Season and Revelation in Early Christian Thought 
the Synthetic Use of the Term Logos in Justin the 
Martyr and Greek Apologetic Literature

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REASON AND REVELATION IN EARLY CHRISTIAN THOUGHT: 
THE SYNTHETIC USE OF THE TERM LOGOS 
IN JUSTIN THE MARTYR AND 
GREEK APOLOGETIC LITERATURE

by 
Rick M. Rogers

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate college
in partial fulfillment
of the
Degree of Master of Arts

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
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REASON AND REVELATION IN EARLY CHRISTIAN
THOUGHT: THE SYNTHETIC USE OF THE TERM LOGOS
IN JUSTIN THE MARTYR AND GREEK APOLOGETIC
LITERATURE.

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY, M.A., 1979

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PREFACE

The subject of this study has concerned me for sometime. There is a very old theory which claims that there are two realms of existence, each legitimate and real within the cosmos. This theory has been called a two-realmed principium because of its foundational character in Western thought. In the Christian tradition this theory was absorbed and translated into a variety of dichotomies: church/state, secular/sacred, nature/grace, natural/spiritual, creation/redemption, body/soul and reason/faith.

I found the last of these dichotomies particularly intriguing due to my suspicion of rationalistic propositionalism. This doctrine--prevalent in my theological circles--claims that the Scripture is the Word of God because it contains rational verbal statements which are true in and of themselves, or in other words, propositional truths. This doctrine may be traced to the work of Beza, Peter the Martyr (Vermigli) and Zanchius, all of whom tried to render the Word of God more internally consistent through propositional systematizing. However, the deeper derivation is the medieval reason/revelation dichotomy, an epistemological expression of the two-realmed principium.
Through the lectures of H. Evan Runner, it became increasingly clear to me that this two-realmed principium was an unquestioned assumption and must be critiqued via an examination of its origin in the Christian tradition. Therefore, encouraged to question the legitimacy of the two-realmed principium, and armed with a desire to understand how rationalism entered Christian thought, I began to study the Greek apologetic Logos-speculation. A brief panoramic sweep of the literature informed me that I was in the right neighborhood. However, this study must not be considered a strict historical analysis, but rather a challenge to long venerated presuppositions. It is my contention that unless they are continually challenged the ever increasing pool of theories will not be able to provide the much needed support which a healthy culture demands.

I gladly take this opportunity to acknowledge the Medieval Institute for providing an atmosphere where issues of this sort may be raised and pursued. As another has said, it is not easy to question the thoroughly sensible, the thoroughly well intentioned.

For assistance in the reading of the manuscript and for improvements of expression and substance I must give thanks to my advisory committee, Professors Guntram Bischoff, Arthur Falk and Otto Gründler—especially, because there is so much in the present study which they
found perplexing. Nevertheless, the imperfections are patent.

This study was not composed in tranquility of spirit, and therefore, I am indeed thankful for the much needed reassurance and solitude provided by my wife, Pris.
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I  INTRODUCTION

The Purpose and Framework of this Study

The purpose of this study is to isolate the synthetic speculative Logos operative in early Greek apologetic literature in order to determine the religious character of the Logos-speculation and to modestly advance our understanding of synthesis. This study is undertaken primarily in reference to the historical analysis of Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven (cum suis).¹ The following questions serve as directives: 1) What is the nature of the Logos-speculation in early Christian thought? 2) What is the relationship of the Greek philosophical theme of the a priori to the early Christian Logos-speculation? 3) What is the character of the Greek philosophical Logos and of the biblical Logos?

This first chapter features the critique and analysis of Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven. Through careful examination, they have attempted to push through to the ground motives implicit in the various periods of intellectual history, and in light of these motives they have constructed a particular philosophical historiography. Their analysis has led them to the conclusion that the

¹Consult the bibliography under H. Hart, L. Kalsbeek, J. Kraay, K. Popma, H. E. Runner, and B. J. VanDerWalt.
two basic motives of early Christian synthesis are mutually exclusive. For those unfamiliar with their work, conducted over the last half century, and the work of their associates at the Free University of Amsterdam, this section may serve as a very modest introduction.

Having dispensed with the immediate business of this study, that is, the establishment of a perspective for isolating and understanding synthesis in early Christian thought, the second chapter is a sketch of the conceptual development of the term Logos in both Greek speculation and biblical religion. This sketch includes an examination of the two primary elements which make up the epistemological dichotomy of reason and revelation. Because of its historical importance in this connection, Philo's Alexandrian synthesis also receives a measure of attention.

Building upon this conceptual foundation, chapters three and four survey some of the apologetic literature in the second century Greek world which in varying degrees addresses the subject of the Logos. The bulk of this study deals with the synthetic use of the term Logos in the literature of Justin the Martyr. Although some attention has been given to Justin's Logos-speculation, little has been written about its synthetic character.

In addition to the works of Justin, the writings of Tatian the Syrian, Athenagoras of Athens and Theophilus
of Antioch are probed for their uses of the speculative Logos.

An Analysis of Synthesis

There is a problem with the locution known as "synthesis." It possesses a certain ambiguity which can best be explained by the juxtaposition of two contrasting positions. Meyendorff, in his book *Byzantine Theology*, speaks of synthesis in this manner:

The unavoidable necessity of reformulating and rethinking the Christian faith in the light of changing cultural patterns is widely recognized, and the effort of the Greek Fathers to formulate Christianity in the categories of Hellenism can only be viewed as legitimate. Actually, Byzantine theology, as Lossky realized, was nothing but a continuous effort and struggle to express the tradition of the Church in the living categories of Greek thought, so that Hellenism might be converted to Christ.1

It appears from this statement that Meyendorff sees synthesis as the legitimate and necessary bringing together of two structural elements: the healthy cultural patterns of Greek thought and the "religious" tradition of Christianity. The latter, presumably void of any living categories of thought, or at the very least, in need of more suitable ones, is actually to be reformed and then expressed in terms of the former. The ultimate

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motive is the conversion of Hellenism to Christ. It could be said that Meyendorff understands synthesis as a structural matter. In other words, he is implying, through his treatment of Christianity and Hellenism, that meaning is to be found within the mere objective content of both and that this content can be blended in such a way that both are mutually benefited. Such treatments stress "the objective" as that which is true regardless of the particular faiths involved.

However, this usage stands in contrast to the position taken by Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven. A somewhat charismatic version of their views on this matter is set forth by Runner.

(Synthesis) is the attempt to combine the Truth of the Word of God with the constructions of thought that have arisen in the apostate mind....For there are no biblical "elements" apart from the one structure of the Word of God, the Truth. Neither are there any elements of pagan thought that are not "informed" by the deep-seated apostatic principles of total-structuration that distort the whole.1

Runner does not view synthesis as a structural matter at all, but as a problem of directional principles, that is, a problem between biblical (obedient) and unbiblical (disobedient) patterns of thought. Accommodation and mutual adjustment of these principles is an utter impossibility.

Synthesis can be attempted but never consummated. According to this view, God holds creation including man to a structure which is the Truth. Truth, in this sense, is ontic and not epistemological. In the Scripture one reads about God's faithful continuance of His side of the covenant. When Adam, in the story of creation, broke the covenant, he did not break the structure of creation. Rather, he misdirected his life (that is also his response to God or his religion) and in so doing he misdirected the structure of creation. This is what accounts for the distortions of reality and the antinomies in one's view of reality. Indeed, it is the groaning structure itself which testifies that man is guilty of misdirection.

What is suggested in Runner's understanding of synthesis is that "living categories of thought" are common to both Hellenistic and Christian thought by virtue of creation. For example, Aristotle articulated the laws of logic because he was, first of all, a creature capable of such articulation and not merely because he was a Hellenist. Likewise, Christian thought must abide by these laws of logic if it is to be legitimate thought. What is overlooked in most discussions of synthesis is that there are two competing intentions (directions) involved. Actually it is the particular faith of each competitor which governs the direction of the various "living categories of thought" and of culture as a whole.
This unconventional understanding of synthesis led to an analysis with unprecedented results.

Doooyeweerd's analysis uncovered four ground motives operative in Western thought and each of them are to be understood as religious in character. That is, they are distinguishable expressions of what is taken to be ultimate and certain. Because these particular motives acquired a certain amount of socio-cultural power in the history of Western civilization, they were able to govern the development of Western philosophy.²

Doooyeweerd expresses the first of these motives in Aristotelian terminology. He believed that the form(morphē)---matter(hyle) motive was the driving force behind Greek thought in all of its diversity.³ The second fundamental motive was introduced into Western thought by the Christian religion. It is the motive of "the radical and central theme of creation, fall into sin and redemption by Jesus Christ as the incarnate Word of God, in the


²Doooyeweerd, TWT., p. 35.

³L. Kalsbeek, Contours of Christian Philosophy. Edited by B. and J. Zylstra (Toronto: Wedge Publishing Foundation, 1975), pp. 62-66. This is perhaps the best survey of Doooyeweerd's philosophy of the cosmonomic idea to be found in English.
communion of the Holy Spirit."¹ The third motive of Nature and Grace implies a distinction between a natural and a supra-natural sphere of thought and acting.² This scholastic motive was a mutual accommodation of the two previous motives. The attempt at integrating these two motives into a new and all encompassing motive is what Dooyeweerd means by synthetic thought.³ The fourth ground motive of Western thought is called the humanistic or secularistic motive and its two poles are nature and freedom.⁴ From this analysis Dooyeweerd concluded that the general character of all non-scriptural motives, in contrast to the central motive of biblical religion, was dialectical. In other words, "they are intrinsically

¹Dooyeweerd, TWT., pp. 41-42. Cf. TPPT., p. 67.
²Dooyeweerd, TWT., p. 44.
³Synthesis is made up of the thesis and the antithesis, and these refer to the two previous motives in an order depending upon the particular motive which dominates the individual thinker or the tradition on which his judgments are based. For example the Thomistic attempt ascribes primacy to the Grace pole as is clear from the adage: Gratia naturam non tollit, sed perficit. See Dooyeweerd, TWT., p. 45.
⁴"[insert citation]" originates in an insoluble conflict between the religious cult of human personality in its liberty and autonomy, and the desire (stimulated by the religious motive of human liberty and autonomy itself) to dominate reality by modern natural science, which in its classical form seeks to construe it as a rational mechanical and uninterrupted chain of causes and effects. This humanist motive has tried to absorb into itself the three earlier fundamental motives, secularizing the Christian and the Catholic (universalist) motive." From Dooyeweerd, TPPT., p. 73.
divided by an irrevocable religious antithesis, caused by
the fact that they are composed of two central motive
powers, which are polarly in opposition to one another.¹

On the basis of a similar historical analysis,
Vollenhoven developed a philosophical historiography
which would open texts to fundamental insights. He began
by dividing philosophical history into three primary
periods.² The first period covered a span from about
700 B.C. to A.D. 40 and includes Ancient Greek, Hellenis-
tic and Roman philosophy. In one fashion or another the
form-matter motive dominated the theoretical output of
this period. From approximately A.D. 40 up to 1600, the
period which includes both Patristic and Medieval philo-
sophy, the synthetic motive characterized almost all
theorizing. Modern and Contemporary philosophy constitute
the last division and are described as anti-synthetic.³

¹Dooyeweerd, TWT., pp. 35-36. His historical
analysis resulted from the inquiry into the inner struc-
ture of the theoretical attitude of thought, and thus, in
a Kantian fashion; the English title to his monumental
work, A New Critique of Theoretical Thought, translated by
D. H. Freeman and H. De Jongste into four volumes (Phila-

²B. J. Van Der Walt, "Eisegesis-Exegesis, Paradox
and Nature-Grace: Methods of Synthesis in Medieval Philo-
sophy," The Idea of a Christian Philosophy (Toronto:

³New motives never totally supplant the old and yet
they soon dominate most theoretical activity. For this
reason a period can be characterized by the new motive
even though the old is still influential.
Therefore, in Vollenhoven's analysis, the three divisions of historical thought are called pre-synthetic, synthetic and anti-synthetic.

With respect to synthesis, Vollenhoven has observed three distinct methods operating in the Patristic/Medieval period. Van Der Walt lists them as follows:

The method of eisegesis-exegesis reveals an attitude of world conformity. All that was necessary was that the pagan philosophy of Athens should obtain biblical sanction and authority from Jerusalem by an allegorical interpretation of Scripture. The method of paradox advocated an attitude of world flight. Jerusalem had nothing to do with Athens.

The method of nature-supernature [Grace] preached world compromise in an attempt to avoid the extremes. Jerusalem was neither identical to Athens, nor opposed to it, but, as the superior to an inferior realm, it surpassed Athens.¹

The two-realmed theory, assumed in the method of nature-supernature, received its most articulate expression in the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas. Tertullian is perhaps the best exponent of the method of paradox. However, the method of eisegesis-exegesis is foundational for the latter two and is readily observed in both early Patristic and Jewish thought. Its basic contention is that exegesis can never be an absolutely neutral activity where an individual reads a passage and thereby objectively understands its meaning. Indeed, some exegetes exaggerate the

¹Van Der Walt, p. 195.
allusive side of their hermeneutical enterprise in order to justify a pronounced eisegesis. According to Vollenhoven, this sort of eisegetical activity was common in early synthetic thought. Many foreign ideas clashed with biblical revelation and yet they were often read into a particular scriptural account to be later revived as biblically sanctioned.¹ Vollenhoven claims that this method served as the modus operandi for legitimizing an unbiblical Weltanschauung in the name of the Word of God.²

The method of eisegisis-exegesis was closely connected with the speculative Logos-theory of the second-century apologists. Dooyeweerd claims that this Logos-theory actually denaturalized the biblical theme of creation, fall into sin and redemption by Jesus Christ as the incarnate Word of God, in the communion of the Holy Spirit.³ The authentic proponents of this theory stated

¹Van Der Walt, p. 195.

²With respect to this synthetic method the instrument of allegorical interpretation was employed by authors such as Philo of Alexandria and Origen. Edsman suggests a reason for the popularity of this devise: "Die allegorische Exegese oder Allegorese hat in allen Religionen mit heiligen Urkunden eine grosse Rolle gespielt, um den feststehenden Formulierungen einen neuen und zeitgenossischen Inhalt beizulegen und dadurch auch die Autoritat kanonischer Schriften zu bewahren." C. M. Edsman, "Allegorie," Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Vol. I (Tubingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1957), p. 238. Also cited by Van Der Walt, p. 196. Some thinkers believe that when the Scriptures are so employed they are in reality deprived of their authority by abstraction.

³Dooyeweerd, New Critique, p. 177.
that the divine creating Word (Logos) is a lower divine being who mediates between the unity of God and the diversity of impure matter. Adopted in a somewhat more sophisticated form, the Alexandrian school actually managed to transform biblical religion into a lofty ethical theory, that is, "into a moralistically tinged theological and philosophic system, which as a higher gnosis was placed above the faith of the Church."¹ In a similar way, the Greek philosophical theology of the pre-Socratics, Plato and Aristotle had been placed above the pistis of the common people.²

That, I believe, is the contour of Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven's historical analysis of synthetic thought. Their rather unique assessment, which is here disclosed in a modest yet serviceable abridgment, cannot initially count on wide acceptance among scholars; yet, it has received an extensive reading in Europe and much of North America. Also, their over-all perspective has kindled many insights in the purveyors of theory and students of history.³

¹Dooyeweerd, New Critique, p. 177.


³Kalsbeek, Contours, pp. 10-13. These pages are an assessment of Dooyeweerd's perspective and influence. They suggest quite clearly that his views are more than the product of a mere sectarianism.
II LOGOS AND THE CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE TERM

Greek Speculation

This section is of necessity rather involved. The Greek concept of the Logos is complicated with a long history. Indeed, our very understanding of Greek philosophy could cloud a clear perception of the Logos' peculiar meaning in the synthesis process. Therefore, we must briefly review the development of Greek philosophy in order to bring about greater insight and understanding of the early Christian Logos doctrine. This will invariably lead to a sketch of what has become known, in certain circles, as "the theme of the a priori."

Cornford, in his book, From Religion to Philosophy: A Study in the Origins of Western Speculation, discusses the importance of the term Nomos (Law) in early Greek thought. He speaks of the law as a dispensation, a distributor, a governing principle and a principle of order. Yet, the question which intrigued these early thinkers, impressed as they were with the evident lawfulness of the cosmos, was the exact location of the law. A sense of tangible ultimates was required for a "full-orbed" human

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existence. In other words, if the best of the Greek minds could not understand the meaning of existence all other sides of human culture would suffer from a kind of *ignotum per ignotius*. Only well laid foundational knowledge would support a healthy culture. Therefore, questions concerning the law became crucial.

The work of Vollenhoven (*cum suis*) affords some insight into the fundamental tendency of Greek philosophy to explain the lawfulness of the cosmos. The Hellenic answer to the fundamental question of the place of the law was primarily twofold: 1) The law is found within the cosmos itself, 2) The law is located beyond or outside the cosmos. This first answer was common among all Greek savants until the debut of Plato, who, with the early Aristotle, best articulated the second answer. Vollenhoven called the former answer "functionalism" and the latter "realism."¹

Functionalism is the theory which enlarges some aspect or function of the cosmos to the role of law.² Once the question "What is the location of the law?" is answered: "Within the cosmos!" various secondary divisions come to the fore. Vollenhoven has distinguished two types

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¹J, Kraay, "How Should We Read Aristotle?" (Grand Rapids: Calvin College, 1966), p. 25.

of functionalism in the Greek world: subjectivism and objectivism.¹

In pre-Socratic thought the world was composed of the primal elements, earth, water, air and fire. These elements, as well as physical things, were cosmic subjects. Any thinker who believes that one or another of these elements or subjects determines the Moira of being and becoming, is called a subjectivist.² Therefore, subjectivism is the view that some subject fulfills the ontic role of law for the rest of reality.³ Some of the exponents of this view were Hesiod, Musaius, Thales, Heraclitus, Xenophanes and Empedocles.

Perhaps the most important of these thinkers was Heraclitus. He saw everything in a condition of flux (a state of perpetual becoming) and sought for a continuum among the primal elements. The darting flame, sinking ember and vanishing smoke suggested that the unalterable law which governs reality had to be fire. It was eternal energy. Following a tradition which tends to represent Heraclitus as a Stoic before the Stoa, Alexander⁴ informs

³In this early subjectivism, reality consisted only of subjects. The object, insofar as it was observed, was reduced to the subject. Runner, *Ancient Philosophy*, p. 37.
his readers that Heraclitus sometimes called this law "Justice" and "Harmony", but most frequently "Logos." He believes that in at least two passages of the most important Heraclitian fragments the sense of the law is conveyed by the term "Theos." His conclusion is that the terms Fire, Logos and God were indistinguishable in this thinker's mind.¹

For philosophers such as Anaximander, Anaximenes, Parmenides, Anaxagoras, Leucippus and Democritus—who observed that earth was hard and heavy, water was wet, air was dry and fire was hot and light--the origin of meaning and the principle of order was located in hypostatized or substantialized object functions. These men tended to emphasize the various qualities (objects) over the elements (subjects) which exhibited them. Understood as an independent power or stuff, some object function or quality fulfilled the ontic role of law for the rest of reality. Therefore, in the development of Greek cosmology "the conditions for cosmic existence were posited even further away from concrete existential things."² What has been described in this paragraph is objectivism.

Anaxagoras' place in the philosophical tradition, as one of the most committed objectivists, is debatable.


²Hart, p. 2.
His use of the concept **Nous**, however, has been considered an advance on previous speculation. Anaxagoras believed that the world was originally a chaos of opposites, and that this world was eventually ordered into various things, each one a compound of opposition. The principle of order which reconciled these chaotic opposites and the law which governed all subjects in their compounded condition were both the special quality called **Nous**. **Nous**, functioning as an object in Anaxagoras' theorizing, was vague, confused and hardly distinguishable from the corporeal.¹ To paraphrase Goodenough,² even Plato and Aristotle had hoped to discover in Anaxagoras a more satisfactory Weltbild than the other "materialists" had given. But, according to them, Anaxagoras employed the **Nous** conception only when the operation of corporeal forces proved inadequate to explain the meaning of some phenomenon. They considered this theoretical particular of Anaxagoras' work a "mere parapraxis." His own conflicting thoughts could not sustain a consistent theory.

In order to more fully understand the next step in speculative history, a word about Pythagoras should be included. Pythagoras and his school posited that metrical shape and number are the conditions of cosmic existence. This view has been called mathematical objectivism and it

¹Alexander, p. 1912.
²Goodenough, Justin, p. 5.
represents a still greater theoretical movement away from concrete existential things.¹

The Pythagoreans, with their tenacious movement away from subjectivistic cosmology, influenced the direction of post-Socratic philosophy. Their influence on the direction of Plato's thought was particularly radical.² The year in which Plato was born also witnessed the death of Athens' greatest statesman, Pericles. The generation that followed his fall never seems to have escaped the shadow of decline. Driven to find an ultimate solution for the ills besetting Athens, and spirited by the anti-subjectivism of the Pythagoreans, Plato eventually turned away from objectivism and grounded the kosmos aisthètos in the full Kosmos Noètos. Rejecting ultimate contingency, he formulated the theory that "the sensible world...had its being in the dependable existence of a knowable world of ideas, numbers-themselves and figures-themselves."³ In other words, Plato posited that the law which established the conditions for the order and meaning of cosmic existence was located in a separate realm of law-essences outside of


²Zeller, p. 138.

³Hart, p. 2.
cosmic existence itself. This theory is what Vollenhoven means by the technical term realism.

The world of law-essences was an immutable and abiding background which governed all the experiences of the sensible world in the foreground. Both primal mathematicals (numbers- and figures-themselves) and ideas were the guiding principles. However, these primal mathematicals and ideas were not only law-essences but knowable substances, purely intelligible to the human soul by virtue of recollection. For Plato, all knowledge is recollection. Therefore, contrary to pre-Socratic thought, the experiences of the foreground world became the occasion of knowledge and not the origin. Recollection was the basic function of the mind (Nous). With the Nous, one need only look out "toward the realm of eternally-existent, purely intelligible law-essences and behold the Truth."²

The deaths of Alexander the Great in 325 B.C. and Aristotle in 322 B.C. mark the close of the classical age of Greek culture and the beginning of the Hellenistic period. It was during this new epoch of theoretics, with its movement from cosmology to epistemology, that another view concerning the location of the law arose.³

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¹Hart, p. 24.
²Runner, Relation, p. 60.
³The development of this view was actually a reversal (from realism back to subjectivism) of the earlier ones.
The development of Greek philosophy up to this time was cosmological in character. Existence was the assumed criterion for all cognition whether theoretical or intuitive, whether conscious or unconscious. Ontic concerns were primary and prior to epistemic ones, and the latter could not have determined the former. A kingdom of things existed. At times and under certain circumstances they could be known. It was a matter of pure and unqualified discovery. Hart sums up the matter this way: "The cosmos and its conditions were real existences quite independent of any form of human experience, let alone of merely the knowledge experience."¹

With the rise of the political-economical importance of the non-Greek world, the Greek intelligentsia feared the loss of their culture and began losing faith in their previous grounds of certainty. And when these non-Greeks eventually did invade this contemplative world, they were unable to follow the fine distinctions of the Greek mind. Thus they became confused about and suspicious of the Hellenic theoretical tradition. The combined result of these two desperate attitudes was a general incredulity in the academic world. In this climate, an intellectual crisis could not be avoided and a skeptical movement (Skepsis)—of considerable magnitude—began to influence the various philosophical schools. Skepsis is defined as

¹Hart, p. 2.
a systematic doubting of the knowability and finally the reality of whatever has been the assumed ground of certainty (the law).\(^1\)

Jaeger\(^2\) believes that the Greek mind never recovered from the blow which the Skepsis delivered against it. Forced by skepticism to neglect their differences, the various schools, Platonist, Stoics, Pythagoreans and to a lesser extent Aristotelians, sought some common ground. The common ground was the theme of the \textit{a priori}.\(^3\)

The first development of this theme is observed in Timon of Phlius (died in 230 B.C.) the student of Pyrrho the skeptic.\(^4\) Before Timon had entered the philosophical arena, the universal law had always been situated outside the individual human micro-cosm, and in some non-human subject, object or ideal world. However, he radically broke with skepticism by placing the law within the individual human mind as a distinct part of its structure. The importance of this new conception should not be underestimated.\(^5\) Before this theoretical advent, the

\(^1\)H. E. Runner, "Hellenistic" (Grand Rapids: Calvin College, ca. 1960), p. 1.


\(^3\)Here the Law is understood as a rational \textit{a priori}.


\(^5\)Runner explains its significance in some detail in "Hellenistic," p. 3.
conditions for human existence were governed by something extra-mental and upon occasion an intra-mental knowledge, in the form of concepts and judgments, could be appropriated. But now, the governor of these conditions became a "concept," with universal and binding powers. Of course this concept does not, like other concepts, arise out of experience, but it precedes and actually generates experience. It is therefore, a priori.

The Stoa, however, offered more sophisticated terminology to express this theory. Chrysippus (died 205 B.C.), the second father of this school (after Zeno), spoke of innate presuppositions. Aristotle had taught that man had powers of logical thought and that this logic governed much of knowledge. Epicurus (of the Garden), in his attempt to escape the suspended judgment of the Skepsis, mentioned that a Prolepsis (pre-suppositions) lies at the foundation of human experience. Chrysippus, combining the positions of Aristotle and Epicurus, concluded that logical pre-suppositions possessed the binding character of law for all knowledge experience and were embeded in human nature.

The third development in the theme of the a priori

1 A. A. Long claims that Epicurus was the first to use the term. *Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974), p. 23. Burrell, "Hellenistic," p. 3, calls the Epicurean Prolepsis "purely temporal." It was found in the sensible world (time-oriented existence).
took place in the Academy.\(^1\) It should be remembered that Plato had a background world full of ideas and primal mathematicals. Sometime around 275 B.C., a man named Archesilaus, a student of Theophrastus, left the Aristotelian Lyceum for the Academy (the Middle Academy). Skeptically inclined, Archesilaus questioned and finally he rejected the knowability of the background ideas. Yet his rejection was not radical for he still retained the view that the primal mathematicals could be known. This has been called a resigned realism because only knowability and not existence had been questioned.\(^2\)

In the Late Academy, a second skeptical movement occurred under the auspices of Carneades of Cyren. He even denied the existence of the ideas while yet affirming the primal mathematicals. This is called semi-realism.\(^3\)

The two major representatives of this theory were Philo of Larissa and Antiochus of Ascalon; both were teachers of the young Cicero. Nevertheless, they reinterpreted the denial of Carneades. According to Antiochus, the ideas

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\(^1\) The following is a general outline of the Academy's history as it is understood in this study: I. Old Platonism, A. Early Academy, B. Middle Academy, C. Late Academy. Transition: Philo of Larissa. II. Mesoplatonism, A. Early Mesoplatonism, B. Late Mesoplatonism. III. Neoplatonism, A. Ammonios Sakkos, B. Plotinus (C.S.).

\(^2\) Runner, "Hellenistic," p. 4.

\(^3\) Ibid.
did exist, but only in the thinking mind (Nous) of the macro-cosm (the universal) and the micro-cosm (the individual).\(^1\) Therefore, in early Mesoplatonism we see two kinds of law. The primal mathematicals (as law) exist in the background world while the ideas (as law) exist in both the macro- and micro-cosm of the foreground world. Analogous to the "innate presuppositions" of the Stoa are the "innate ideas" of the Academy. This is a semi-realism with the a priori of ideas.

It was sometime before the Academy added anything to this position. Meanwhile, outside the Academy, the Neo-Pythagorean movement taught that both numbers and geometrical figures were a priori. They did so, however, in two distinguishable ways.\(^2\) This movement was carried aloft by a mystical and non-mystical wing. The latter group maintained the theme of the macro- and micro-cosm, depositing the primal mathematicals in both the universal and individual knowing mind. The mystical wing, in a regressive fashion, believed that the apriority of the mathematicals was true only for the universal mind. To acquire any real knowledge concerning numbers and metrical

\(^1\)Antiochus seems to re-interpret Plato. Participation occurred between Plato's foreground and background world. But with the loss of the background world ideas, participation (on the subject side) was understood as Platonic similitude (normally the relation between Plato's macro/microcosm).

\(^2\)Runner, "Hellenistic," p. 4.
limits, the individual mind must horizontally extend itself into the one universal mind.

Only after this Neo-Pythagorean statement does the Academy (A.D. 150) question the knowability of numbers themselves (that is, numerical law-essences). Eventually, in late Mesoplatonism, the Academy did deny the numbers themselves and moved to a double a priori with numbers and ideas (as a duality of law) located in the micro-cosm and macro-cosm of the foreground world.

There is yet another stage in this third development of the theme of the a priori: Neo-Platonism. Influenced by the mystical element in Neo-Pythagoreanism, the Academy of the third century after Christ contended that only the universal mind could possess a priori concepts, and therefore, individual minds must look for knowledge in the universal mind. Although this last stage does not directly influence the subject matter of our present study, it does show the direction of the theme of the a priori.

In effect, this new theme became the major solution to the devastating problem posed by the Skepsis, namely, that the law which gave meaning and direction to life and provided certainty for all human understanding could no longer be discovered in any external object or world of law-essences. This solution claimed that the law was located in man himself as rational a priori. In other words, man's "understanding" was equipped with a priori
knowledge content and thus radically transformed into hypostatized "reason" (logos).¹

A clear perception of the development of the theme of the a priori is crucial for a proper judgment of synthesis, for it was precisely this understanding of the law which was synthesized with the biblical revelation about the Law of God.

Biblical Religion

In biblical religion the term Logos usually means a divinely revealed (volitional) word. This section is devoted to a brief statement concerning the scriptural Logos as the Law of God, with particular attention given to the prologue of John's gospel. This passage, more than any other, was essential to the early Christian Logos theories.

The Old Testament Hebrew term Dabar was generally translated Logos by the authors of the Septuagint and it is rendered Word in the various English versions. In Genesis, the Logos is seen as the effective agent in the creation. The Psalmist, commenting on the creation, says: "For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast."² In another poetic passage we read that God's Word is the sustaining providence of the universe.

¹Runner, "Hellenistic," p. 6.
²Ps. 33:9. All Bible references from the NASB.
He sends forth His command to the earth;  
His word runs very swiftly.  
He casts forth His ice as fragments;  
Who can stand before His cold?  
He sends forth His word and melts them;  
He causes His wind to blow  
And the waters to flow.  
Fire and hail, snow and clouds;  
Stormy wind, fulfilling His word;  

From such passages as these, we can see that the Word of God (Logos) is the law revealed in creational existence itself. The Logos is not only a principle of physical order, but of intellectual and ethical order as well. Again in the words of the Psalmist: "Thy word is a lamp to my feet/And a light to my path."  

In prophetic literature the Logos was conveyed by dreams and apocalyptic visions, and occasionally by sacred lots (interpreted by the priest). It always revealed some particular norm for human existence. The major prophets found the Logos, as an oracular disclosure of the will of God, irresistible in character. According to Jeremiah it was "like a burning fire shut up in my bones; and I am weary of holding it in, and I cannot endure it."  

The series of apparitions (commonly known as theo-

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1Ps. 147:15, 17 & 18. and 148:8.
2Ps. 119:105.
4Jer. 20:9; see Ezek. 33:7; Amos 3:8; and Micah 5:8. The distinction between true and false prophecy is emphasized in the prophetic literature.
phanies) which occurred in the Old Testament are always identified with the will of God, some revealing specific details. A somewhat fascinating phenomenon is the infatuation which the early Church Fathers demonstrated in their vigorous search for the identity of these apparitional beings, and conversely, their slight of comment concerning the import of the apparition, namely, that God is directing human existence through His Logos.

The biblical concept of the Word of God is obviously related to "the Wisdom of God." "Wisdom" might well be understood as the elusive form of divine revelation. It does not come by virtue of human achievement, but only through the gratuitous self-disclosure of God. According to Turner, it was given to craftsmen as manual skill for constructing the Tabernacle and to Joshua as an "essential" for leadership.

Although the term Wisdom, like that of Logos, was occasionally used to convey the law for creational existence, it was often poetically personified in a deeply

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1 Gen. 16:11, 13; 32:29-31; Exod. 3:2; 13:21; and Zech. 1:11.

2 Alexander, p. 1913.

3 Job 28.


5 Turner, p. 954. Exod. 36:1 & Deut. 34:9 respectively.

personal way. However, the wisdom books outside the Canon frequently suggest something more than what we find in the Scriptures, namely, a substantive Wisdom. In the pseudo-Solomonic books (*The Wisdom of Solomon*), the influence of Greek theoretical thought is traceable.\(^2\)

Whereas, the Old Testament Logos signified the revealed Word of God which generated and cemented the creation, both physically and normatively, the New Testament equates the Logos with the historical Christ. The synoptic gospels, *Acts*, the Pauline epistles and *Hebrews* tend to imply the equation. The teachings of Jesus and his apostles are regularly termed the Logos.\(^3\) In *Hebrews*, apostolic preaching, the illumination of the Spirit and particular teachings are referred to as Logos.\(^4\)

The fourth gospel is most explicit in equating the historical personage of Jesus Christ with the Logos. Whether this gospel is historical in character or not is of special importance for understanding its Logos usage. Ridderbos\(^5\) is convinced that an ahistorical approach,

\(^1\)Prov. 1:20; 5:3; 7:10.
\(^2\)Alexander, p. 1913 and Turner 955.
\(^3\)Matt. 7:24; Mark 2:2; *Acts* 4:29; cf. Rom. 9:6; and *2 Cor.* 4:2.
a la F. C. Baur (the idealistic sort) or Rudolf Bultmann (the existentialistic sort), is unacceptable. He claims that John wanted to write history, and that "the gospel as a whole, with all its historical, chronological, and topographical details, is proof of this."¹ He appeals further to the archaeological work of Albright and Jeremias as support for the accuracy of the various topographical references in John's gospel.²

By firmly understanding the historical character of this gospel, one is also able to understand the very special significance the prologue (John 1:1-18) gives to the story of Jesus of Nazareth. The prologue begins in a sort of cosmological idiom, speaking about the relationship of the Logos (who was God and yet distinct from God) to the world. Discharging the opening words of the Torah, "In the beginning," the author directs his readers attention to the creation. The relation of the Logos to the world is clearly that of cause and effect.

John's prologue proceeds in a soteriological fashion, alerting men as to their relationship with the Logos. Using the metaphor of light, the Logos is portrayed as the illuminator of darkened man.³

¹Ridderbos, p. 60.
²The Palestinian archaeology of W. F. Albright and Joachim Jeremias.
³John 1:4-9.
When the author finally reveals that "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory," the reader is immediately aware that all the preceding verses were also Christological. That is, the cosmological and soteriological Logos are known by virtue of the historical (flesh and blood) Jesus of Nazareth who is the revealed Word of God. Therefore, as Berkouwer suggested, the reader's path to knowledge does not run downhill from John 1:1 to John 1:14, "as though [one] could deduce the significance of Jesus Christ as the incarnated Word from the knowledge of the pre-existent Logos." But rather, the reader must climb uphill from the human situation, that is, "from the incarnated Word to the Father." John does not appear to be revealing some gnostic mystery. Rather, he seems to be declaring that through the knowledge of Jesus Christ one may understand salvation (soteria) and creation (kosmos). Therefore, it would seem that the special significance of the prologue is Christological.

Because of the extraordinary importance of this passage for understanding and evaluating the early Christian Logos-theory, it is advisable to approach the prologue from a slightly different side. What is the purpose of

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1 John 1:14a.


the prologue, and in that connection, why does the evangeliast use the technical term Logos? If Ridderbos' research is correct, the term Logos had not yet become the standard title for the pre-existent Son of God.\(^1\) Indeed, what does come to the fore here is the overwhelming character of the historical Jesus himself. The evangeliast wants to introduce a very special person to his readers. Clearly, it was the glory of Jesus which exceeded every precedent, even that of Moses, that John sought to express. In Ridderbos' words, John accomplished his intent by falling back on "the dynamic creating Word in the beginning of all God's ways, the word that called forth lights out of darkness and created life."\(^2\)

If this reading of John is correct, a docetic Christology cannot be discovered here. The prologue's point of departure is not found genetically in the eternal Logos but in the historical Jesus. In order to know this Jesus it is not necessary to possess some pre-knowledge of the Logos, yet, in order to understand the dimensions of his glory one's attention must be focused on the majestic creational work of God. Perhaps John was trying to tell his readers that "nobody has ever seen God, and nobody will ever know him as he is, unless that person has

\(^1\)Riderbos, p. 68.

seen the glory of him who dwelt among us," and so, here
"is the story of Jesus of Nazareth.*

In the light of John's use of the term Logos and his
peculiar opening statement which calls attention to the
glory of the historical person Jesus of Nazareth as a
unique revelation of God's Word and will for human life;
and, in light of the Old Testament meaning of the Word as
the law of God revealed for both natural and normative
human existence, a biblical understanding of the Logos
should flourish.

Alexandrian Synthesis

It has been said that with Philo of Alexandria,
Greek philosophy stood almost at the door of the Christian
Church. In the thought of this Jewish philosopher the
Hebraic and Hellenic meanings of the Logos converged.

From a rich cosmopolitan family, Philo was educated
in Greek paideia and steeped in Plato. Although he knew
little if any Hebrew, he did manage to rediscover his own
Jewish culture and tradition. Armed with a Greek educa-
tion and a commitment to the Jewish tradition, Philo be-
came a literary phenomenon. Through his study of

1Ridderbos, pp. 69-70.


3J. Dillon, The Middle Platonist (Ithaca, New York:
Homer exegesis, he discovered that battles, shipwrecks, homecomings and fornications were pregnant with philosophical truths.\footnote{Dillon, p. 142.} This discovery suggested a further questions: Could there also be some hidden meaning in the Pentateuch?

The emphasis of this section is not on Philo's exegesis, fascinating as that may be, but on his speculative use of the term Logos. Also, the following exposition should be read as a brief interpretation of Philo's thought on the subject at hand, and not as an in-depth study. It is designed to fill in what, otherwise, might be a lacuna in our treatment of the conceptual development of Logos.

Philo's works are not organized expositions of doctrine, and one must be prepared to understand his rich but random statements in the context of Hellenistic philosophical theory. This theoretical period is best characterized as eclectic, and Philo's definition is true to form. According to Turner, Philo fused the Heraclitian "all-pervasive energy," the Platonic "metaphysical dualism," the Aristotelian "transcendental monism" and the Stoic "individualism."\footnote{Turner, p. 955. These labels are both simplistic and suspect. Cf. J. Danielou, Philon D'Alexandria (Paris: Libraire Artheme Fayard, 1958), p. 163.} The breadth of Philo's philosophical reading is truly amazing.
The Septuagint, the wisdom literature and perhaps the targums (popular interpretations of paraphrases of the Old Testament) were the Hebraic sources for Philo's thought. In the targums especially, the terms memra (word) and shekhinah (glory) were mediating forces between God and the world. These powers serve as the bridge between the divine and human side of the spiritual chasm.

Philo's speculative Lofos and his synthesis of these Hellenistic and Hebraic elements were clearly exposed in his exegesis of Genesis. In this opening book of the Torah, Philo conceived of a double creation. First an intelligible world (Noëtos Kosmos) came into existence. This was followed by a sensible world (aisthètos kosmos). In the philosophical language of semi-realism, the law-ideas of the background world were, according to Philo, located in the Nous or Logos of God, where they became seminal reason-principles (logoi spermatikoi). According to Dillon, the logoi spermatikoi serve as the models and creative principles of the physical world and are located in their sum-total in the intelligible cosmos, which is a milieu of immobility. When they are excited out of this

1Alexander, p. 1913. Such knowledge was surely conveyed to Philo, whether or not he read Hebrew.

2Dillon, p. 158.

3Dillon, p. 159.

4Ibid.
"catalepsy," the sensible world is generated. Before any of this could possibly happen, however, the Logos as the sum-total of the ideas in activity had to be sent from God. The angels of the Torah seem to correspond with the ideas as logoi spermatikoi, while the sephia and memra of the wisdom literature correspond with the Logos as the sum-total of the active ideas.

Nevertheless, Philo's Logos is in sharp contrast with the Stoic Logos. The former was the collective term for immaterial reality, radiating from God rather than a background world, while the latter was the basic fiery substance of matter itself.¹

In the end, Philo must appeal to mysticism as the only way to truly perceive human unity with the Logos. This mysticism, as a Pythagorean "looking up into the macro-cosm," is contrasted to the Platonic flash of intuition, and thereby calls for a temporary rejection of the autonomy of reason.² Although mysticism emphasizes relationships rather than theoretical abstractions, the language of the latter is absorbed into Philo's mysticism. Wolfson's analysis³ of the higher relations in Philo's thought, demonstrate this tendency. Philo seems to

suggest that the relation of God to the Logos is that of
the Creator to the created, while the relation of the Logos
to the intelligible world is that of a thinking mind to
its object of thought. The intelligible world is thus re-
lated to the ideas as the whole is related to the parts
of which it is composed. In another manner of speaking,
the Logos is an image (eikon) of God the archetype (para-
deigma), and in turn, the Logos is the archetype of all
other things, which are its images.1 Because of this in-
terpretation, Dillon confidently labels Philo as an ortho-
dox Middle Platonist.2

What Philo is actually saying about the Logos is by
no means simple or self-evident. However, as Alexander
has pointed out, Philo's Logos is clearly the rational
principle of order manifested in the visible world.3 This
expression should never be conceived as a distinct person,
but as a group of divine ideas.

Therefore, the Old Testament idea of the Logos as the
revealed Word of God and its suggestive language implying
a law order is in contrast to the rational order of Philo.
Also, the Hebrew antithesis between true and false prophe-
cy, which permeates the Old Testament accounts of the

1Dillon, p. 160.
2Dillon, p. 161. The term "orthodox" may be debat-
able. Cf. p. 22 of this study.
3Alexander, p. 1940.
revealed Logos, appears to be missing from Philo's commentary.\(^1\) An even sharper contrast existed between the personified (yet impersonal) metaphysical Logos of Philo and the personal Logos of John's gospel, who is revealed in history as Jesus of Nazareth. The idea of the incarnation is completely alien to the thought of Philo, while it is the crown of Johannine teaching.\(^2\)

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The preceding three sections of this chapter have offered an interpretive, rather than an exegetical, sketch of the conceptual development of the term Logos.\(^3\) The first two sections, on Greek speculation and biblical religion, establish the two primary elements which make up the epistemological dichotomy of reason and revelation. The third section on Alexandrian Synthesis, although not strictly what we mean by synthesis philosophy,\(^4\) illustrates the first emergence of the type of phenomenon we intend to isolate in the following two chapters.

\(^1\)See note 4 on page 26 of this study.

\(^2\)Alexander, p. 1916.

\(^3\)Because of its pivotal importance, the section on biblical religion necessitated some exegetical treatment; yet, all three have relied heavily upon secondary material.

\(^4\)See p. 4 of this study.
Little is known of Justin's early life. He was born in Flavia Neapolis, near ancient Sichem, the modern Nablus, about A.D. 101. His father was Priscus and his grandfather was Bacchius, names which indicate that they were of Greek stock.¹

Justin writes about his education and eventual conversion to Christianity in his Dialogue with Trypho.² The story clearly reveals the character of the times as well as that of the man. Justin saw his education as a sort of intellectual odyssey which climaxed in his conversion.

From his youth Justin was attracted to philosophical studies. He pursued the vocation by becoming an apprentice to a certain Stoic, but was disappointed in this fellow's lack of interest with questions about God. After

¹P. Cayre, Manual of Patrology and History of Theology, Vol. I (Paris: Desclee and Company, 1936), p. 116, believed that Justin was of Latin origin, while J. Quasten, Patrology, Vol. I (Utrecht, Brussels: Spectrum Publishers, 1950), p. 196, claimed that he was Greek. The argument for the latter is much the stronger, it seems to me.

²Located in the first eight chapters. This is all the particular information available concerning Justin's education and teachers. However, the nature of the Stoic, Aristotelian and Platonic schools at which he studied and the world views which influenced him can be sufficiently reconstructed from other sources.
a break with the Stoic, Justin met a Peripatetic (Aristotelian) and studied with him until the philosopher demanded an unfair tuition settlement.\(^1\) Disillusioned with this profit seeking intellectual, Justin sarcastically writes, "I left him, because I did not consider him a real philosopher."\(^2\) Soon after, Justin obtained an interview with a famous Pythagorean. A brief conversation with this encyclopedic thinker revealed Justin's weak academic background. Before this particular Pythagorean would consider accepting a student, the candidate must master music, astronomy and geometry. All such disciplines were necessary prerequisites for the study of philosophy, at least this pedagogue's philosophy. But Justin thought himself too old to begin at such an elementary level and so he continued his search for a mentor. He finally discovered a Platonist of high repute. The impact which this teacher and his tradition created are best expressed in the Martyr's own words:

> Under him I forged ahead in philosophy and day by day I improved. The perception of incorporeal things quite overwhelmed me and the Platonic theory of ideas added wings to my mind, so that in a short time I imagined myself a wise man. So great was my folly that I fully


\(^{2}\)Ibid.
expected immediately to gaze upon God, for this is the goal of Plato's philosophy.¹

This quotation from Justin sets the stage for what may be called the mysterious stranger incident. Justin was in the habit of sorting out his thoughts by walking along the seashore, and during one of these outings he encountered an old man who was looking for some friends. By explaining his own presence, Justin exposed his vocational interest in philosophy. Armed with this information, the old man presents Justin with a puzzle: "Does philosophy produce happiness?" he asked.² From this question a rather delightful dialogue develops. In brief, Justin presents his readers with a language picture of a bright young philosopher who, in an unexpected game of conundrum, is kindly yet cleverly ensnared by a humble old man. After suggesting the folly of philosophical arguments for dealing with questions of ultimate Truth, the old man encourages Justin to "beseech God to open...the gates of light, for no one can perceive or understand

¹Schopp, pp. 150-151. For Justin this particular Platonist seemed to be free of the difficulties encountered in previous teachers. He was concerned with questions about God, and presumably, he did not think it necessary that a number of scientific studies be mastered so that the mind may draw "...away from objects of the senses and render itself fit for the intellectual, in order that it may contemplate what is good and beautiful," as had the Pythagorean.

²Schopp, p. 152.
these truths unless he has been enlightened by God and His Christ."  

The old man's specific role in this story was to point out the emptiness of pagan philosophy, including Platonism, and to demonstrate the fullness of the Christian life. He suggested that Justin read the Prophets and compare them to the life of Christ. Assuming the role of the devil's advocate, Justin undertook the challenge and his response was the heart and soul of all his work. In his own charismatic words:

My spirit was immediately set on fire, and an affection for the prophets, and for those who are friends of Christ, took hold of me; while pondering on his words, I discovered that his was the only sure and useful philosophy. Thus it is my wish that everyone would be of the same sentiment as I, and never spurn the Savior's words; for they have in themselves such tremendous majesty that they can instill fear into those who have wandered from the path of righteousness, whereas they ever remain a great solace to those who heed them.  

In the words of one commentator, "the instructions

\(^1\)Schopp, p. 160.  
\(^2\)Ibid.  
\(^3\)F. A. March, editor, Douglass Series of Christian Greek and Latin Writers, Vol. V (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1877), pp. x-xi. In the presence of such conviction Justin recognized the weakness of his philosophical grasp of the Truth. He asked: "...if their philosophers...do not know the Truth, what teacher or method shall one follow?" This quotation is from Schopp, p. 159. The old man's answer was that he should read the prophets of the Scripture. Over against these stood the false prophets, the philosophers (non-biblical thinkers).
of the strange old man, the study of the prophets, the
association with the followers of Christ, led Justin from
the shades of the Academy into the dust and sun of Chris-
tian warfare."

After his conversion, Justin continued to wear his
philosopher's cloak, which indicated that he yet envision-
ed his vocation as philosophical.\(^1\) He left Ephesus, where
he had lived for some years, for Rome and there establish-
ed a respectable school similar to the catechetical school
of Alexandria.\(^2\) Tatian the Syrian was his best known
student, and Crescens the Cynic was his most formidable
critic. He conducted many debates with the latter, and in
an unbridled moment called him "the lover of fanfare and
ostentation."\(^3\)

Many scholars feel that Crescens kindled the politi-
cal fire which ultimately led to Justin's martyrdom under
the prefect Junius Rusticus, somewhere between 163 and 167.
The story of Justin's beheading is told in an anonymous
writing, considered one of the most trustworthy of the

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\(^1\)The philosopher's pallium was the symbol of a wise
man. Upon his conversion the cloak was far more appropri-
ate, for "...he had achieved philosophical wisdom on the
very day he had become a Christian." E. Gilson, History
of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages (New York: Ran-
dom House, 1955), p. 13. It was not philosophy which he
opposed but the unbiblical character of current philosophy.

\(^2\)Cayre, p. 116.

\(^3\)Schopp, p. 122.
the martyrrologies. Some anomalous versions, however, record that Justin died by drinking hemlock. Because of his fondness for the old philosopher of Athens, he might have preferred the Socratic departure for the Stygian shore.

The Work of Justin

Justin's writings were mainly polemical and apologetic, delivered against Jews, heathens and heretics, with a word or two for the imperial government as well. Perhaps Osborn's salient statement concerning the second century attitude and religious climate will best set the stage for a brief review of Justin's work.

Before the end of the second century it was argued that there must be four gospels because there are four winds. The argument invites the question whether these four winds were also the reason for the fourfold attack on Christianity at that time. Christians felt not only the four winds of heaven but also four fierce blasts of condescending opposition from different directions. The state, the philosophers, the Jews and the heretics all objected to Christianity. The different attacks augmented rather than qualified each other and made the position of Christians both confused and precarious.


The imperial government was angered by the Christian's refusal to worship the Roman gods. They did not seem to mind if the Christians worshiped their own God, as long as they did not do so exclusively. Worshiping the Roman gods was the esprit de corps of Roman society, a religious convention which acknowledged the state's sovereignty over the life of the individual. To refuse this token was considered a denial of the state's "rightful place" in the natural order of things. In this regard, some politicians claimed that the Christians, with their kingdom propaganda, might eventually threaten the totalitarian character of the Roman regime.1

As for the reasoning behind the remaining opposition, the pagan philosophers thought that Christianity was the ultimate in absurdity, ignorance and presumption, while the Jews complained that the Christians had usurped the ancient scriptures of Israel for their own wrongheaded purposes.2

A brief bibliographical note on Justin's three genuine works will enhance our understanding of his intellectual background and prepare us for a closer look at the cosmic character of the Logos. Several chapters from

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1H. Mattingly, Christianity and the Roman Empire (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1967), p. 33. The charge of maiestas was the popular method of ridding the state of these burdens.

2Osborn, pp. 3-4.
Justin's two apologies explicitly address this subject.

Justin's *First Apology*, as it is generally called, was a rather bold work. It is a petition addressed to the Emperor and his sons asking for the just treatment of Christians. However, he appealed to the Emperor in these words:

> You hear yourselves everywhere called pious men and philosophers, guardians of justice and lovers of learning; whether you really deserve this reputation will now become evident.¹

This is Justin's way of prefacing his requests. In his mind the government may be able to kill Christians but it cannot harm them.² He appeals to the state for reasonableness, a commodity available to all men when they rebuke petty emotions. Justin also showed pluck by exhuming the character of certain Christian rites which had been secretly entombed in the minds of church members. Fearing ridicule and persecution because of their unique practices, they did not appreciate overexposure. But Justin contends:

> It is our duty to give everyone a chance of investigating our life and doctrines, lest we should pay the penalty for what they commit in their blindness, they who persist in being ignorant of our ways.³

The *First Apology* seems to argue: 1) that Christians are good citizens and do not strive for earthly power,

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¹Schopp, p. 34.
²Ibid.
³Schopp, p. 35.
but for the "heavenly kingdom"; 2) that Christianity is superior to paganism because of the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies and the debt Plato owed Moses (a historical chimera); and 3) that Christian practices dispel all false, preposterous notions.¹

The Second Apology, composed shortly after the first, was addressed to the Roman senate and occasioned by the execution of three Christians by Urbicus, the prefect of Rome. After denouncing this action and revealing its demonic origin, Justin responded to the popular "ridicule of the day," that is, the two sarcastic questions: "If Christians desire to see God, why do they not commit suicide and save their enemies the trouble of killing them?" and "If God has the power to save Christians, why does He permit their enemies to harass them?"² Although he deals with these two questions in some detail, his conclusion is that only deliberation on Christian teachings will eventually prove it to be more sublime than all human wisdom.³

The Dialogue with Trypho, the oldest of this type extant, was a treatise written in defense of Christianity against Jewish criticism.⁴ Its ultimate purpose was to

¹See March, pp. 97-102.
³Schopp, p. 135.
convinced the Jews of the messiahship of Christ; to this end, three principle ideas guided the logical sequence of the dialogue. First, the decline of the old covenant was given as the reason why Christians did not observe the Mosaic Law. Secondly, the Logos was identified with the God of the Old Testament and as the Messiah who had become incarnate in the Virgin Mary. Thirdly, and following forthwith from the previous premises, the Christians (as followers of the Logos) were proclaimed the true people of God and the rightful heirs of the divine promises.¹

The Logos Speculation of Justin

The Stoic/Mesoplatonic theme of the a priori—as delineated in chapter two, section one of this study—permeated the intellectual world of early Christianity.²

The Stoic school, at which Justin the Martyr first studied, was impressed by the variety and amount of sensible things in the world.³ In the midst of this diversity, the Stoics found a unifying principle of coherence in the a priori law which they called Logos (reason). According to their

¹See Schopp, pp. 139-140.
²It must be remembered that the "theme of the a priori" is a label for the location of the law or the Nomos.
doctrine, all individual things were bound together by rationality to the world at large by a World Logos (World Reason). From this World Logos there generated sparks or fragments known as seed logos. These seeds fell on the fertile ground of men as specks of reason or rays of light and thus aided them to understand the universe as rational.¹

After Justin's conversion, his missionary zeal motivated him to seek out ways in which he might share his new found faith with his associates (presumably as philosophically inclined as he was). In the role of an intellectual champion of the faith and protector of the persecuted, Justin was forced to formulate a defense. From his philosophical training, he had learned above all else that the universe was rational and that its inhabitants would, in the end, act rationally. In his typically straightforward way, he told the political leaders whom he addressed in his first apology that: since they strove for piety and philosophy they could not act against reason and reject his pleas.² The status of reason is highly visible in Justin's apologies, especially in the central

¹The origin of this world view is to be found in Stoic physiology, where the logos spermatikos is conceived as "every fine gas which flowed, among other bodily senses and functions, into the damp seminal fluid, and which was the active element, the truly germinal property, of the entire sexual excretion. When this gaseous element from the male united with a similar gaseous flow in the female, germination took place." From Goodenough, Justin, p. 161.

²Schopp, p. 44.
chapter of the First Apology, the locus classicus:

We have been taught that Christ was First begotten of God (the Father) and we have indicated above that He is the Word of whom all mankind partakes. Those who live by reason are Christians, even though they have been considered atheists: such as, among the Greeks, Socrates, Heraclitus, and others like them; and among the foreigners, Abraham, Elias (et cetera). ... So, also, they who lived before Christ and did not live by reason were useless men, enemies of Christ, and murderers of those who did live by reason. But those who have lived reasonably, and still do, are Christians, and are fearless and untroubled.¹

The phrase, "He is the Word of whom all mankind partakes," not only appears to be a direct derivative from the Stoic concept mentioned above, but it also resembles the passage in the Gospel of John, which says: "That was the true light (that is, the Word), which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."²

From Justin's statement it seems clear that he was using the Hellenistic Logos (hypostatized reason) in his presentation of the Biblical Logos (revealed Word). The sum of his equation was truly novel: "Those who lived by reason were Christians." These few statements define the character of Justin's apologetic. His language seems to indicate a profound commitment to the centrality of reason as an implement of missionary activity, and as the ground

¹Schopp, p. 83.

²John 1:9 (K.J.V.). The exegetical importance of this verse will be discussed later.
or fundamental source of Truth. Therefore, the inclusion of all sorts of peculiar allies, such as Socrates and Heraclitus, could never reduce the significance of Christianity. On the contrary, his including them was intended to demonstrate Christianity's universality of scope.

Accordingly, one must in the initial stage of the missionary task convince the apostate to live by the demands of reason; and, for the safety of the Christian community, a special effort must be directed toward those who control "the power of the sword" in matters of public justice. In the end, if all men would act in accordance with the reason (the ray of light, the a priori knowledge) they possess, they would be fearless and untroubled Christians.

In the Second Apology, Justin offered further clarification concerning the Logos and its participation in men.

We know that the followers of the Stoic teaching, because of the seed of reason implanted in all mankind, were hated and killed...[and] the demons always brought it about that everyone, who strives in any way to live according to right reason and to avoid evil, be an object of hatred. Nor is it surprising that the demons are proved to be the cause why they are much more hated who do not live according to only a part of the seminal word, but by the knowledge and consideration of the whole Word, which is Christ.¹

According to Justin, every thinker (human being) who conformed to right reason and lived ethically would face

¹Schopp, pp. 127-128.
spiritual calamity. This calamity, so he suggests, had been the burden of the Stoic philosophers but now it rested on the shoulders of the Christians. Part of the significance of this statement may be found in the fact that a Stoic sat on the Roman throne with his scepter betwixt and between the life and the death of many Christians.\textsuperscript{1} In this context the job of the apologist was to convince those in power that the evils which had overtaken their philosophical ancestors now threatened those who might legitimately be called their spiritual progeny. However, the Christians must endure a much greater degree of hatred because of their "knowledge (γνωσίν) and consideration (θεωρίαν)" of Christ. The theory behind this belief claimed that the Stoics lived according to only part of the seminal word, or, as it is rendered in some translations, the sowing word (κατά spermatikou logou meros); while the Christians lived according to the whole Word (κατά tantou pantos logou).\textsuperscript{2}

It seems that Justin is here implying that the sowing word (spermatikos logos) is in fact the potential Christ (pantos logos). By way of reference, the post-Nicene terminology for the former was the pre-incarnate word and

\textsuperscript{1}In Cochrane, pp. 164-168, there is a fine discussion of this Stoic mentality. Schopp, p. 115, discusses the problem as to which of the "five good emperors" was the recipient of Justin's remarks.

for the latter it was the incarnate Word. Apparently, to stretch our reference in the other direction (back to Philo's thought), Justin is aware of the theory that the sowing word originally impregnated the creation (macro-cosm) with the principle of rationality, and that in turn, this principle permeated all individual men (micro-cosm) in the form of seeds of reason. However, as Justin directly stated in the previous passage, it is by the gnōsis and theōria of the whole Word (which is the historical personage of Jesus Christ) that an even greater degree of truth is obtained.

Justin elaborates upon this particular line of thought in chapter ten of the apology.

Beyond doubt, therefore, our teachings are more noble than all human teachings, because Christ, who appeared on earth for our sakes, became the whole Logos, namely, Logos and body and soul. Everything that the philosophers and legislators discovered and expressed well, they accomplished through their discovery and contemplation of some part of Logos. But, since they did not have a full knowledge of the Logos, which is Christ, they often contradicted themselves.²

Christianity, so Justin thought, was a superior teaching (megaleiōtera didaskalia) because of the appearance of Christ who became the whole Logos, or literally the whole rational being (to logikon to holon). Clearly,

¹On p. 50 of this study.
²Schopp, p. 129.
the whole Word is only known by revelation of the Christ and not by unaided reason. Yet, he also believed that the accomplishments of the philosophers and the legislators were not to be demeaned; they discovered much and expressed it well for the degree of knowledge they possessed. Presumably, this degree of knowledge is determined by individual patience, good will and proficiency with *theory*. Some of Justin's more rustic admirers could well have imagined that he leaned towards elitism. Both philosophers and legislators were specifically mentioned as examples of the type of men capable of contemplating part of the Logos, while no mention was made of the universal character of the whole Logos, which is available to all men by faith. No doubt, this glaring deficiency stems from Justin's struggle with the precise definition of the Logos and the peculiar relationship of the part with the whole.

Secondly, this passage reveals that Justin believed that the whole Logos was composed of a Logos, body and soul (*logon kai soma kai psychèn*). The primitive theological correspondence which developed from this sort of speculative language equated the body (the physical aspect) and the soul (the volitional aspect) with the human nature

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of Christ, and the Logos (the rational/spiritual aspect) with the divinity of Christ:

Once again Justin writes about the philosophers, but this time he includes poets and historians, and informs his readers that

each one of them, seeing, through his participation of the seminal Divine Word, what was related to it, spoke very well. But, they who contradict themselves in important matters evidently did not acquire the unseen (that is, heavenly) wisdom and the indisputable knowledge. The truths which men in all lands have rightly spoken belong to us Christians....Indeed, all writers, by means of the engrafted seed of the Word which was implanted in them, had a dim glimpse of the truth. For the seed of something and its imitation, given in proportion to one's capacity, is one thing, but the thing itself, which is shared and imitated according to His grace, is quite another.¹

Here the reader is instructed that the "seminal Divine Word" is operative in men, especially philosophers, poets and historians.² Notwithstanding this, however, those who have not acquired "the unseen wisdom and indisputable knowledge" (tēn aptōton epistēmēn tēn anelegkton gnōsin) do, upon occasion, contradict themselves. One might also infer the reverse, that the sign of non-acquisition is contradiction in important matters. Yet, a somewhat more curious inference, is the belief that all non-contradictory concepts or judgments (truths) are the sole

¹Schopp, pp. 133-134.
²Theios is added to the conception for the first time in Justin's apology.
possession of the Christian. To this extent, Justin admitted Socrates and Heraclitus, masters of non-contradiction, into the Christian tradition. One might legitimately question how serious Justin really was in giving this distinction to pagan thinkers. Yet, it was made possible because of the theory which claims that all men possess some glimpse of the truth by virtue of the "en-grafted seed" (τῶν ἐνουσασ ἀποσπώσ) and the implanted word (ἐμφυτεύω τοῦ λόγου).

Before observing the synthetic use of the Logos in other Greek apologetic sources, it should be restated that Justin's particular formulations were motivated by his intentions to defend the Christian faith and to demonstrate its universal character. The latter was fulfilled in a very special way by the Stoic Logos spermatikos. According to Goodenough, there is no reason to suppose that Justin did not understand the term when he used it, that is, "as a spiritual effluence from God, bringing the life and intelligence of God into the world of matter." Yet, Justin passed into Christianity from Platonism, and Goodenough's definition alerts us to the problem of reading Stoic ideas into Justin's use of Stoic terminology. For example, his use of the idea "seed forces" is not directly connected with the materialistic Stoic World Reason. Also, there

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1 Goodenough, Justin, p. 162.
2 Barnard, Justin, p. 99.
is his allusion to the Roman/Stoic idea of "general concepts" (communes notitiae). These concepts, given to man a priori, were predominantly confessional and ethical. In this sense, however, "God" was an intuition implanted in human nature along with the embedded faculty of knowing good and evil. In Barnard's opinion, this is similar to the Middle Platonist use of the Stoic "naturally formed concepts." Moreover, in Justin's thought, there is a close connection between the "naturally formed or general concepts" and the "seed forces" mentioned above. In one context he speaks of the seeds of the Logos implanted in the whole human race (as in the second apology, chapter eight), while in another, of the intuition of God implanted in the nature of man (as in chapter six of the same apology).2

Justin firmly equated his Logos with Jesus Christ whom he designated as the whole and entire Word. In so doing, he at once differentiated his thought from the speculations of Philo, Stoicism and Middle Platonism—but not so much opposing as transcending them. In other words, while basically retaining their cosmological and anthropological models, he developed the meaning and significance of the biblical Logos.

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2Barnard, Justin, p. 99. Schopp, pp. 127 and 125 respectively.
Tatian the Syrian

Little has been discovered about Tatian's life and we know nothing about his death. The American editor of The Ante-Nicene Fathers, in his introductory note on Tatian, suggests A.D. 110-172 as the Syrian's dates.¹ Quasten writes only about the 172 date, when Tatian left Rome for his homeland in the East. This physical move appears to have corresponded with an intellectual shift in Tatian's theology, as will be presented shortly.

Tatian was born in Syria to pagan parents. As a young man, in a state of some bewilderment, searching for truth in the manner of Justin the Martyr, Tatian stumbled upon "certain barbaric writings." In his narrative:

[These writings were] too old to be compared with the opinions of the Greeks, and too divine to be compared with their errors; and I was led to put faith in these by the unpretending cast of the language, the inartificial character of the writers, the foreknowledge displayed of future events, the excellent quality of precepts, and the declaration of the government of the universe as centered in one Being.²

The entire testimony of Tatian's conversion is found in chapter twenty-nine of his Address to the Greeks and it seems to support the idea that he was a Roman resident at

this time. There is also ample evidence to maintain the
commonly held opinion that Tatian, while in Rome,
frequented Justin's school. It is not clear, however,
what contributions Justin made to Tatian's thought.
Tatian's opposition to cultural solidarity, clearly set
forth in his Address, is emphatically at odds with Justin's
estimate of culture.¹

After Tatian left Rome for Syria, he became a follow-
er, or more likely the founder, of a gnostic cult called
the Encriptes (that is, the Abstinents). According to
Quasten, Tatian's character was so inclined to extremes
that he found Christianity insufficient in its critique
and rejection of contemporary education and culture (name-
ly Greek paideia).² The Encriptes were probably so busy
enforcing their beliefs that they had very little time to
worry about contemporary affairs outside their own cultur-
al cloister. It seems this heresy condemned matrimony as
adultery, forbid the consumption of any sort of meat and
even substituted water for wine in the Eucharistic service.

¹Nowhere in Tatian's Address does he show the least
awareness that his anti-solidaritarian attitude, which was
an attempt to exclude pagan philosophical opinions, be-
trays the mark of Cynicism and its contempt for the world.
See J. K. Popma, "Patristic Evaluation of Culture: The
Idea of a Christian Philosophy" (Toronto: Wedge Publishing
duction to Ancient Philosophy (Westminster, Maryland:
Sawman Press, 1959), p. 117, and A. Harnack, History of
Dogma, Vol. II, translated by N. Buchanan (New York:

²Quasten, p. 221.
Because of this latter practice, some Christians called them the Aquarri.¹

Before looking at his use of the term Logos, a brief word concerning his two surviving works is in order. His many writings have perished because of his shift from orthodoxy to heresy. Patrology is much the weaker for the lack of these writings. Not only were his beliefs an anomaly among the apologists, but his literary style was far superior. Only his Address to the Greeks (or Discourse) and the Diatessaron remain. Some scholars now think that the former was not so much an apology as an oration, designed to extend an invitation to the author's school. With respect to the latter work, this harmony of the gospels was extremely important for the Syriac speaking churches. For the first time since their founding, they had, in the Diatessaron, a liturgy of their own.²

Tatian's use of the term Logos is exclusively cosmological, and therefore void of any allusions to a historically revealed Logos.³ Chapter five of his Address

¹Quasten, p. 221, cf. fragments in Roberts, Vol. II pp. 82-83.
²Quasten gives many particulars concerning this work, pp. 224-225.
discusses the character of the Logos. Tatian believes that God is the necessary ground of all being, the hypostasis. But He is also the Logos-power (dia logikēs dynamēōs) which sustains the Logos itself. In the beginning, however, in a fission like process, the Logos chose to govern itself (oikonomia tēn hairesin proslabon). This did not result in a deletion of deity from deity as might be supposed. Employing a conventional simile, Tatian made his point.

For just as from one torch many fires are lighted, but the light of the first torch is not lessened by the kindling of many torches, so the Logos, coming forth from the Logos-power of the Father, has not divested of the Logos-power Him who begat Him.¹

Tatian closed the theoretical discussion of chapter five with a personal note. In his mind man should be imitating the Logos. The Logos was begotten and in turn begat the whole world, but only after it created the necessary matter. "So also I," wrote Tatian, "am trying to reduce to order the confused matter which is kindred with myself."²

Two more passages, the first from chapter seven and the second from chapter thirteen, should be mentioned. They clarify Tatian's understanding of the relationship between the Logos and the human side of the creation.

²Ibid.
This first passage concerns the image of God.

For the heavenly Logos, a spirit emanating from the Father and a Logos from the Logos-power, in imitation of the Father who begat Him made man an image of immortality, so that, as incorruption is with God, in like manner, man, sharing in a part of God, might have the immortal principle also.¹

The Logos as an emanating spirit passes on the principle of immortality through its creation of man. Man is, therefore, a receptacle for a part (meros) of divinity. Tatian used this statement to open a passage on the fall of man. According to him, man lost the immortal principle when he would not follow the dictates of the spirit. The circumstances of this affair reveal something about the Logos, about the nature of sin and about the character of man's soul. Tatian advances his doctrine in a second important passage.

The Logos, in truth, is the light of God, but the ignorant soul is darkness. On this account, if it continues solitary, it tends downward towards matter, and dies with the flesh; but, if it enters into union with the Divine Spirit, it is no longer helpless, but ascends to the regions whither the Spirit guides it: for the dwelling-place of the spirit is above, but the origin of the soul is from beneath. Now, in the beginning the spirit was a constant companion of the soul, but the spirit forsook it because it was not willing to follow. Yet retaining as it were a spark of its power, though unable by reason of the separation to discern the perfect, while seeking for God

it fashioned to itself in its wandering many gods....But the Spirit of God is not with all, but, taking up its abode with those who live justly, and intimately combining with the soul, by prophecies it announced hidden things to other souls.¹

It is obvious from this last passage that Tatian saw the fall and the restoration of the soul as a structural matter (having to do with some irrepressible order), rather than a directional matter (involving a choice of obedience or disobedience in a covenantal context).² However, in contrast to Platonism, this apologist denied the natural immortality of the soul treating it as though it were a material spirit inherent in matter itself.³ It was only in the union of the human soul with the Divine Spirit that man retains his dignity. The context surrounding this passage reveals that man lost the image of God through his consorting with demons and, yet, he may regain it through a "Gnostic" reuniting of his soul with the Spirit.⁴ However, even though the Spirit forsook the soul at the fall of man, a "spark" (enausma) of its power remained.⁵ Whether or not the reader should consider this "spark" a

²See pp. 4-5 of this study.
³Harnack, p. 191.
⁴That is, chapters 12 and 15 of Tatian's Address, which are found in Roberts, Vol. II, pp. 70-71. Cf. Harnack, p. 191 on this point as well.
⁵See Danielou, History, pp. 391-392.
remnant of the Logos is vague. Yet the allusion to Justin's theory concerning the seeds of reason is probable. The major difference is that Tatian's spark had little of the salutary influence found in Justin's seed reason. Tatian was not about to call selected wise men of the past Christians.

Although the Greek philosophical theme of the a priori is not emphasized in Tatian's Logos, the Johannine concept fares much worse. None of the soteriological context found in the gospel is contained in Tatian's thought. Even the name of Christ, which is liberally used by Justin, stands as the singular omission in Tatian's Address.

Athenagoras of Athens

Again, as with Tatian, we find the life of Athenagoras cloaked in obscurity. The sub-titles of his two extant works reveal that he was an Athenian philosopher. Perhaps he visited Egypt and the Christian Platonist school of second century Alexandria; but, our source for this bit of information is an unimpressive fragment from a work by Philip of Side.

His two works, A Plea for Christians (or Supplication) and On the Resurrection of the Dead, are somewhat more intriguing (though less stylish) than Tatian's writings. The first of these works was designed to defend Christians from the three pseudo-accusations of atheism, cannibalism
and Oedipean incest. The second writing, divided somewhat evenly between God and man's relation to the resurrection, was an attempt by way of analytical argument to prove the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead.¹

When observing Athenagoras' synthetic use of the term Logos, the reader is aware of a certain reserve. This is especially noticable after studying Justin's writings. Athenagoras was cautious at just those points where the Logos of Justin was open to a subordinationist interpretation.²

Chapter ten of the Plea is the most important passage in Athenagoras' commentary on the Logos. After an opening remark on monotheism, Athenagoras states:

But the Son of God is the Logos of the Father, in idea and in operation; for after the pattern of Him and by Him were all things made, the Father and the Son being one. And, the Son being in the Father and the Father in the Son, in oneness and power of spirit, the understanding and reason (nous kai logos) of the Father is the Son of God.³

Here the rational aspect of the Logos is clearly emphasized. According to Barnard, this Logos is "the totality

¹L. W. Barnard, Athenagoras: A Study in Second Century Christian Apologetics (Paris: Beauchesne, 1972), pp. 32-33, believes that Athenagoras is a better writer than either Justin or Tatian, but their thought is more original. Cf. pp. 43 & 44, of this study.


of God's intelligence or thought and all the Son's rational activity is God's." \(^1\) The identification of the Logos in idea and operation (en idea kai energeia) is original to Athenagoras. \(^2\) Also, his use of the term "power" (dynamis) to designate unity of Father and Son, rather than a mere dynamic aspect in the Father, is unprecedented. \(^3\) The allusion to Johannine terminology, with the declaration that the Father and Son are one, is certain.

Athenagoras concludes this passage with a statement concerning the genesis and creative activity of the Logos.

I will state briefly that He (the Logos) is the first product of the Father, not as having been brought into existence (for from the beginning, God, who is the eternal mind [nous], had the logos in Himself, being from eternity instinct with Logos [logikos]); but inasmuch as He came forth to be the idea and energizing power of all material things, which lay like a nature without attributes, and an inactive earth, the grosser particles being mixed up with the lighter. The prophetic Spirit also agrees with our statements. \(^4\)

The implication is that the eternal Logos proceeds to organize matter as the archetypal "idea" of the universe.

In Danielou's opinion, the underlying conception here is

\(^1\)Barnard, Athenagoras, p. 97. Cf. Roberts, Vol. II, p. 141, in chapter 24 of the Plea, where it says that the Son is the nous and sophia of the Father.

\(^2\)Barnard, Athenagoras, pp. 97-98.

\(^3\)Ibid.

that ultimate divinity has within itself an immanent reason, and that "this reason comes forth from him and takes on a separate existence of its own only in order to give form to inert matter."\(^1\) However, the Logos does not perform this activity directly; but, in Athenagoras\(^1\) mind, there is "a multitude of angels and ministers, whom God... distributed and appointed to their several posts by His Logos," and they perform the "goodly ordering" of the material elements.\(^2\)

Emphasizing the significance of the Logos as the reason, idea, energy and mind of the ultimate deity, Athenagoras totally neglected the Christological meaning of the term.\(^3\) Like Tatian, he said nothing at all about Christ, the incarnate Word and crucified man. Also, according to Harnack, Athenagoras tended to represent the Christian faith as a mere "rational doctrine."\(^4\) Even though this doctrine must be confirmed by revelation to be proclaimed the Truth, the Greek philosophical theme of the a priori is assumed as the foundation for knowledge. Therefore, with Justin, Tatian and Athenagoras, we have a precedent set which became the status quo interpretation.

\(^1\)Danielou, History. p. 353.
\(^3\)See Barnard, Athenagoras, p. 102, for criticism.
\(^4\)Harnack, pp. 188-189.
Theophilus of Antioch

Theophilus is one of the most obscure individuals in second century apologetic literature. Born of pagan parents sometime around A.D. 115, he was educated in Hellenism and converted to Christianity at a mature age. He gives his readers an account of his conversion while commenting upon the resurrection of the dead.

Therefore, do not be sceptical, but believe; for I myself also used to disbelieve that this would take place, but now, having taken these things into consideration, I believe. At the same time, I met with the sacred Scriptures of the holy prophets, who also by the Spirit of God foretold the things that have already happened, just as they came to pass, and the things now occurring as they are now happening, and things future in the order in which they shall be accomplished. Admitting, therefore, the proof which events happening as predicted afford, I do not disbelieve, but I believe, obedient to God.¹

His conversion was based, as was Justin's, upon the unique character of scriptural prophecy. One other salient piece of knowledge about Theophilus' life is available. According to Eusebius, he was Antioch's sixth bishop, appointed sometime near A.D. 168.

It has been said that he composed several commentaries on the gospels and was actually the earliest writer to do so, but none of them are extant. All that we possess of his several writings are three short books from Ad

Autolycum. These works discuss the absurdities of idolatry, the teachings of the prophets, the creation story (explained allegorically) and the superiority of Christianity (on subjects dealing with morality). Quasten has concluded, on the basis of a close reading of Theophilus' treatment of the gospels and the epistles of Paul, that the bishop of Antioch was probably the first ancient Christian to clearly teach the inspiration of the New Testament.\(^1\) Also, his work seems to suggest that it was originally an oral discussion with a man by the name of Autolycus and that this discussion was recorded extemporaneously. The obvious exception to this theory would be book three, chapters twenty and following, where he deals with both biblical and Roman chronology. Theophilus might well have been the founder of the science of biblical chronology.\(^2\) Before discussing his particular use of the term Logos, one further comment is in order. It seems that he was also the first person to use the word "trinity" (\textit{trias}) as a designation for the union of the God-head.\(^3\) In Theophilus' own words, we read that the three days which were before the luminaries, are types of the Trinity, of God, and His Word, and His Wisdom.\(^4\)

\(^1\)Quasten, p. 239.
\(^4\)Ibid.
Theophilus' contribution to the theory of the Logos is important even though he has little to say on the subject. Concerning the origin of the Logos he writes:

God, then, having His own Word internal (logon endiatheton) within His own bowels, begat Him, emitting Him along with His own wisdom before all things. He had this Word as a helper in the things that were created by Him, and by Him He made all things. He is called "governing principle" (archê), because He rules, and is Lord of all things fashioned by Him.¹

Although this statement, concerning the origin and genesis of the Logos, is similar to those of the other apologists, Theophilus has added a new twist to their understanding of the activity of the Logos. The Logos had been characterized as a "rational principle" and "principle of immortality," but its judicial side was emphasized by Theophilus.

Theophilus continues this original thought about the Logos, in the following passage. Danielou's translation reads:

The Word of God is also his Son, not in the sense in which the poets talk of sons of God born from carnal union, but in accordance with that which the Truth teaches of the Word which ever exists immanent (endiathetos) in the heart of the Father. Before anything existed, the Father had him as his counsellor (symboulos), since he is his mind and thought (nous kai phronēsis). But when God willed to give reality to what he decided, he begat this Word as external to himself (prophorikos), and as the firstborn of all creation, without being himself deprived of the Word, but

So it seems, Theophilus was the first Christian writer to directly employ the distinction between Logos immanent (endiathetos) and expressed (prophorikos), that is between the interior thought and uttered word. Although this distinction is usually attributed to the Stoic schools of thought with their metaphysical orientation, Theophilus' work generally seems less inclined towards a metaphysical explanation of the Logos. And even though he employs rationalistic language at points (such as, characterizing the Logos as the "mind and thought" of God), he seems to think that "truth originates with revelation," rather than merely being confirmed by it. One further point should be made before the concluding statement of this study. Theophilus' work is full of allusions to, and indeed, recitations of the Scriptures; and yet, as was the case with Tatian and Athenagoras, he took little notice of the historical manifestation of the Logos.


2This distinction corresponds to the Latin ratio and sermo. See Danielou, History, p. 353.

3Harnack, p. 195. In contrast to Athenagoras. Further reflection on his understanding of the concept of the Truth is needed before one can posit the extent to which this is the case.
V. CONCLUSION

The Nature and Significance of the Logos-Speculation

Having conducted this all-too-brief interview with a relatively obscure group of thinkers, I must now expose what I believe to be the nature of their Logos-speculation.

Faced with persecution and with the insufferable attitudes of the non-Christian community, these apologists pleaded for the toleration of Christianity on the grounds that it possessed an even higher philosophical integrity than their own ancient wisdom. And how did they support such a view? In answering this question, Justin the Martyr is the most explicit of our four defenders. For him the Logos, as the mind or reason of God, is located wherever the functioning of reason occurs. Socrates condemned Greek religion when he was intellectually incited by the Logos. However, Socrates (and such others) possessed only a portion of the Logos, seemingly too small a portion to permit his spiritual successors (the Middle Platonist) to overcome demonic influence and recognize the Christ as the whole Logos incarnate.

The biblical moorings for this type of speculation were obvious to the apologists. The creation story tells of the genesis of man in this manner: "And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness....[and]..."
so God created man in his own image, in the image of God
created he him."1 The "image and likeness of God" was
generally accepted to be the hypostatized divine reason
implanted in man by the creator. Further substantiation
for this view could be found in the first chapter of the
Gospel of John, as was discussed in chapter two of this
study.2 In verse one we read that the Logos was in the
beginning with God and indeed was God. All four apolo-
gists, Justin, Tatian, Athenagoras and Theophilus, tried
to make this point with the same clarity and force as the
Gospel. Reading into this Logos its traditional philoso-
phical usage, that is as hypostatized reason, would only
serve to universalize the gospel message, so they thought.
As for its activity, that Logos "ἐν τῷ φῶς ἐκ τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ
ho φῶτιζει πάντα ἀνθρώπον εἰς τὸν κόσμον."3
From the passages cited in this study, I believe that it
is certain that Justin (and perhaps Tatian) thought that
every man enters the universe with this Logos, this speck
(spark) of reason, this ray of light, as a priori content.
Gilson restates and expands this point by paraphrasing
Justin:

1Genesis 1:26-27 (K.J.V.). See G. C. Berkouwer,
Studies in Dogmatics: Man the Image of God (Grand Rapids:

2See pp. 30-32 of this study.

3"was the true light which lighteth every man who
cometh into the world." I left the commas out to approxi-
mate the apologists' possible reading.
We have learned (John 1:9), Justin says, that the Word enlightens every man who comes into this world; but we also know, from the same source (John 1:14), that the Word is Christ: whence there follows, by strict scriptural reasoning, that even before the coming of Christ, all the philosophers who followed the light of reason (logos) have shared in the light of the Word (Logos), that is, of Christ.¹

As was demonstrated in the second chapter of this study, the context of the prologue in John one and the entire gospel story clearly reveals the subject of both verses one and nine.² The divine incarnation, in all its glory, is here disclosed in the flesh and blood man called Jesus. If this contextual witness is observed in translation, the antecedent of the participle "coming" (erchomenon), in verse nine of John's gospel, would be "the light" (to phōs) and not "man" (anthrōpon).³ It was Christ's coming into the world that was prophesied, that happened and that now extends enlightenment. In other words, it was by virtue of Christ's and not man's "coming" that enlightenment was offered and accepted. How such enlightenment is offered and accepted is another matter, which is delineated throughout the rest of John's gospel.

¹Gilson, History, p. 13, note 16.

²See pp. 30-32 of this study.

³The K.J.V. renders this verse in the following manner: "That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Cf. the N.A.S. rendering. See Berkouwer, Revelation, pp. 237-261.
The problem especially for Justin and to a lesser extent for Tatian was no mere jeu de mots or solecism, but the powerful influence of a particular Weltanschauung on their exegesis. None of the apologists discussed here, whether describing the relationship of God to Logos or of Logos to man, seemed to be aware that their use of metaphysical terminology to universalize and to make appealing the gospel message might indeed disguise an internal dialectic of incompatible motives. They were compelled to witness the Truth of the Scriptures, and yet, fearful and skeptical of the Hebrew antithesis between true and false prophecy. For this reason Justin claimed that pagan philosophy was only talking abstractly about the Logos while the Scriptures had been teaching it with more clarity and thereby concealed this antithesis "behind an assumed mere difference of degree of clarity of insight."^1

^1It is this reader's understanding that a radical departure from previous Greek thought is precisely John's intention. The philosophers proclaimed that man entered the world with the logos (rational powers), a belief which most early Christian thinkers held to be true. But the non-Christian thinkers included something more in this idea than the Christians were aware. They exaggerated the place of the rational in life, and contended it was the origine of meaning, the way, the truth and the life. John's gospel is clearly a refutation of this belief. According to him, Christ is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6), and no substitute or accommodation is necessary. 

^2Discussed in chapter one of this study., pp. 6-8. 

^3Runner, Relation, p. 75.
The significance of the Logos-speculation is considerable. The early church theologians were quick to realize that this explicit sort of theorizing displayed an inherent tendency to evolve into various forms of subordinationism and emanationism. However, the many heresies which were distinguished and censured as a result of this realization continued to frustrate the Christian community for sometime. Bethune-Baker believes that the apologists did not, as a result of this tendency, "transform the genuine gospel of Christ into a Natural Theology."^1 Yet the apologists did understand redemption as an enlightenment built on a rational foundation.^2 Perhaps the most succinct summary of the character and significance of the Logos-speculation (especially as it was enunciated by Justin the Martyr) is found in Lietzmann's book, The Founding of the Church Universal.

[The Logos] became the "new law-giver," although the "new, eternal, and final" law was the old law of rational virtue long recognized by the sages, a law which men must obey in complete freedom of will if they would be saved....Christianity of this kind was a genuinely philosophical system, constructed of familiar elements. The idea of God was borrowed from popular philosophy and, even in the expressions employed, corresponded with what we can find among the religious minded Stoics in the first century....Already in John's gospel, Jesus Christ has been described as the Logos of God. Whereas, in John, this identifies-

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^1Bethune-Baker, p. 160.

^2Kelly, p. 169.
tion was meant to abrogate the historical limitations of Jesus's life, and to raise it to eternal significance, we find in Justin a tendency almost in the contrary direction. The purpose was to render it impossible to reject the authority of Christ's teaching in this way, and to make it cast light on the examination conducted by reason. Jesus was indeed the incarnate divine reason, and consequently everything truly reasonable on this earth must in the end agree with Christianity .... In whatever ways this doctrine may have penetrated in detail into Justin's working ideas, and however strange it may seem when contrasted with the early Christian ideas, Justin and his fellow-warriors introduced it into speculative theology, where it immediately dominated all thought, and continued to do so triumphantly for many centuries.¹

All four of the apologists, discussed in this study, abstracted the cosmological Logos and expressed it in concepts hitherto used only to express the autonomy of reason. This activity gave rise to the Logos-speculation which, although later exposed as heretical, served as the vehicle for the entry of the Greek philosophical theme of the a priori into Christian thought patterns. In this way the road towards the acceptance of a natural theology was paved.

A Resolution of the Epistemological Problem

It was not the purpose of this study to present a philosophical argument, with well defined premises leading to an inescapable conclusion. Rather, it was my intention to bring to the fore the origin of a "philosophical" problem, which has received relatively minor treatment among intellectual historians. This was accomplished through the utilization of a particular historical analysis. However, as the title of this section implies, I do not wish to end this study without a statement of resolve concerning the epistemological dilemma mentioned in the preface.¹

This brief closing note of resolve is an answer to the question: If Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven's analysis and critique is sustained, how otherwise might one understand the knowledge process?

With their biblical insight on the creational distinction between structure and direction, these two Dutch philosophers claimed to have rediscovered the scriptural meaning of the "heart." Through scientific observation man can distinguish a certain number of basic functional processes.² This diversity is clearly in some sort of

¹Found on p. ii of this study.

²Consisting of at least the following functions: numerical, spatial, kinematic, physical, biotic, psychic, logical, technico-formative, lingual, social, economic, aesthetic, jural, ethical, and confessional (or pistical).
irreversible order of time and also exhibits an indissoluble coherence. However, it is this coherence which suggests a deeper underlying unity. In the estimation of Dooyeweerd and many other philosophers of theory, no amount of analysis can uncover this unity. It is for this reason that he, over against the positivists and their Voraussetzugslosigkeit, distinguished the existence of another kind of knowledge, namely, a pre-scientific kind.¹ He contends that such knowledge is resident in the heart, which is the religious concentration point of man. It was this particular insight "which enabled him to wrestle free from Neokantianism and Phenomenology."² Wolters explains Dooyeweerd's usage of the term "Heart":

The Scriptures speak of this focal point also as "soul," "spirit," and "inner man." Philosophical equivalents are EGO, I, INNESS, and SELFHOOD. It is the heart in this sense which survives death, and it is by the religious redirection of the heart in regeneration that all man's temporal functions are renewed.³

Therefore, Dooyeweerd (and Vollenhoven also) distinguished two kinds of knowledge, a theoretical and pre-theoretical kind. In their view, the latter does not merely confirm the accuracy of the former, but rather, is funda-

¹That is, a knowledge based on the wholeness of existence, in an everyday, integral and naive sense, a gestalt.

²Kalsbeek, p. 349.

³Ibid.
mental for the character and the very existence of theoretical thought.

This position is remarkably similar to that suggested in the *Imitatio Christi*. In the opening sentence of book one, chapter two, we read: "There is naturally in every man a desire to know, but what profiteth knowledge without the fear of God?" The word for knowledge in this sentence is *scientia*. This no doubt was a warning against intellectualism in religion and perhaps scholasticism; for the first part of this quotation is a literal Latin translation of the opening sentence in Aristotle's *Metaphysica*.¹ *Scientia* conveys a scientifically discursive kind of knowledge which is in contrast to what we read in the *Imitatio Christi*, book three, chapter two, the knowledge that comes from hearing the eternal Word speak.²

In light of these statements, reason should be understood as a functional aspect in the structure of reality, while revelation is God's Word impressing itself on man's heart and demanding obedience. This is no *Modern devotio*. Faith (believing and/or confessing) does not stand in opposition to reason (reasoning), but as part of the func-


²Runniger, *Relation*, p. 96. When Calvin speaks about knowledge of God in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, he uses the word *cognitio* instead of *scientia*. Perhaps this term was free of the undesirable connotation.
tional cloak of man.¹ Also, it is not something lost and later returned as a donum superadditum, that is, as a gift of Grace. For Grace never stands over against Nature, as though it were some new structural entity, but against wrath.² In this context, the religious a priori of rational autonomy is rejected in favour of the religious a priori of the sovereignty of God, a rejection which can never be reversed by synthesis.³

¹D. H. Th. Vollenhoven, "Faith: Its Nature and Structure, and Its Significance for Science" (Toronto: ICS, ca. 1950), p. 1. The problem here is whether or not faith (believing) is an ontic aspect of human existence or the prefunctional activity of the heart. Replacing the term "pistical" with that of "confessional" is perhaps more correct in describing this functional activity. See fn. 2 on p. 77 of this study, for a listing of the various functional aspects and the context with which this term for believing must coincide.

²Vollenhoven, p. 6.

³In this way, both Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven believe that epistemological dualism is impossible because this a priori of the sovereignty of God does not admit the ontic existence of two separate autonomous realms.
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