begins late and ceases soon, in any case at death. But in God, it is entirely different. He is solely and purely and completely Father; He is only Father; He is Father by

nature; He is eternal Father, without beginning and end, and therefore, generation must also be eternal, and the Son equally eternal as the Father, because if the Son were not eternal, the Father could not be eternal either. The eternity of Fatherhood entails the eternity of Sonship; whoever mentions the Father also automatically mentions the Son. To express this relationship of the Father to the Son and also to the Holy Spirit, the Father was often called autogenous, autogenetos, autotheos, apoietos, anarchos, principii expers, self-origin, self-cause of substance, self-principle; and also arch, aitia, riza, phgh, principium, causa, radix, fons, origo, caput, etc. of the Son and the Spirit or of the entire Godhead.

The particular property of the second Person in the Trinity is filiation. In Scripture, He bears various names indicating His relationship to the Father, such as Word, Wisdom, Logos, Son, Firstborn, Only Begotten, Only Son, Image of God, eikon, hypostasis, character. On these Names and on some texts, quoted above, was built the doctrine of eternal generation, aiōnios gennēsis, first named by Origen. Naturally, we speak of this in a human and therefore imperfect and defective way; and the thought of it urges humility. But still, we may speak so. For just as by analogy, mouth, ear, and eye are attributed to God, human generation is an analogy and image of that Divine act by which the Father gives life in Himself to the Son. But then all imperfection and sensuality thereof must be excluded. Human generation is imperfect and defective; a man needs a woman to produce a son; a man can never impart his full image, his entire being, even in many children; a father becomes a father only gradually and ceases to be one, and the child soon becomes entirely independent of and autonomous from the father. But this is not so with God. There is generation also in the Divine Essence. It is a beautiful thought, recurring in the church fathers, that God is fruitful. He is not an abstract, rigid Unity, not monadic, solitary. He

is a fullness of Life; His nature is generative, fruitful; it is capable of expansion, unfolding, communication. Whoever denies this and denies all production in the Divine Essence does not take seriously that God is infinitely, blissfully alive. He is left with nothing but an abstract, deistic conception of God or, as compensation, in a pantheistic way, he incorporates the life of the world into the Divine essence. Without the Trinity, creation cannot be understood; if God cannot communicate Himself, then He is a dark light, a dry fountain, and how could He communicate Himself ad extra, to creatures? But still, that generation is to be understood in a Divine way. Therefore, it is primarily spiritual. The Arians particularly objected to it, arguing that all generation necessarily entails separation, division, parturition, and now also, suffering, exhaustion. That would be so if it were bodily, sensual, creaturely. But it is spiritual and Divine, and therefore simple, without division or separation; it occurs indivisibly and immutably. It brings distinction and distribution, but no diversity and division in the Divine Essence. "For God, being without parts, is also without suffering or exhaustion of the Son; nor is there any wounding of His body, nor any breaking up into parts, as occurs with men." Therefore, the generation in God has its most striking analogy in thinking and speaking; and Scripture itself points to this when it calls the Son the Logos. Just as the human spirit objectifies itself in the word, so God in the Logos communicates His entire Essence. But even here, there is distinction. Man needs many words to express his thought; those words are sounds and therefore sensual and material; they are unsubstantial and have no permanence in themselves. But when God speaks, He speaks in the one Logos, expressing His entire Essence and giving Him life in Himself. Secondly, therefore, generation implies that the Father begets the Son ek thēs ousias tou patros, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father, as established at Nicaea. The Arians taught that the Son was

brought forth from nothing by the will of the Father. But this was not generation but creation. Creating is making something exist and exist in the way that the creator and maker make it, dissimilar to them in every way and in essence; but generation is the one who is begotten being brought forth by the essence of the one who begets, like in essence. The Son is not a creature but is to be praised as God forever, Rom. 9:5. And therefore, He was not brought forth by the will of the Father, from nothing and in time. But He is begotten from the essence of the Father, in eternity. Generation, therefore, is not an actual work, an energy of the Father, but to the Father belongs a generative nature. This naturally does not mean that generation is an unconscious, involuntary emanation, that it occurs outside the will and power of the Father. It is not an act of a preceding, deciding will, of a preconceived plan, like creation; but it is so naturally to the Father that His will, as a concomitant will, is entirely pleased with it. It is a revelation of His essential nature and therefore also of His knowledge, will, and power and of all His virtues. Thirdly, therefore, generation is also confessed by the Christian church as eternal. The Arians said that the Son was once not, hn pote ote ouk ēn, they appealed mainly to the creation, ektisis, of Proverbs 8:22, and pointed to the antinomy that exists between the concepts of eternal, aiōnios, and generation, gennēsis. But if Father and Son bear these names in a metaphysical sense, as the Scripture undeniably teaches, then thereby generation is also proven to be eternal. If the Son is not eternal, then God is not eternal either; He was then God before He was Father and only later became Father in time. Denying eternal generation not only diminishes the deity of the Son but also that of the Father; it makes Him changeable, deprives Him of His divine nature, robs Him of the eternity of Fatherhood, and leaves unexplained how God can truly and rightly be called Father in time if the basis for this is not eternal in His nature. But that generation is therefore to be understood truly as eternal. It did not end and was

completed in eternity, but it is an eternal, unchanging, and therefore simultaneously eternally completed and eternally ongoing act of God. Just as the sun radiates light, and the fountain flows water, so generation is inherent in the nature of the Father. The Father was never and is never without generation. He always begets. "The Father did not beget the Son and then disown Him, nor did the Father, after begetting Him, reject Him from His own substance, but He always begets Him." God's begetting is speaking, and His speaking is eternal, "God's begetting is eternal."

The third Person in the Trinity bears the name of the Holy Spirit, and His personal property is the ekporeusiv, pneuma, procession, spiration. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit has always been treated in Christian theology as a consequence of the doctrine of the Son. With the second Person, the struggle was almost exclusively over His divinity; His personality was generally accepted. But with the Holy Spirit, the struggle was mainly over His personality; if this was acknowledged, His divinity naturally followed; just as with the divinity of the Son, so must that of the Holy Spirit be accepted. However, the Pneumatomachians of earlier and later times brought various objections against the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit. They argued that the Name God is never attributed to the Holy Spirit in Scripture, that there is no mention of His worship anywhere, and that He is repeatedly presented as a power and a gift from God; the few passages that speak of Him as a Person had to be understood as personifications. Now Gregory of Nazianzus explained the great difference of opinion that existed in his time about the Holy Spirit by saying that the Old Testament had clearly revealed the Father but less clearly the Son, and that the New Testament had indeed set forth the divine nature of the Son in clear light but had only obscurely indicated the divinity of the Holy Spirit. But now the Holy Spirit dwells among us and makes Himself known to us.

Therein lies an undeniable truth. The personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit are not as objectively distant from us as those of the Father and the Son. The Name He bears does not express that Personality, as does that of Father and Son. The economy of the Holy Spirit, namely sanctification, is not as clearly delineated for us as that of creation, incarnation, and atonement. We live in that economy ourselves; the Holy Spirit dwells in us and among us, and therefore prayer is directed less to Him than to the Father and the Mediator. He is much more the Author than the object of prayer. Therefore, the personality or at least the divinity of the Holy Spirit was disputed in the church for a long time. The religious importance of this doctrine was not felt in the early days. The Spirit was usually acknowledged in His personality but only considered as the Spirit who had done His work in the past, who had enlightened the prophets and apostles, and who had equipped and empowered Christ for His ministry. The necessity of internal grace was not yet understood; there was still no conscious, lively need for an almighty, divine operation of grace in the heart; the mystical union, the communion between God and man, was not yet sounded in its depth; the objective revelation of God in Christ seemed sufficient, and a subjective illumination was not yet considered necessary. However, as soon as the church contemplated more deeply its own life and tried to understand not only the objective but also the subjective principles of salvation, it joyfully confessed the Personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit. And so it has continued through all ages. The denial of the Personal existence and divine nature of the Holy Spirit always arises consciously or unconsciously from a rationalistic, Pelagian, deistic principle; it belongs in the circle of the Arians, Socinians, Remonstrants, etc.

This immediately shows that the confession of the Personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit did not arise from philosophy but from the

heart of Christian religion itself, from the faith of the church. There is, as with the Deity of the Son, a deep religious significance to it, it is connected with the Christian religion itself. This is undoubtedly established on the basis of Scripture, that the Holy Spirit is the subjective principle of all salvation, of regeneration, faith, conversion, sanctification, etc., in other words, there is no communion with the Father and the Son except in and through the Holy Spirit. And now one of two things: either the Holy Spirit is a creature, whether a power, a gift, a person, or truly God. If He is a creature, then He cannot make us partakers of the truth of God Himself, the Father and the Son with all their benefits; then He cannot be the principle of new life in the Christian and in the whole church; then there is no true communion of God and humanity, then God remains above and outside us, and He does not dwell in humanity as in His temple. But the Holy Spirit is not and cannot be a creature. For He stands in the same relationship to the Son as the Son does to the Father, and He makes us partakers of the Son and the Father. He is as closely connected to the Son as the Son is to the Father. He is in the Son, and the Son is in Him. He is the same essence with the Son. He is the Spirit of wisdom and truth, the power and the glory, the Spirit through whom Christ sanctifies the church and in whom He makes her partake of Himself and all His benefits, the true nature, the adoption, the mystical union with God. He who gives us God Himself must Himself truly be God.

To this soteriological significance is added the theological meaning of the Personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit. Without this, there is no true Unity of Father and Son; whoever denies the Deity of the Holy Spirit cannot maintain that of the Son; only in the Divine Person of the Holy Spirit does the Trinity come to a close, does the Unity of Essence in the Trinity of Persons and the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of Essence come into being. With the Deity of the Holy Spirit,

the entire dogma of the Trinity stands or falls, the mystery of Christianity, the heart of religion, the true, essential communion of our souls with God. This was understood by the church fathers, and therefore, along with defending the Deity of the Son, they defended that of the Spirit. The Nicene Creed expressed the faith in "the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke through the prophets." And since then, the whole Christian world confesses its faith in the consubstantial Trinity.

The relationship in which the Holy Spirit stands to the Father and the Son is somewhat revealed by His name, the Holy Spirit, as well as by many verbs such as given, sent, poured out, breathed, proceeding, descending, etc. Christian theology has described it as probolh, ekporeusiv, ekfoithsiv, proienai, prokuptein, proceisyai, processio, spiratio, and so forth. It was preferably thought of as a breath, spiratio. Scripture provided grounds for this, as when it called the Holy Spirit wind, pneuma, and often compared Him to breath and wind, Ps. 33:6, Job 33:4, John 3:8, 20:22, Acts 2:2, etc. However, theology exercised modesty in the description of inspiration. Like generation, it had to be thought of as the eternal communication of the same essence; it also had to be distinguished from generation, because generation gave life in itself to the Son and spiration to the Holy Spirit, but people felt the difficulty of further specifications. Augustine said: "But who can explain the difference between being born and proceeding, speaking of that most excellent nature? Not everything that proceeds is born; although everything that is born proceeds. Just as not everything that is bipedal is human, even though everything that is human is bipedal. This much I know. But to distinguish between that generation and this procession, I neither know nor am able to do so." Yet, some distinction was sought. And it was found either in the fact that the Son went forth only from the

Father, but the Holy Spirit from both, or in the fact that He proceeded from the Father and the Son as given, not as born. Especially, it was pointed out that the Holy Spirit could not be the Son of the Son, because then the triad would become an infinite plurality, and there would be no end to the vital movement in the Being of God. The Holy Spirit completes the blessed triad. The trinity is not susceptible to increase or decrease; it is perfect. Augustine once responded to the objection of the Arians, that if only the Father could generate a Son by whom all things were created, then the Father must be more powerful than the Son: "But God forbid that the Father is more powerful than the Son because the Father begot the creator, and the Son did not beget the creator. For it was not that He could not, but that He did not have to." But how this is to be understood is clarified in the following: "For the divine generation would be immoderate if the begotten Son were to beget a grandson to the Father...and the series of generation would not be fulfilled if one always were to be born from another, nor would anyone complete it if one were not sufficient." However, in that essence of the Trinity, in no way can any other person exist from the same essence. Finally, especially by Thomas Aquinas and his followers, the distinction between generation and spiration was thus indicated: generation occurred by way of intellect, and spiration by way of will. This distinction had long been prepared by comparing generation to thinking and speaking, and presenting the Holy Spirit as the love that binds the Father and the Son together. In medieval and Roman theology, this distinction was almost universal. Protestant theologians all accepted a certain distinction between generation and spiration, as well as between Son and Spirit; they partly recognized the correctness of the above-mentioned distinctions; but many were not so confident in speaking here and did not consider these distinctions scriptural and modest enough.

Distinctions Between East and West

However, gradually, a significant difference between the East and the West developed in the doctrine of the Trinity. The ontological procession of the Son from the Father was understood in the second century as an eternal generation; and similarly, for the Holy Spirit, who could not remain separate from the Father and the Son, a similar procession had to be assumed. The relationship of the Spirit to the Father and the Son had to be established. Athanasius taught in this regard that the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of both the Father and the Son or of Christ, possessing the same idiothv, taxiv, and fusiv in relation to the Son as the Son does to the Father. He is said to proceed from the Father, ekporeuesyai, because He is sent and given from the Logos, para tou logou, who is from the Father. As the procession of the Father, the Holy Spirit is always in the hands of the Father, who sends Him, and the Son, who bears Him, and cannot be separated from Him. He is not the brother or son of the Son, but is the Spirit of the Father, just as the Son is the son of the Father. But although He is not called Son, He is not separate from the Son, for He is called the Spirit of wisdom and of sonship; if we have the Spirit, we have the Son, and vice versa. However, why one is called Son and the other Spirit is incomprehensible, but so teaches the Scripture. He is united with the Son, as the Son is with the Father. Thus, Athanasius very clearly teaches a dependence of the Spirit on the Son but does not explicitly state that He proceeds from the Father and the Son. The three Cappadocians speak in the same spirit; they clearly teach that the Holy Spirit stands to the Son as the Son to the Father, that He follows the Son in order, that the Spirit gives us the Son and the Father, that He proceeds from the Father

and is thought of after and with the Son, that He is from the Father through the Son, and that only the proper distinction gives each of the Three Persons their own Name; but the procession of the Spirit from the Son is not explicitly stated by any of them. It cannot be said that this was denied or contested by them, for this question had not yet arisen. Hence, expressions are found in Gregory of Nyssa, Epiphanius, Didymus, Cyril, and others, which seem to teach the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Son. They use the prepositions para and ek, say that the Holy Spirit takes everything from Christ, and that Christ is the Source of the Holy Spirit, John 7:38; they state that He is from the Essence of the Father and of the Son and that He is the Image, the mouth, the breath of the Son; they acknowledge that He is the third Person, existing after the Son, and receives everything from the Father through the Son, and so on.

However, the development of the doctrine of the Trinity took a different direction in the East than in the West. Cyril, in opposition to Nestorius, who made Christ dependent on the Holy Spirit and thus reversed the order of the Persons, entirely in accordance with the Greek fathers, taught that the Spirit proceeded from the Father through the Son, dia tou uiou. Similarly, Damascenus says that the Spirit is also the Spirit of the Son because He is revealed and communicated through Him; that He proceeds from the Father through the Son; but he expressly rejects the idea that He is from the Son and has His existence from Him, reducing Son and Spirit to one cause. And this remained the doctrine of the Greek Church. The East adhered to the theology of the fathers. However, the West went further. Tertullian had already begun to derive the Trinity not from the Father but from the Essence of God, and he also said: "I consider the Spirit to come from no other source than from the Father through the Son." Hilary places the Spirit in the same relation to the Son as the Son to the Father, saying that the Spirit proceeds from the

Father and is sent and distributed by the Son, indeed, the Son has authority over Him. But above all, Augustine surpassed the Greek fathers. He conceives of the Three Persons as relations in the one, simple Godhead and therefore had to relate the Spirit not only to the Father but also to the Son. Augustine clearly teaches that the Holy Spirit stands in relation to both the Father and the Son, that He is an ineffable communion of Father and Son. While the names Father and Son express only the reciprocal relationship and not that to the Spirit, our language is too poor for that. Yet, the Spirit is called a gift from the Father and the Son. He has both as a principle; it must be admitted that the Father and the Son are the principle of the Holy Spirit. But these are not two principles, just as the Father, Son, and Spirit are not three principles of creation. No, Father and Son are one principle of the Spirit. The Son also has this, that He also sends forth the Spirit, received from the Father; for the Son can be distinguished from the Father in nothing except that He is the Son. This teaching of the procession of the Holy Spirit is then found after Augustine in the symbol of the Synod of Toledo in 400, in the letter of Leo I to Turribius, in the Athanasian Creed, and in the symbol of the Third Synod of Toledo in 589, which inserted the filioque into the text of the Constantinopolitan Creed. The church and theology in the West followed Augustine and repeatedly defended the filioque against the East, and the Reformation aligned with this position. However, despite all attempts at agreement, the East remained steadfast in its old position, even at the conference of the Old Catholics in Bonn in 1875.

The fruitlessness of all these attempts is all the more remarkable because the difference seems so slight. The Greeks do not teach subordinationism and acknowledge the full homoousia of the Three Persons; they also place the Holy Spirit in a certain relation to Christ, who sends and distributes Him; they also have no objection to saying

that He proceeds from the Father through the Son, dia tou uiou, per filium. Conversely, the Western church has stated that the procession of the Father and the Son should not be understood as emanating from two principles and existing in two spirations, but as from one principle and in one spiration. Pope Leo acknowledged that the inclusion of the expression filioque in the old creed was formally incorrect; even the formula ex patre per filium as such did not pose a problem in the West. And yet, no agreement was reached. The Greeks always retained a great objection that, if the Holy Spirit also proceeded from the Son, there would be two principles, two aitiai, in the Godhead. This points back to another doctrine of God and to another practice of piety. The opposition to the filioque remains in the Greek church as the last vestige of subordinationism. Although the Three Persons are thought of as perfectly one and equal, that unity and equality belong to the Son and the Spirit only from the Father. He is the source and origin of the Godhead. If the Holy Spirit also proceeds from the Son, then the Son stands beside the Father, and the principle of unity is broken and a kind of ditheism is upheld. For the Greeks, the unity of the essence and the root of the Trinity do not lie in the divine nature as such but in the person of the Father. He is the sole aitia. The Three Persons are not three relations in the essence, not a self-unfolding of the Godhead, but it is the Father who communicates His essence to the Son and the Spirit. But from this follows that the Son and the Spirit now also stand beside each other, and both in the same way have their aitia, their principle, in the Father. In both, the Father reveals Himself. The Son makes Him known, the Spirit enables enjoyment of Him. The Son does not reveal the Father through the Spirit, nor does the Spirit lead to the Father through the Son. But both are to some extent independent; both open a way to the Father. Orthodoxy and mysticism, intellect and will, stand dualistically side by side. And this peculiar relationship between orthodoxy and mysticism is the hallmark of Greek piety.

Doctrine stands outside, above life; it serves only the head; it is a suitable object for theological speculation. In addition, there is another source for life in the mysticism of the Spirit; it does not spring from knowledge but has its own origin, and nurtures the soul. Head and heart are not in the right relationship; conception and emotion are separated; ethical connection is lacking.

The Economic Trinity

These immanent relations of the Three Persons in the Divine Being also manifest outwardly in their revelations and works. Indeed, all opera ad extra are commonly owned by the Three Persons. Opera Deitatis ad extra sunt indivisa, servato ordine et discrimine personarum. It is always the same God who acts in creation and re-creation. Yet, in this unity, the order of the three Persons is preserved. The ontological Trinity reflects itself in the economic Trinity. Therefore, particular attributes and works are attributed to each of the three Persons, not to the exclusion of the other two Persons, as Abelard believed, but so that the order existing among the Persons in the ontological Trinity is manifested therein. These attributes are thus not propriae but appropriatae, and this is consistent with Holy Scripture. Citing Mt. 28:19 and 1Cor. 8:6, Hilary states that the Father is the auctor, from Whom everything is; the Son, the Only Begotten, through Whom everything is; and the Holy Spirit is a gift to all. Therefore, there is one power, one Son, one gift. Nothing is lacking in this perfection. In the Father is eternity, in the Son is the species in image, in the Spirit is the use in gift. Hilary attributes these characteristics to the three persons because the Father is the arch and without a beginning; the Son is the image of

the Father, who reveals Him in His glory; the Holy Spirit is a gift from the Father and the Son, who makes us partakers of communion with God. Augustine raised some objections against this and expressed the distinction differently: in the Father unity, in the Son equality, in the Holy Spirit the concord of unity and equality; and these three are one in all things because of the Father, equal in all things because of the Son, united in all things because of the Holy Spirit. Augustine further elaborated on this distinction in his work De Trinitate. Here, he attributes power to the Father, wisdom to the Son, and goodness or love to the Holy Spirit. However, this should not be understood as if the Father became wise and good through the wisdom of the Son and the goodness of the Holy Spirit. For the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit all share the same divine nature and the same divine attributes. Nevertheless, it is permissible to attribute the mentioned attributes to the three Persons in an economic sense. Later theologians adopted this distinction as well.

This corresponds to an economic distinction in the opera ad extra. Although these are all works of being, each of the three Persons assumes the place that corresponds to the order of His existence in the Divine Being. The Father works from Himself through the Son in the Spirit. Holy Scripture clearly indicates this distinction in the so-called distinctive prepositions ek, dia, and en, as seen in 1Cor. 8:6 and Joh. 1:3,14. The frequently cited text Rom. 11:36 is not trinitarian in division, and Col. 1:16 is only seemingly in conflict with this use of prepositions. This distinction, which Scripture makes between the three Persons, was recognized early on and emphasized. Athanasius frequently refers to Eph. 4:6, stating that God as Father is above all, as Son through all, and as Spirit in all, and that the Father creates and recreates all things through the Son in the Spirit. Basil was accused because in his prayer he sometimes thanked the Father meta tou uiou sun tw pneumati tw agiw and then again dia

tou uiou and tw agiw pneumati. In his work "De Spiritu Sancto," he defends the first expression, stating that the Son and the Spirit are one Being with the Father and therefore must receive the same honor and speaks extensively about the distinction of the prepositions. Against the Arians, he argues that the unequal prepositions do not prove the inequality of the Persons but indicate a specific order in their existence and activity. The Father is the prokatarkric cause, the Son is the demiurgic cause, the Spirit is the teleiwtic cause. This same distinction reappears in all later theologians.

All outward works of God have one principium, namely, God, but they are brought about through the cooperation of the three Persons, who occupy a distinct place and fulfill a unique task in both the works of creation and those of redemption and sanctification. Everything originates from the Father, is accomplished by the Son, and perfected in the Holy Spirit. Indeed, to a certain extent, the outward works are also divided among the three Persons. Gregory of Nazianzus explained, as mentioned earlier, the great difference of opinion about the Holy Spirit in his time by stating that the Spirit first made Himself known through His indwelling in the church. Much abuse has been made of the truth expressed by Gregory, due to various forms of pantheism. From Montanus to Hegel, the idea emerged repeatedly that the three Persons represented three successive periods in the history of the church. Consequently, the economic Trinity was detached from its metaphysical foundation, God's Being was drawn into the stream of becoming, and cosmogony was transformed into theogony. The struggle of the fathers was precisely to banish this paganistic, pantheistic element from Christian theology, to detach God as the Being from the evolution of becoming, and therefore to conceive of the Trinity as an eternal life movement within the Divine Being itself. Gregorius of Nazianzus does not teach in the aforementioned words that the Godhead of the

Son and the Holy Spirit became so later; he endeavors to prove both as decisively as possible from Scripture. But in His self-revelation, God did consider the capacity of humans. It was dangerous, as Gregorius says, to teach about the Godhead of the Son while the Godhead of the Father was not yet acknowledged, and to impose on us the Godhead of the Holy Spirit while that of the Son was not yet confessed. He did not want to overwhelm us with food or blind our eyes with the full light of the sun. All outward works, creation, maintenance, governance, incarnation, atonement, renewal, sanctification, etc., are works of the entire Trinity. Nevertheless, in an economic sense, creation is attributed more specifically to the Father, redemption to the Son, and sanctification to the Holy Spirit. Just as in the ontological Trinity, the Father is first in order, and the Son is second, and the Holy Spirit is third; so also in the history of revelation, the Father preceded the Son, and the Son, in turn, preceded the Holy Spirit. The economy of the Father was especially that of the Old Testament (Heb. 1:1); the economy of the Son began with the incarnation, and the economy of the Holy Spirit commenced with Pentecost (John 7:39, 14:15). The Father comes from Himself, but the Son comes only sent by the Father (Mt. 10:40, Mk. 9:37, Luk. 9:48, John 3:16, 5:23,30,37, 6:8, etc.), and again, the Holy Spirit comes only sent by both (John 14:26, 16:7,12).

But this mission in time is a reflection of the immanent relation of the three Persons in the Being of God and has its foundation in generation and spiration. The incarnation of the Word has its eternal archetype in the generation of the Son, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is a weak analogy of the procession from the Father and the Son. Therefore, the church fathers rightly concluded from the relations that appeared between the three Persons in time, to their eternal immanent relations. And this is entirely correct. For, as Augustine says, the Son cannot be called sent because He became

flesh, but He is and is called sent, so that He might become flesh. For the Father did not speak a word in time that the eternal Son would be sent. Sed utique in ipso Dei verbo quod erat in principio apud Deum et Deus erat, in ipsa scilicet sapientia Dei sine tempore erat, quo tempore illam in carne apparere oporteret. Itaque cum sine ullo initio temporis in principio esset verbum, et verbum esset apud Deum et Deus esset verbum; sine ullo tempore in ipso verbo erat, quo tempore verbum caro fieret et habitaret in nobis. Quae plenitudo temporis cum venisset, misit Deus filium suum, factum ex muliere, id est, factum in tempore, ut incarnatum verbum hominibus appareret, quod in ipso verbo sine tempore erat, in quo tempore fieret. Ordo quippe temporum in aeterna Dei sapientia sine tempore est. Cum itaque hoc a patre et filio factum esset, ut in carne filius appareret, congruenter dictus est missus ille qui in ea carne apparuit, misisse autem ille qui in ea non apparuit. Quoniam illa quae coram corporeis oculis foris geruntur, ab interiore apparatu naturae spiritalis existunt; propterea convenienter missa dicuntur. And the same applies to the sending of the Holy Spirit. Facta est enim quaedam creaturae species ex tempore in qua visibiliter ostenderetur spiritus santus....Haec operatio visibiliter expressa et oculis oblata mortalibus missio Spiritus Sancti dicta est, non ut ita appareret ejus ipsa substantia, qua et ipse invisibilis et incommutabilis est sicut pater et filius, sed ut exterioribus visis hominum corda commota atemporali manifestatione venientis ad occultam aeternitatem semper praesentis converterentur. The Holy Spirit was already a gift before He was given to anyone. Quia sic procedebat ut esset donabile, jam donum erat et antequam esset cui daretur. Aliter enim intelligitur cum dicitur donum, aliter cum dicitur donatum. Nam donum potest esse et antequam detur, donatum autem nisi datum fuerit, nullo modo dici potest. The sending in time is thus closely related to the eternal procession in the Divine Being. And while now the Son and the Spirit have appeared in the incarnation and

outpouring under visible form, their mission is completed in their invisible coming into the hearts of all believers, in the church of the Son, in the temple of the Holy Spirit. The Son and the Spirit have eternally proceeded from the Father, so that He Himself would come through and in Them to His people, and ultimately God would be all in all.

Analogies of the Trinity

The doctrine of the Trinity surpasses human understanding to such an extent that from the beginning, efforts were made to elucidate it through images or prove it through reasoning. Firstly, it was remarkable that the number three had such a rich and deep meaning in Scripture. There is mention of three parts of creation: heaven, earth, and what is under the earth; three groups of people according to the three sons of Noah; three dispensations of the covenant of grace, before, during, and after the law; three patriarchs; three parts of the Tabernacle; three main feasts; three divisions of the Old Testament; three years of Jesus' public ministry; three offices; three days from Jesus' burial to resurrection; three crosses on Golgotha; three languages in the inscription above Jesus' cross; three beloved disciples; three witnesses; 1 John 5:8; three Christian virtues; three types of lust; 1 John 2:16; three woes, Rev. 8:13, and so forth, a triple blessing; a triple action in bending down, blessing; a three-day fast, three prayer times a day, etc. But not only in Scripture does the number three occupy such a prominent place, but also outside of it, this number holds great significance. For Christian trinitarian doctrine, analogies were sought not only in intermediary beings that gradually emerged in Jewish theology, and the three Sefiroth, rtk,

hmnx, and hnyb, spoken of in the Kabbalah. But traces and indications of the Trinity were also found in the Hindu Trimurti, Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva; in the three forms of Chinese Tao; in the three main Germanic gods, Odin, Thor, and Loki; and in other Chaldean, Egyptian, and Greek representations of the gods. In particular, certain emphasis was placed on a statement by Hermes Trismegistus and on the three principles that Plato accepted to explain the world, the highest nous (being, the good), the world of ideas, and the matter. But all these analogies are polytheistic and therefore difficult to compare with Christian trinitarian doctrine.

Of greater value are the physical analogies that have been sought in nature. Justin Martyr, following Philo, used the image of fire, which, when igniting another, remains the same. Tertullian said that God produced the Logos, sicut radix fruticem et fons fluvium et sol radium, and spoke of source, stream, and river, of root, stem, and crown, etc. These images recurred in later church fathers and theologians and were expanded and elaborated upon. The more one reflected on everything, the more it became apparent that everything existed in threes. Space with its three dimensions; time with its three moments; nature with its three kingdoms; the world of matter, spirit, and their combination in man; bodies in their solid, liquid, and gaseous states; the forces of attraction, repulsion, and their equilibrium; the three functions of the human soul, the rational, the emotional, and the volitional, or the three faculties, head, heart, and hand; the three factors of the household, husband, wife, and child; the three classes in society, the learning, the fighting, and the nourishing classes; the three ideal goods of the true, the good, and the beautiful; the triad in music, consisting of the tonic with its third and fifth; the rainbow and its many colors; the sun with its vigor, splendor, warmth, its life-giving, illuminating, and heating power; the three primary colors, yellow, red, and blue, and so forth, have

been used in earlier and later times as analogies of the Christian Trinity. Higher still are the logical analogies that have been discovered. Augustine repeatedly points out that everything must, in the first place, have unity, one essence, unity, a measure, esse, unitas, mensura, modus; secondly, it must have a certain form, species, to be something specific and distinct from other things; and finally, there must be a certain relationship and harmony between the general and the particular. Substance, form or beauty, and harmony between them or love are the basic forms and elements of all existence. Omne quod est, aliud est quo constat, aliud quo discernitur, aliud quo congruit.

Medieval theology elaborated on this in various ways and sought to identify a triad everywhere. It found an analogy to the Trinity in the trivium of grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric; in the three philosophical disciplines, logic, physics, and ethics; in the three persons of grammar; in the active, passive, and middle voice; in the singular, dual, and plural; in the three primary vowels and in the triliteral roots of the Hebrew language; in the dispositio, elocutio, and actio of rhetoric; in the definition, division, and argumentation of dialectic; in the three forms of poetry, epic, lyric, and drama; in the three stages of mysticism, cogitatio, meditatio, contemplatio or faith, reason, contemplation, or via purgativa, illuminativa, unitiva, etc. Dionysius the Areopagite structured his celestial hierarchy, and Dante his Divine Comedy, according to this triad. In modern philosophy, the triad has come to formal dominance. According to Hegel, Kant, as if by instinct, rediscovered triplicity and schematized accordingly the organs of knowledge, the faculties of the soul, the categories, the ideas of reason, etc. But it was only in the idealistic philosophy derived from Kant by Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel that this triplicity became a dialectical method. Idealism seeks to understand things as a product of consciousness, as an unfolding of

the idea. Therefore, the idea must be conceived as living, moving, and producing. This can only happen if it is always in contradiction between what it is and what it does, and then resolves and reconciles this contradiction in a third. The law of contradiction is the essence of spirit. Thus, the idea progresses through its unfoldings and developments through the moments of position, negation, limitation, thesis, antithesis, synthesis, being-in-itself, for-itself, being-for-itself. The whole world develops in the "Schema of Triunities." Logic, with its doctrine of being, essence, and concept, considers Spirit in itself; natural philosophy, in the three forms of mechanics, physics, and organics, deals with Spirit for itself, the spirit in its otherness, in its self-alienation; philosophy of mind, with its subjective, objective, and absolute spirit, deals with Spirit in and for itself, the spirit in its return to itself, in its self-awareness. Through the influence of this philosophy, triplicity became the basis of many philosophical and theological systems.

However, it was not enough merely to discover analogies for the Trinity in various ways; attempts were also made to positively prove it, either deducing it from the essence of thought or from that of love as necessary. The doctrine of the Logos, both in Scripture and in Greek philosophy, unintentionally and naturally presented an image in human thought and speech of the Trinitarian process in the Divine Being. Justin Martyr, Tatian, Tertullian, Lactantius, and others make use of this comparison. Athanasius and the Cappadocians repeatedly presented generation as God's self-knowledge in His Image, as an eternal speaking of a word; Father and Son are joined as nous and logos. But especially Augustine found clear traces of the Trinity in the internal, rational human being. And he found them in various ways and directions.

First, he found them in the triad of esse, nosse, and velle; essentia, scientia, amor; mens, notitia, amor. Then he discovered traces of it in the faculties of the soul, particularly in sensory perception, which comes about through an object, the thing itself, through an image of it in the eye, vision, and the intention of the mind, which directs the sense organ to the object; and this trinity remains even when the object disappears, for then an image of it is preserved in memory, external observation gives way to internal vision, and the will remains, which unites both. However, Augustine finds the greatest resemblance to the Trinity in the self-knowledge of the human spirit. He usually calls the trinity he finds here by the names mens, notitia, amor (dilectio), or memoria, intelligentia, voluntas. First, the spirit is memoria, i.e., consciousness both of other things and of itself; there is consciousness, a scientia that is not yet actual knowledge; in the spirit as memoria lie many notitia, also of itself; someone can know something, even if they are not currently thinking about it. But from this spirit as memoria, from the scientia preserved in memoria, is produced by cogitatio, by thinking, knowing, intelligentia. In this intelligentia, the spirit forms an adequate image of itself, understands, knows, and contemplates itself. So when the mind observes itself in thought, it understands and recognizes itself. And this self-knowledge and self-contemplation is a production: therefore, it generates this understanding and its knowledge. And these two are united by the will or love. But generating these two and the generated by love, they are united by a third, which is nothing other than the will desiring or holding something to enjoy. Thus, Augustine is deeply convinced that all creatures, as works of the Triune God, also show traces or indications of the Trinity to a greater or lesser degree. Above all, he seeks an image of the Trinity in man, created in the image of the triune God. The entire creation was a mirror of God for Augustine. In various ways, he tries to demonstrate the similarity between the trinitas he discovers in creatures,

especially in man, and the trinitas in the Divine Being. The triad exists in both in that all three are one and equal, that each of the three is in the other two, and these again in the one, and thus all things are in all. However, he does not conceal that all these comparisons are only analogies and images, and that there is a very great difference in the resemblance. Thus, the trinitas in man is not man himself but something in or to man, while in God the Trinity He Himself is, and the three Persons are the one God. Memory, intelligence, and love are in man only powers, but in the Divine Being, there are three subjects. In man, those three powers are often unequal and serve to complement each other, but in the Divine Being, there is perfect Unity and equality of Persons. Augustine did not intend, with these analogies and images, to prove the Trinity a priori; he started from faith, he accepted them on the basis of God's Word; he only tried to point them out in the whole of nature and clarify them by thinking. The first seven books of his work On the Trinity are mainly devoted to proofs from Scripture; and only in the last eight books does he seek to confirm them from nature and man. And finally, he added that this trinity in the human mind could indeed be observed by everyone, but could only be recognized by the believer as an image of the triune God. It is indeed essentially inherent in the human spirit and is not eradicated by sin, but it is obscured and renewed by faith as man learns to remember, understand, and love God again. And we will only become His Image completely when we will see Him face to face. There our being will have no death, our knowing no error, our loving no offense. This proof of the Trinity from thought has been adopted by many. But in connection with this proof of the Trinity from thought, Augustine also employs another, namely, from love. He starts from the Scripture's statement: God is love, and shows that there is always a trinity in love, lover and what is loved and love itself. Indeed, you see the Trinity if you see love.

This speculation has also been followed by many, especially by Richard of St. Victor. The fullness of the divine love, as well as that of divine goodness, blessedness, and glory, demands a plurality of persons in the Divine Being because love desires an object, one that is like the loving one. But this love is complete only when both the lover and the beloved include a third in their mutual love and are reciprocally loved by him. We find the same reasoning in Bonaventure and in many others in modern times.

The church and theology generally maintained a very reserved attitude toward these philosophical constructions of the doctrine of the Trinity. At most, they were willing to consider posteriori proofs for the Trinity in order to elucidate the dogma, but even then, many warned against attempting to find support for this doctrine in reason. More than any other, the dogma of the Trinity was a mystery that far exceeded both nature and reason and could only be known through special revelation. Like Augustine, Thomas Aquinas acknowledged vestiges of the Trinity in creation and attempted to elucidate them through reasoning. However, he explicitly stated that the Trinity was not knowable through reason because creation is a work of the entire Trinity and thus demonstrates the Unity of Being but not the distinction of Persons. "But whoever attempts to prove the Trinity of persons by natural reason, detracts from faith in two ways: first, by diminishing the dignity of faith, which has only invisible things as its object, and secondly, by leading others away from the faith, when they begin to think that our faith rests on such weak grounds." Calvin saw little benefit in the analogies and proofs brought from nature and humanity for the Trinity. And many Reformed and Lutheran theologians judged similarly.

Special Revelation and the Trinity

Undoubtedly, in response to all those who seek to ground the doctrine of the Trinity on rational grounds, it must be maintained that the knowledge of this doctrine is solely due to God's special revelation. Scripture is the only and final basis for the doctrine of the Trinity; reason can at most, posteriori, somewhat elucidate this doctrine through thought. Nevertheless, the arguments brought forth to clarify the dogma of the Trinity are not entirely devoid of value. Firstly, Scripture itself allows us this freedom when it says that the entire creation, especially humanity, is a work of the Triune God. Certainly, all God's works outwardly are undivided and characteristic of all three Persons: in these works, the Unity of God is emphasized much more than the distinction of Persons. However, in that Unity, diversity cannot be absent. And Scripture itself indicates this by stating that all creatures bear traces, and humans will display the image of the Trinity. Despite the fact that sin objectively veils the revelation of God in His works and subjectively dims our vision, it cannot be denied a priori that the enlightened understanding, through revelation, can discern traces of that God who, in Scripture, is known as Triune in His manner of existence and operation. Furthermore, all these reasonings are undoubtedly not capable of proving the dogma of the Trinity. None of them can or should be the basis of our faith. We would abandon truth to the mockery of our opponents if we accepted it on such weak grounds as our reason can provide. But these reasonings are nevertheless capable of refuting various objections raised against the dogma; they have the power to demonstrate that what revelation teaches is neither impossible nor unreasonable; and they are able to argue that the faith of opponents is inadequate and inconsistent with reason itself. The doctrine of the Trinity is not as absurd as it appeared to superficial rationalism of

earlier and later times. It has not been overturned by a calculation that one cannot be three and three cannot be one. Rather, philosophy has repeatedly returned to the doctrine of the Trinity, even in this century, and has at least somewhat recognized its rich meaning and deep significance. Finally, these reasonings uncover and preserve the connection between nature and grace, between creation and recreation. It is the same God who creates and sustains us and who recreates us in His image. Grace indeed transcends nature but is not at odds with it. Restoring what has been corrupted by sin, grace also illuminates and perfects what remains of God's revelation within it. Reflective reason places the doctrine of the Trinity in the midst of the rich life of nature and humanity. The confession of the Christian faith is not an island in the ocean but a high mountain peak from which the whole creation is surveyed. And it is the task of the Christian theologian to clearly highlight God's revelation in its connection with and significance for all of life. Christian thought remains unsatisfied until all being is traced back to the Triune God, and the confession of the Trinity of God is placed at the center of our thought and life. The analogies and proofs brought forth for the Trinity do not serve to demonstrate the dogma, but they serve primarily to demonstrate the manifold utility and rich significance contained in this confession for the life and knowledge of creatures. Ultimately, they are born not out of a desire for empty speculation and inappropriate curiosity but out of a deep religious concern. If God is Triune, then that must be of the highest significance because it is only from, through, and to God that all things exist.

For the time being, the Trinity reveals to us God as the truly Living One. Already by the church fathers it was observed that the error of deism and pantheism, of monism and polytheism, was avoided by the Trinity, and the truth hidden in all those ideas about God was included in the Trinity. Deism digs a gulf between God and His

creature, abolishes their relationship, and holds for God nothing but an abstract Unity, a pure being, a monotonous and uniform existence, it satisfies neither the head nor the heart, it is the death of religion. Pantheism brings us closer to God but makes Him equal to the creature, erases the boundary line between Creator and creature, deprives Him of His own Being and life, and undermines religion. But the Christian doctrine of the Trinity reveals God as essentially distinct from the world and yet as partaking in its own blessed life. God is a plenitude of being, πληρωματος ουσιαν. He is not barren, ἀγονον. He is the absolute Being, the Eternal, Who is and was and is to come, but in that Being, the Ever-Living, the eternally generating. Attempts have been made to derive the Trinity from the thought and will of God from His love, goodness, perfection, etc. Intended as philosophical constructions of the doctrine of the Trinity, they all leave much to be desired. The construction from thought does not lead to a distinction of Persons, does not clarify the procession of the third Person, and must, with a view to this, pass over to and supplement itself with the construction from the will of God. The derivation of the Trinity from love encounters the same objections and fails to highlight the procession of the Holy Spirit. But it is true that these and all other attributes acquire life and reality through the Trinity. Outside and without it, they are mere names, sounds, empty concepts. As attributes of a Triune God, they begin to live for the head and the heart. It is through understanding them that we learn that God in Himself, even apart from the world, is the independent, the Eternal, the All-Knowing, the All-Good, Love, Holiness, and Glory. The Trinity reveals to us God as the Fullness of His, the true Life, the eternal beauty. In God, too, there is Unity in diversity, diversity in Unity. Yes, this order and harmony are present in Him in an absolute way. In creatures, there is only a weak analogy to this. Either unity or diversity does not come into its own. Creatures exist in space and time, stand beside each other, and do not penetrate

each other. There is unity only through attraction, through will and affection, a moral unity that is breakable and shaky. And where there is deeper, physical unity, for example, between the faculties of one substance, there is lack of independence, and unity takes distinction back into itself. But in God, both are present; absolute Unity and absolute diversity. It is the same Being, borne by Three supposita. Here is the highest communion, the communion of the same Beings, and at the same time the highest diversity, the diversity of Persons. Therefore, if God is Triune, the three Persons cannot be thought of as anything other than homoousioi. Arianism in its various forms does not think of the Being of God and therefore does not satisfy thought. If there are distinctions, not outside but in and within the Divine Being, then these distinctions, that is, these Persons, must all be of the same Being. Nothing can exist in God that is anything else or less than God Himself. There is no transition between Creator and creature. Father, Son, and Spirit all partake of the same Being and are truly God, or they sink down to the creature. There is no third possibility from a Christian standpoint. But in the same way, Sabellianism in its various modes is condemned. For the homoousia of the three Persons has meaning and significance only if they are truly and really distinct from each other, as distinct bearers of the same substance. The diversity of subjects that appear alongside each other in the revelation of God, in creation and recreation, arises from the diversity that exists within the Being of God between the three Persons. There could be no distinction in the Unity externally if it did not exist internally, ad intra.

Secondly, the doctrine of the Trinity is of the utmost importance for the doctrine of creation. This can only be upheld with the confession of a Triune God. Only through this is it possible, on the one hand, to maintain against deism the connection and, on the other hand, against pantheism the distinction between God and the world.

Creation cannot be thought of as mere chance nor as a self-development of the Divine Being. It must have its foundation in God and yet not form a moment in His inner life process. How could both of these be maintained other than by the Trinity of God? God's life is divinely rich; it is fruitful; there is action, production in it. And therefore, the doctrine of the Trinity also speaks of the generation of the Son and the procession of the Holy Spirit. Both of these acts are essentially distinct from creation; they are not immanent relations; the former is an opus ad extra; the latter is not self-sufficient; God does not need creation. He is life, salvation, glory in Himself. But still, creation is closely connected with this fertility of God. Firstly, Athanasius rightly noted that if the Divine Being is barren and cannot communicate itself, there can be no revelation of God outwardly, i.e., no communication of God to and in His creature. The doctrine of the uncommunicability of the Divine Being through generation and procession to Son and Spirit entails that the world stands apart from, outside, and opposite to God. God is then absolutely hidden, abyss, the unconscious, ungrund; the world does not reveal Him; there can be no knowledge of God. On the contrary, the dogma of the Trinity teaches that God can communicate Himself, absolutely to the Son and Spirit, and therefore also relatively to the world. For the communication that takes place within the Divine Being is, according to the thought of Augustine, the pattern, the archetype of God's work in creation. Scripture repeatedly points to the close connection between the Son and Spirit on the one hand, and creation on the other. The designations Father, Son (Word, Wisdom), Spirit indeed indicate immanent relations, but they also reflect the relations present in the works of God externally between the three Persons. From the Father are all things; in the Son lie the ideas of all being; in the Spirit are the principles of all life. The generation and procession in the Divine Being are the immanent acts of God that make creation and revelation of God possible externally.

Finally, it can be explained that all works of God externally are only sufficiently known when their Trinitarian existence is understood. The examples mentioned above are partly very far-fetched and in any case nothing more than analogies. But from Plato's philosophy to von Hartmann, it has always, consciously or unconsciously, returned to a triad of principles or arcai, from which creation as a whole and in its parts could be explained. There is a great truth in the fact that creation shows us everywhere vestiges of the Trinity. And because these vestiges are most clearly seen in man and he can even be called the image of the Trinity, therefore, as it were, he is urged by an immanent impulse everywhere to trace these vestiges. In the triad comes first from the completeness of the creature, the completeness of the system, the harmony of beauty. The higher something stands in the hierarchy of creatures, the more it strives towards the triad. And even in the deviations of man in the religious sphere, there is still something of this effect to be observed. Schelling's attempt to interpret mythology in a Trinitarian way was still something more than a brilliant fantasy.

Thirdly, the Trinity is of the highest importance for the Christian religion. With the confession of God's Trinity, the entire Christianity, the entire special revelation, stands or falls. It is the core of the Christian faith, the root of all dogmas, the substance of the new covenant. From this religious, Christian importance, the development of the church's doctrine of the Trinity has taken its beginning. It was truly not about a metaphysical doctrine or philosophical speculation, but about the heart and essence of the Christian religion itself. This is felt so deeply that all who still value the name of Christian recognize and honor a certain Trinity. In every Christian confession and theology, the deepest question is this: how can God be One and yet threefold? And depending on how this question is answered, the Christian truth is more or less evident in all

parts of the doctrine. In the doctrine of the Trinity, the heart of the entire revelation of God for the redemption of humanity beats. Prepared in the Old Covenant, it therefore becomes clearly evident in Christ. Religion can settle for nothing less than God Himself. In Christ, God comes to us Himself, and in the Holy Spirit, He communicates Himself to us. The work of redemption is thoroughly trinitarian. From, through, and in God are all things. It is one divine work from beginning to end, and yet threefold in distinction; it is concluded by the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Holy Spirit. And accordingly, the Christian's life of faith reflects back on three principles, as the Dutch Confession of Faith states in article 9, that we know the doctrine of the Trinity both from the testimonies of Holy Scripture and from the workings of the three Persons, mainly from the One whom we feel within us. We know ourselves as children of the Father, redeemed by the Son, and in communion with both through the Holy Spirit. All salvation and blessing come to us from the Triune God. In that Name we are baptized; that Name is the sum of our confession; from that Name all blessings descend upon us; to that Name we offer eternal thanks and honor; in that Name we find peace for our hearts, peace for our consciences. The Christian has God above, before, and within. Therefore, salvation in this and the coming life is connected to the doctrine of the Trinity, even though we cannot determine the extent of knowledge required for a sincere faith in this mystery.

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