

Chapter Two: A universe in movement

Fr Gerry Hughes: ‘Everything is sacred.’¹

Ps 102/103.10: ‘God does not treat us according to our sins not repay us according to our faults.’

Introduction

We shall ascertain the attributes of the universe and its parts including human persons together with its movement and goal relative to God. These attributes will include its potential and weaknesses. We will also address the attributes, movement and goal of human persons as particular parts of the universe.

A. THE UNIVERSE ACCORDING TO THE PATRISTIC THEOLOGY

The nature of the universe

We need to ascertain whether or not the universe is an entity in itself or merely a *collection* of ‘things’. St Maximus stated that ‘the whole creation is one, as if it were another human being’² indicating the oneness of the universe. He also stated that ‘the whole world, made up of visible and invisible things, is man and conversely that man made up of body and soul is a world.’³ This implies that the universe as a whole and its parts has both material and spiritual aspects like a human person. This is consistent with God loving all things.

The universe is distinct from God because it is governed by time (*chronos*, χρόνος), distance (*diastema*, διάστημα) or space (*χωρα*, τόπος), matter, and number (*arithmos*, ἀριθμός). It is therefore subject to change. Because of this distinction, the universe and its parts are imperfect relative to God and will sometimes deviate from the divine Plan. Nevertheless, this Plan gives the universe a potential to work with God and unite with Him.

The Logos and the union between God and the universe

We have ascertained that the God of Love influences the universe. There would therefore be a result of that influence relative to God. Such a movement and result could be regarded as a divine Plan. A divine Plan can be termed a *Logos* (Λόγος). Christian scripture states that the ‘*Logos* (Word) is God,’⁴ a *Logos* can mean the Idea or Plan of something and as the *Logos* is divine, that Plan *will* be fulfilled in accordance with the divine will. Accordingly, St Maximus stated that there is a ‘grand Plan of God ... infinitely pre-existing before all the ages’ with the goal being ‘the *union* (*enosis*, ἔνωσις) between ... Creator and creation.’⁵

The Logos and logoi

St Maximus also stated that the goal is not merely of the universe as a whole as he described

¹ Gerard W. Hughes, *Cry of Wonder* (London: Continuum, 2014) p. 264.

² St. Maximus, *Amb* 41.9; PG 91, col. 1312A; trans. NC-AMB2, p. 115.

³ St. Maximus, *Myst* 7; PG 91; trans. CWS-MC, p. 196.

⁴ Jn 1.1.

⁵ St Maximus, *Thal* 60; PG 90, col. 621AB; trans. BL-CM, p. 124-25.

the goal as the ‘goal for which *everything* exists.’⁶ As God loves all things, a divine Plan must be directed from God towards both the universe as a whole but also its parts. The *Logos* therefore comprises many *logoi* capable of uniting with God. Parts of the universe therefore possess *logoi* with a common potentiality of uniting with God. This implies that the universe and its parts have an affinity with God and His Plan.

The *logoi* of parts of the universe are contained in the *Logos* according to St Maximus. He stated that the *Logos* ‘contained within Himself the pre-existing *logoi* of created beings’⁷ so that ‘the *logoi* of all things are steadfastly fixed ... in God.’⁸ The destiny of the universe is therefore related to the *Logos*. This concept is consistent with the fact that, if part of the universe moves towards God, the universe also moves towards God. Similarly, a collection of parts of the universe with *logoi* would move if one part moved. Collections of parts with *logoi* would therefore have a *logos*.

Beginning as a *logos*, all things have the potential for fulfilment when they acquire actual existence. All the parts of the universe therefore have in common their origin and potentiality in God. This situation is clearly compatible with God loving all things and influencing them. By terming parts of the universe with *logoi* as ‘things’⁹ or ‘creatures’¹⁰ rather than human persons, St Maximus appeared to leave open the possibility that parts of the universe other than human persons have *logoi* but he does not define which of those things with ‘natural differences and variety’¹¹ do or do not have a *logos*.

St Maximus stated that ‘all created things are positively defined by their own *logoi*’¹² and it is ‘because of (their) *logoi* (that) different things differ.’¹³ All created things therefore has a ‘specific individuality, which remains unconfused both in themselves and with respect to one another (even though) many *logoi* are one *Logos*.’¹⁴ We conclude that things with a *logoi* possess individuality relative to God.

Movement of things with logoi

St Maximus expressed the movement towards the goal in a triadic series. He states that between the apparent divine acts of ‘origin and rest, (there) stands a natural obstacle that separates them: motion’¹⁵ and that ‘rest ... is ... the end of the potential activity.’¹⁶ Coming-to-be/movement/rest (*genesis-kinesis-stasis*, γένεσις-κίνησις-στάσις) thus form a triadic series. Regarding coming-to-be and movement specifically, St Maximus stated that ‘all the things that come into being from God, whether intelligible or sensible, their coming into being is conceived of before their motion, for motion cannot precede coming into being.’¹⁷ Also, St Maximus stated that ‘everything that has received its being ... is in motion ... then

⁶ St Maximus, *Thal* 60; PG 90; trans. BL-CM. P. 124.

⁷ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.16; PG 91, col. 1080A; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 95.

⁸ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.19; PG 91, col. 1081A; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 99.

⁹ E.g., St Maximus, *Amb* 7.19; PG 91, col. 1081A; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 101.

¹⁰ E.g., St Maximus, *Amb* 7.10; PG 91, col. 1073C; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 87.

¹¹ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.15; PG 91, col. 1077C; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 95.

¹² St Maximus, *Amb* 7.19; PG 91, col. 1081B; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 101.

¹³ St Maximus, *Amb* 22.2; PG 91, col. 1256D; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 449.

¹⁴ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.15; PG 91, col. 1077C; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 95.

¹⁵ St Maximus, *Amb* 15.7; PG 91, col. 1217D; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 371.

¹⁶ St. Maximus, *Amb* 15.10; PG 91, col. 1220D; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 375.

¹⁷ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.6; PG 91, col. 1072A; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 81.

nothing that moves has yet come to rest.’¹⁸ Therefore the goal of the universe is the ‘rest’ of the above series.

St Maximus stated that ‘the end of the natural motion ... is rest (when) it attains its goal ... which is God’¹⁹ and ‘God ... is the goal of the motion of things that are moved.’²⁰ The divine energies must therefore be behind not just the goal of the universe but also the movement to it. St Maximus confirmed this by stating that ‘the many ... return ... to the One – as if to an all-powerful point of origin, or to the centre of a circle pre-containing the beginnings of the radii originating from it – insofar as the *One gathers everything together*, the many are One.’²¹

After analysing Chapter 23 of the *Ambigua* of St Maximus, Lossky concluded that ‘everything in the created world is in a state of becoming.’²² For example, that chapter states that there is a ‘single cause encompassing both the beginning and the end to which everything that exists ... owes its existence and motion.’²³

We have ascertained that God is infinite relative with the universe so that the power of the universe to move towards its goal is insignificant compared with the power of the God with whom it will unite. This power of God is through His Spirit, the Spirit of Power but He is also the Spirit of Love because God is the God of Love.²⁴

Furthermore, the universe is not united in its movement towards its goal and its movement towards its goal is not an automatic process. One aspect of the universe is that it comprises a multitude of different parts with various influences. This multiplicity is an inevitable feature in the emergence of parts of the universe able to respond to God’s influence. These parts cannot unite with God without His influence and, even though His assistance is always available, God’s influence has to compete with other influences in the universe. If God overrode these influences without any contribution from the universe, it would be merely an empty vessel without an independent identity. If the universe overcame God’s influence, the result of His influence would be thwarted and would have no purpose.

The nature of matter

Matter is in all things. More often than not, it is a part of something else and not necessarily only in one thing. Nevertheless, most parts of the universe have no knowledge of God nor what it means to move for or against His Plan for the universe. Matter is not therefore against God, and accordingly, St Maximus stated that ‘nothing created ... by God is evil.’²⁵ Similarly, he stated that ‘there is nothing evil in creatures except misuse.’²⁶ These citations support scripture which stated that the universe is ‘good’.²⁷ Therefore, ‘evil is not considered in the substance of creatures but in mistaken and irrational movements.’²⁸ Matter without *logoi* does not oppose the divine Plan and the infinite divine power as it only acts as

¹⁸ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.3; PG 91, col. 1069B; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 77.

¹⁹ St Maximus, *Amb* 15.7; PG 91, col. 1217C; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 369.

²⁰ St Maximus, *Amb* 41.5, col. 1308B; NC-AMB2, p. 109.

²¹ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.20; PG 91, col. 1081C; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 101-103.

²² Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Cambridge and London: James Clarke & Co. Ltd, 1957) p. 98.

²³ St Maximus, *Amb* 23; PG 91, col. 1257D; trans. NC-AMB2, p. 3.

²⁴ 2 Tim 1.7.

²⁵ St Maximus, *Char* 3.3; PG 90; trans. CWS-MC, p. 61. Cf. 1 Tim 4.4: ‘Everything created by God is good.’

²⁶ St Maximus, *Char* 3.4; PG 90, col. 1017CD; trans. CWS-MC, p. 62.

²⁷ Gen 1.31; 1 Tim 4.4.

²⁸ St Maximus, *Char* 4.14; PG 90; trans. CWS-MC, p. 77.

appendages or potential appendages to things with *logoi*. Evil therefore does not arise in matter itself but in activity incompatible with God's Plan for the universe. However, as the universe evolves, matter always has the potential to be part of something more complex than itself. Nevertheless, matter will be involved or potentially involved in movements of those things moving eschatologically towards God. This is supported by the fact that St Maximus supports the universe as a unity and not what possesses a *logos* within the universe.

The nature of humankind

Human persons and their *logoi*:

A person relates to God and all things God loves and is therefore an individual relative to those things. St Maximus used the term 'person' unconditionally but 'being' has many categories depending on the position relative to God. We shall therefore use the term person rather than being. We have ascertained above that the being and existence of things depend upon having a *logos*. It is also the *logos* that gives individuality.

St Maximus stated that God 'creates an inner condition of desire and love among ... things capable of desire and love.'²⁹ As human persons are capable of love, they are capable of discovering and relating to God, we would expect human persons would possess *logoi*. Accordingly, in the context of human persons, St Maximus stated that they have a '*logos* of eternal being that ... preexists in God.'³⁰ They would therefore be in a privileged position of being able to understand the divine Plan and work with God. St Maximus also stated:

God has created us in order that we may become partakers of the divine nature, in order that we may enter into eternity, and that we may appear like unto Him, being deified by that grace out of which all things that exist have come, and which brings into existence everything that before had no existence.³¹

Human persons are part of the universe so that the distinction between God and the universe is also between God and humankind with St Maximus stating that there is a 'chasm between God and man.'³²

Body, soul and heart:

In the context of relating to God, human persons have a natural advantage over other beings in that they have 'a natural longing and desire for ... God.'³³ Similarly, St Maximus stated that 'when God created human nature, ... He furnished it with ... a pleasure whereby (they) would be able to enjoy God (with) the natural desire of the mind for God.'³⁴ The context of the latter reference was that Adam squandered this desire for God but this does not appear to undermine the universality of the natural desire for God by a human person. It is notable that St Maximus regards human persons as 'intellectual beings' but does not state if there any other such beings. This 'natural desire' indicates that a human person is able to respond to

²⁹ St Maximus, *Amb* 23.3; PG 91, col. 1260A; trans. NC-AMB2, p. 7.

³⁰ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.22; PG 91, col. 1084B; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 105.

³¹ St Maximus, *Ep* 43; PG 91, col. 640BC; trans. LOS-MT, p. 90.

Also, St Maximus, *Thal* 22, PG 90; trans. BL-CM, p. 118.

³² St Maximus, *Amb* 10.84; PG 91, col. 1172A; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 279.

³³ St Maximus, *Amb* 48.2; PG 91, col. 1361A; trans. NC-AMB2, p. 213.

³⁴ St Maximus, *Thal* 61; PG 90, col. 628A; trans. BL-CM, p. 131.

God's love of all things discussed in Chapter One. There is therefore a particular potential for human persons to relate to God.

As, according to St Pseudo-Dionysius, 'the Deity has endless love for humanity'³⁵ and 'the soul was given to (man) because it is the very image (*eikon*, εἰκὼν) of its Creator,'³⁶ a human person has an *affinity* with God. Similarly, St Maximus stated that 'we have been created according to the image of God, an image which exists in a realm above us, and draws us to itself.'³⁷

However, a human person includes a body and not only a soul. This consistent with God loving the body as He loves all things. St Maximus stated that a human person comprises a 'rational soul (*psyche*, ψυχή) and body (*soma*, σῶμα).'³⁸ He also stated that 'the soul (is) the soul of a man (and) the body (is) the body of a man'³⁹ and 'it is inconceivable to speak of the soul and body except in relation to each other.'⁴⁰ 'The (connection between) soul and body as a whole (cannot) be dissolved,'⁴¹ the soul 'receiving its existence at the moment of conception simultaneously with the body.'⁴² Similarly, St Irenaeus stated that 'the soul (is) part of the man but certainly not the man.'⁴³ The person is therefore not the soul with the body as an attachment.

In the soul, there are two groups of faculties. According to St Maximus, 'the soul ... consists of an intellectual and a vital faculty, the former moved freely according to its will, the latter remaining without choice in accordance with nature. The contemplative power belongs to the intellectual faculty (*nous*) and the active power belongs to the vital faculty, practical reason or *logos*.'⁴⁴ To the first faculty belong 'intelligent mind, wisdom, contemplation, knowledge, and enduring knowledge.' To the second belong 'reasoning, prudence, action, virtue and faith.'⁴⁵

St Maximus also stated 'the body is an instrument of the ... human ... and the whole soul permeates the whole body and gives it life and motion'⁴⁶ as 'all bodies are by nature without (spiritual) movement.'⁴⁷ He also stated that because God cares

for what is lower (the soul) should make prudent use of the body, with a view to ordering it to the mind through the virtues, and acquaint it with God as its fellow servant, itself mediating to the body the indwelling presence of its Creator, making God Himself – who bound together the body and soul – the body's own unbreakable bond of immortality.⁴⁸

St Maximus therefore implied that the soul generates spiritual movement and, although the movement of soul and body are distinct, they can be compatible.

³⁵ St Pseudo-Dionysius, *Eccl Hier*; PG 3; trans. CWS-PD, p. 220.

³⁶ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.31; PG 91, col. 1092B; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 119.

³⁷ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.33; PG 91, col. 1093B; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 123.

³⁸ St Maximus, *Amb* 42.26; PG 91, col. 1341D; trans. NC-AMB2, p. 173.

³⁹ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.42; PG 91, col. 1101B; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 139-41.

⁴⁰ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.43; PG 91, col. 1101C; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 141.

⁴¹ St Maximus, *Amb* 42.9; PG 91, col. 1321D-1324A; trans. NC-AMB2, p. 137.

⁴² St Maximus, *Amb* 42.10; PG 91, col. 1324C; trans. NC-AMB2, p. 139.

⁴³ St Irenaeus, *Haer* 5.6.1; PG 7; trans. ANF1, p. 531.

⁴⁴ St Maximus, *Myst* 5; PG 91; trans. CWS-MC, p. 190.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 191.

⁴⁶ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.39; PG 91, col. 1100A; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 135.

⁴⁷ St Maximus, *Char* 3.31; PG 90; trans. CWS-MC, p. 65.

⁴⁸ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.31; PG 91, col. 1092B; trans. NC-AMB1, p.119-21.

For a human person to work with God, in what St Maximus termed the ‘active state’, the body has to be ‘a beast of burden’⁴⁹ to the soul just as the soul must be subservient to God. When the soul moves naturally towards God, it adapts the body towards God.⁵⁰ We conclude from these references that God relates to a human person through the soul. St Pseudo-Macarius therefore defined the soul as ‘the interior of man.’⁵¹

We concluded above that God works through parts of the universe through the Spirit so that divine energies are transformed into natural energies. Accordingly, St Maximus stated that ‘God created us in such a way that we are similar to Him ... for through participation we are imbued with the exact characteristics of His goodness.’⁵² As God acts through the soul, it must be in the soul where the transformation from divine to natural energies takes place. This may imply that God has a particular task for beings with souls but this does not necessarily rule out His influence on other parts of the universe.

Accordingly, St Maximus stated ‘the soul lies between God and matter, with the potentialities to be united to either – I mean the intellect’s potential for union with God, and sense perception’s potential to unite with matter.’⁵³ Such matter is not however merely the matter of the human body but all matter as St Maximus stated that ‘worshippers here below (should) worship ... God ... so that *all things* may be filled with the glory of God’ and ‘this is why man was created by the hand of God and was honoured by being made in the image of God.’⁵⁴ We therefore conclude that both bodies and souls of human persons are essential to the divine Plan for the universe.

The heart:

It is the heart which receives the Spirit of God who is associated with fire. St Maximus in a tome addressed to Marinus, stated that ‘you have the whole warmth of the Spirit, and possess fire in the earth of the heart.’⁵⁵ This is shown in scripture⁵⁶ and by St Maximus who compared the ‘gifts of the Spirit’ or divine energies with fire.⁵⁷ In the opinion of Louth, the origin of the idea of fire in the heart in the works of St Maximus is the spiritual homilies of St Pseudo-Macarius.⁵⁸ We also found a considerable similarity in approach between the two saints and so will make use of the writings of both.

St Pseudo-Macarius stated that the ‘grace (of) the Holy Spirit ... writes (our) hearts,’⁵⁹ grace ... being a gift given by God ... according to the Apostle.⁶⁰ He also stated that the Spirit ‘puts hearts on fire’⁶¹ and that when the ‘lamp of grace ... is especially trimmed’ a person can be ‘intoxicated by the love of God’ also with the association with ‘fire’.⁶² Furthermore, he stated that ‘the Spirit infuses (the person) with a burning love of the Lord (and becomes)

⁴⁹ St Maximus, *Gnost* 2.65; PG 90; trans. CWS-MC, p. 161.

⁵⁰ After St Maximus, *Amb* 10; PG 91, col. 1112C; trans. LOU-MC, p. 100.

⁵¹ St Pseudo-Macarius, *Hom Spir* 7.8; PG 34; CWS-PM, p. 80.

⁵² St Maximus, *Amb* 7.38; PG 91, col. 1097; trans. NC-AMN1, p. 133.

⁵³ St Maximus, *Amb* 10.106; PG 91, 1193D; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 321.

⁵⁴ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.35; PG 91, col. 1096A; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 127.

⁵⁵ St Maximus, *Th Pol* 7; PG 91; trans. LOU-MC, p. 181.

⁵⁶ Mt 3.11, Lk 3.16.

⁵⁷ St Maximus, *Char* 1.54; PG 90; trans. CWS-MC, p. 40.

⁵⁸ Andrew Louth, *Maximus the Confessor* (London & New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 216.

⁵⁹ St Pseudo-Macarius, *Hom Spir* 15.20; PG 34; trans. CWS-PM, p. 116.

⁶⁰ Rom 3.24; 15.15.

⁶¹ St Pseudo-Macarius, *Hom Spir* 25.9; PG 34; trans. CWS-PM, p. 163.

⁶² St Pseudo-Macarius, *Hom Spir* 8.2; PG 34; trans. CWS-PM, p. 81.

always being enflamed *with the love of God*.⁶³ Experiencing the love of God by the Spirit therefore involves the heart.⁶⁴ Similarly, St Basil of Caesarea stated that ‘through the Spirit, we become intimate with God’⁶⁵ and referring to the Apostle who stated that ‘God has sent the Spirit ... into our hearts.’⁶⁶

According to St Maximus, we can share divine love. St Maximus stated that we cannot ‘assign one form of love to God and another to ... beings.’⁶⁷ St Pseudo-Macarius states that ‘if anyone loves God, God also shares His love with him’⁶⁸ as a response. Love is therefore common to the divine and equivalent temporal energies which are linked by the power of the Spirit of Love.⁶⁹ Consistently, St Maximus stated that those who ‘acquire perfect love’ allow it to ‘control their whole lives.’⁷⁰ Furthermore, he stated that the perfect soul ‘rejoices unceasingly in divine love’⁷¹ and has a ‘drive is wholly connected to God.’⁷²

Divine love is the love of all things so that the love of a human person with the Spirit must be ‘one and the same’ quoting scripture.⁷³ We conclude that the task of human persons is to allow God to work through them to achieve the union of the universe with Himself.

St Pseudo-Macarius also stressed the importance of the heart relative to the rest of the person. As someone ‘who possesses love possesses God,’ he must relate to God in the same manner.⁷⁴ He stated that ‘the heart directs and governs all the other organs of the body. When grace pastures the heart, it rules over all the members and the thoughts.’⁷⁵ The heart is thus the centre of spiritual activity as, if the heart is filled with divine love through grace of the Spirit, the soul must be in its most perfect state. Because the Spirit enters the human heart, He can be termed the ‘God of Within’.

The natural path

We have ascertained that God acts through the soul. In that situation, human persons ‘exist *naturally* as moulded by God and as honoured creatures.’⁷⁶ He stated that ‘the intention moved according to the principle of *nature* will have an *activity* habitually corresponding in all things (relative) to God.’⁷⁷ In other words, acting with God is according to human nature as intended by God. As such activities have a goal in God, they can be regarded as being on a ‘natural path’ towards their goal.

We ascertained above that coming-to-be precedes motion in the context of the triadic series coming-to-be, movement, rest but, as this is a general principle, it applies to human persons. St Maximus therefore termed such a movement as ‘natural motion ,, inclined to th

⁶³ St Pseudo-Macarius, *Ep 2* (The Great Letter); PG 34; trans. CWS-PM, p. 266.

⁶⁴ 1 Cor 3.16: ‘God’s Spirit dwells in you.’ Also, Jn 14.17; Rom 8.9, 11; 2 Tim 1.14.

⁶⁵ St Basil of Caesarea, *Spirit* 19.49; PG 32; trans. SVP-BG, p. 77. See also Rom 5.5.

⁶⁶ Gal 4.6.

⁶⁷ St Maximus, *Ep 2*; PG 91, col. 401D; trans. LOU-MC, p. 90. Cf. 1 Jn 4.7.

⁶⁸ St Pseudo-Macarius, *Hom Spir* 15.22; PG 34; trans. CWS-PM, p. 116.

⁶⁹ Gal 5.22: ‘The fruit of the Spirit is love ...’.

⁷⁰ St Maximus, *Char* 4.39; PG 90; trans. CWS-MC, p. 79.

⁷¹ St Maximus, *Char* 1.34, PG 90; trans. CWS-MC, p. 38.

⁷² St Maximus, *Char* 3.98; PG 90; trans. CWS-MC, p. 75.

⁷³ St Maximus, *Ep 2*; PG 91, col. 401C-404A; trans. LOU-MC, p. 90. Lk 10.27 and 1 Jn 4.20

⁷⁴ St Maximus, *Char* 4.100; PG 90, CWS-MC, p. 87.

⁷⁵ St Pseudo-Macarius, *Hom Spir* 15.20; PG 34; trans. CWS-PM, p. 116.

⁷⁶ St Maximus, *ThPol* 7; PG 91, col. 80B; trans. LOU-MC, p. 185.

⁷⁷ St Maximus, *Or Dom*; PG 90; trans. CWS-MC, p. 116.

end established by the Creator.⁷⁸ In other words, the human person thus “moves” (towards) God in accordance with the *logos* of eternal being.⁷⁹ This natural path will follow the divine Plan or *Logos* in the movement towards unity with God so that the activity of a human person following the natural path is eschatological.

St Maximus stated that ‘the principles of all the *beings* that exist ... preexist and are immovably fixed in God ...and remain always drawing closer to their predetermined principles through *natural* motion (and) receive well-being through virtue.’⁸⁰ He described ‘the end of the motion of things that are moved is to rest within eternal well-being itself.’⁸¹ We therefore have a triadic series of ‘being/well-being/eternal well-being.’⁸² As we shall discuss, St Maximus stated that ‘being and eternal-being belong solely to God, who is their author, but the intermediate mode depends upon our inclination and motion.’⁸³ ‘If voluntary activity makes use of nature (or is) according to nature ... it will receive well-being’ from God. Those on the natural path will therefore be in a state of well-being.

The weakness of the human person and the unnatural state

Despite the fact that human nature was due to God and human persons deviate from the natural path, according to scripture, ‘it is ... God’s will that everything should be united with Him although some may turn away from such a result.’⁸⁴

According to St Maximus, the essence of the problem is self-love. He stated that ‘self-love (*philautia*, φιλαυτία) is ‘the first sin’⁸⁵ and the ‘mother of vices’.⁸⁶ There is therefore a ‘tyranny (arising from) self-love’⁸⁷ presumably because it is a tyranny to self and not to God. Lives subject to that ‘tyranny’ are centred on a multitude of self-centres with different goals, none of which are based upon God. Human lives under self-love therefore have no common direction towards God and are therefore static relative to God and alien to the natural path. Those who have turned away from the natural path would no longer be able to work with God.

Because the works of prisoners of self-love have no common direction as they have a multiplicity of goals of their own making, we should not term their position as a ‘path’ as it is without true motion. We shall instead term it the ‘unnatural state’ and term works against the divine Plan as sins or works of evil. Evil is not a power that can seriously compete with God as it is a multiplicity divided in itself.

Regarding ‘being’, a person in the unnatural state will be in a state of ill-being⁸⁸ or non-

⁷⁸ St Maximus, *Amb* 7; PG 91, col. 1088B; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 111.

⁷⁹ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.22; PG 91, col. 1084B; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 105. CF. Acts 17.28.

⁸⁰ St Maximus, *Amb* 42.15; PG 91, col. 1329AB; trans. NC-AMB2, p. 149.

⁸¹ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.10; PG 91, col. 1073C; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 87. Also, St Maximus, *Amb* 65.3; PG 91, col. 1392CD; trans. NC-AMB2, p. 279.

⁸² St Maximus, *Amb* 10.12; PG 91, col. 1116B; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 167.

St Maximus, *Amb* 65.2; PG 91, col. 1392A; trans. NC-AMB2, p. 277.

⁸³ St Maximus, *Amb* 10.2; PG 91, col. 1116B; trans. NC-AMB1, pp. 167-69.

⁸⁴ 1 Tim 2.3-4.

⁸⁵ St Maximus, *Ep* 2; PG 91, col. 397C; trans. LOU-MC, p. 88.

⁸⁶ St Maximus, *Char* 2.59; PG 90; trans. CWS-MC, p. 55.

⁸⁷ St Maximus, *Ep* 2; PG 91, col. 397A; LOU-MC, p. 87. See also *Thal* 61; PG 90; trans. BL-CM, p. 134.

⁸⁸ St Maximus, *Amb* 65; PG 91, col. 1392C; trans. NC-AMB2, p. 279.

being instead of well-being which may become eternal ill-being⁸⁹ instead of eternal well-being. Those with nonbeing have no existence.⁹⁰ As ‘eternal ill-being’ would be alien from God, it would be separation from God⁹¹ or spiritual death so that the wages of sin is death.⁹²

Existence according to St Maximus commences at conception⁹³ and is preceded by nonexistence.⁹⁴ As those with nonbeing have no existence, in a sense, those who fall into the unnatural state step off the universe as intended by God but retain the opportunity to return to the natural path. Because ultimately, there is only existence or nonexistence, there is no such thing as post-existence.⁹⁵ If those with eternal existence fell, it would be similar to the Origenist theory condemned by St Maximus.

St Maximus stated that ‘our sins make a division (*diairesis*, διαίρεσις) between ourselves and God.’⁹⁶ It could therefore be said that there are two parallel universes: one with God and one without. Such a division is clearly more serious than the distinction between God and the universe which does not prevent unity. Morally, this division is between things that follow God and those which do not.

Free will:

The principle of free will of human persons is supported by St Maximus. For example, he stated that

man in the beginning was created according to the image of God, surely so that he might be born of the Spirit in the exercise of his own free choice, and to acquire in addition the likeness by the keeping of the divine commandment, so that the same man, being by nature a creation of God, might also be the son of God and God through the Spirit.⁹⁷

St Maximus stated that there is a natural will (θέλημα φυσικόν) which he defined as ‘the essential desire of things corroborative of nature.’⁹⁸ The natural will therefore belongs to the *logos* of nature (λόγος φύσεως) which is nature in accordance with the *Logos*. The natural will is ‘the power that longs for the natural’⁹⁹ and the desire for good.

Nevertheless, St Maximus states that God ‘does not prevent’ a human person ‘from voluntarily directing himself (toward) the passions of the flesh ... whose tyranny comes about by a choice of free will and not by nature.’¹⁰⁰ Unfortunately, ‘our free will (can be accompanied by) the power of corruption.’¹⁰¹ Free will is thus both an opportunity to work with God and to turn against God.

⁸⁹ St Maximus, *Amb* 65.3; PG 91, col. 1392D; trans. NC-AMB2, p. 281. St Maximus sometimes uses ‘nonbeing’ instead of ‘ill-being’ in the same context, e.g. *Amb* 7.23.

⁹⁰ St Maximus, *Amb* 10.74; PG 91, col. 1164D; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 265.

⁹¹ St Maximus, *Char* 2.93, PG 90; trans. CWS-MC, p. 60.

⁹² Rom 6.23. This notion led to the controversy which came to the fore in the Augustine/Pelagius dispute as to whether or not *physical* death is due to sin.

⁹³ St Maximus, *Amb* 42.10; PG 91, col. 1324C; trans. NC-AMB2, p. 140.

⁹⁴ St Maximus, *Amb* 41.9; PG 91, col. 1312B; trans. NC-AMB”, p. 116.

⁹⁵ St Maximus, *Amb* 42.13; PG 91, col. 1325D; trans. NC-AMB2, p. 145.

⁹⁶ St Maximus, *Lib Asc* 40; PG 90; trans. ACW-MC, p. 130.

⁹⁷ St Maximus, *Amb* 42.31; PG 91, col. 1345D; trans. NC-AMB2, p. 181, also VB-CL, p. 182.

⁹⁸ St Maximus, *Th Pol* 14; PG 91, col. 153A; trans. PS-EA, p. 201.

⁹⁹ St Maximus, *Th Pol* 3; PG 91; trans. LOU-MC, p. 193 after Clement of Alexandria.

¹⁰⁰ St Maximus, *Or Dom*; PG 90; trans. CWS-MC, p. 117.

¹⁰¹ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.11; PG 91, col. 1076B; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 89.

The Fall

We have ascertained that human persons naturally work with God but can act ‘contrary to nature.’¹⁰² Over the first 13 billion years of the history of the universe, there would be no beings capable of making a choice between following God and His Plan or following the course of self-love. That choice would be made when the spiritual development was at its infancy. St Irenaeus therefore regarded Adam as ‘an infant’¹⁰³ presumably because the understanding of God by Adam would still be in its infancy. Furthermore, the period between the first capability of making the first choice and making the first unnatural choice would likely be extremely short and inevitable. Accordingly, St Maximus stated that it must therefore be expected that Adam ‘squandered (his) spiritual capacity ... at the instant he was created.’¹⁰⁴

Nevertheless, since the fall, humankind spiritually developed and became able not only in making better choices but discovering God by contemplation. In scripture, there are examples of human persons relating to God. For example, Eve acknowledged God help after bearing Cain¹⁰⁵ and Abraham had such a close relationship with God that He was willing to sacrifice his son Isaac if that was the divine will. Relationships with God meant that human persons could draw upon God’s help to maintain a position on the natural path.

What has been largely ignored by modern religious was the critical point when a human person made a first step in finding God and also His Plan. They have chosen to emphasize the faltering response of his discovery rather its tremendous potential. This distortion of the true nature of the Fall continued long after the realization that the story of the Fall in Genesis was part of a device to explain a dated instantaneous creation.

If, in the extremely unlikely event that Adam had followed God and not sinned, he would have acted according to the divine will in His image and likeness (*homoiosis*, ὁμοίωσις) of God.¹⁰⁶ As Adam was made in God’s image, he would have had the potentiality of uniting with God. However, as he turned away from God, he could not remain *like* Him because he became under the sway of self-love. However, likeness with God can be restored. St Maximus stated that a human person adds ‘the likeness of God by means of the virtues’¹⁰⁷ and then ‘the Lord (becomes) their adopted father through virtue and knowledge.’¹⁰⁸ He also states that ‘from knowledge and virtue, the divine likeness is manifested, and by means of them the steadfast love of God alone is maintained among the worthy.’¹⁰⁹ It is clear that saints related with God and allow God to work through them, thus allowing likeness to God to be restored.

Nevertheless, despite this, the lure of self-love remained so the division in humankind remained. As a result, human persons continued to fall into the unnatural state and remained ‘constrained (by) sin.’¹¹⁰ The division between the natural path and the unnatural state has

¹⁰² St Maximus, *Amb* 41.6; PG 91, col. 1308C; trans. NC-AMB2, p. 109.

¹⁰³ St Irenaeus, *Haer* 4.38.1; PG 7; trans. ANF1, p. 521.

¹⁰⁴ St Maximus, *Thal* 61; PG 90, col. 628AB; BL-CM, p. 131.

Also, *Amb* 42.7; PG 91, col. 1321B; trans. NC-AMB2, p. 135.

¹⁰⁵ Gen 4.1.

¹⁰⁶ Gen 1.26.

¹⁰⁷ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.21; PG 91, col. 1084A; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 105.

¹⁰⁸ St Maximus, *Amb* 10.21; PG 91, col. 1121B; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 181. Also, 10.43, col. 1140B; p. 217.

¹⁰⁹ St Maximus, *Amb* 10.43; PG 91, col. 1140C; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 215.

¹¹⁰ St Maximus, *Thal* 21; PG 90; BL-CM, p. 110.

therefore remained but at a higher level than at the time of Adam.

B. THE UNIVERSE OF TEILHARD DE CHARDIN

The universe and its parts are united in their potentiality

The physical universe is a delicate balance of galaxy clusters, galaxies, stars, planets, smaller particles and life. If any part of the universe was changed, the remainder of the universe would have to adjust itself to restore its equilibrium. The universe is therefore an entity in the physical sense. Compatibility, Teilhard stated that the universe as ‘a certain ... entity’¹¹¹ and that it is ‘an organic whole.’¹¹²

In a spiritual sense, while Teilhard did not directly use *Logos* theology following the prologue of St John’s gospel, he stated that the universe ‘has a prescribed path.’¹¹³ He therefore accepted that the universe has a destiny according to the divine Plan. He also stated that matter is ‘the inexhaustible potentiality for existence and transformation.’¹¹⁴ His use of the term ‘existence’ implies that the universe acquires true existence as does the universe of St Maximus.

While St Maximus discussed things with *logoi* as distinct parts of the universe, Teilhard used the term ‘elements.’ It is these elements that ‘converge on God’¹¹⁵ so they are presumably equivalent to those parts of the universe with *logoi*. He also stated that the *Pleroma*, the union of God and the universe, is built up ‘element by element.’¹¹⁶ This could be interpreted as the unification of those parts of the universe with *logoi*.

Eschatological movement towards a goal

Teilhard frequently described the movement towards the goal as a process. For example, he stated that ‘the world (is) in (the) process of becoming,’¹¹⁷ a process which is ‘still continuing.’¹¹⁸ He described the ‘becoming’ as ‘cosmic becoming’¹¹⁹ and a ‘universal becoming.’¹²⁰ Regarding eschatological movement, Teilhard stated that ‘I accept ... that the universe is committed to a becoming which gradually constitutes it in its final form.’¹²¹

As with St Maximus, Teilhard is therefore very clear that the universe is moving towards union with God as he stated that there is ‘a process of union with God’¹²² and the ‘whole world (is) in expectation of union with God.’¹²³ The movement of the universe would therefore be under the influence of God. Teilhard, like St Maximus, also links the goal of the

¹¹¹ Teilhard, *My Universe*, 1918; 13HM, p. 199.

¹¹² Teilhard, *Note on the ‘Universal Element’ of the World*, 1918; 12WW, p. 274.

¹¹³ Teilhard, *The Divine Milieu*, 1927; 4DM, p. 69.

¹¹⁴ Teilhard, *The Heart of Matter*, 1919; 13HM, p. 76.

¹¹⁵ Teilhard, *Introduction to the Christian Life*, 1944; 10CE, p. 171.

¹¹⁶ Teilhard, *The Humanity of Christ and the Faithful*, 1920; 10CE, p. 19.

¹¹⁷ Teilhard, *The Divine Milieu*, 1927; 4DM, p. 2. Also, 12WW, p. 70. *In fieri*.

¹¹⁸ Teilhard, *Road of the West*, 1932; 11TF, p. 57.

¹¹⁹ Teilhard, *My Universe*, 1924; 9SC, p. 69.

¹²⁰ Teilhard, *Creative Union*, 1917; 12WW, p. 159. Similar *Mastery of the World and the Kingdom of God*, 1916; 12WW, p. 77. Also several incidences using ‘world’ rather than ‘universe’ or ‘universal’.

Teilhard, *The Mass on the World*, 1923; 13HM, p. 121: ‘Growth of the world borne ever onwards in the stream of universal becoming’.

Teilhard, *Cosmic Life*, 1916; 12WW, p. 70: ‘Process of becoming (of) the natural world’.

¹²¹ Teilhard, *Creative Union*, 1917; 12WW, p. 154.

¹²² Teilhard, *My Intellectual Position*, 1948; 13HM, p. 144.

¹²³ Teilhard, *The Priest*, 1918; 12WW, p. 206.

universe with 'rest'. For example, he described 'the goal ... attained by creation is ... rest.'¹²⁴ While St Maximus directly based his approach to eschatological movement upon *Logos* theology, there does not appear to be any significant difference between his approach and that of Teilhard.

The nature of matter

In some instances, Teilhard gave the impression that not all matter shares the destiny of the universe. He stated in 1919 that some matter (Type C) is 'the perishable part of ourselves.'¹²⁵ He also stated that some matter (Type B) is 'the evil principle'¹²⁶ and 'does not succeed in entering into a spiritual union,' but '*everything not assimilated by a rational soul is ... doomed to destruction*' and 'finally vanishes.'¹²⁷

However, in 1927, Teilhard stated that 'by virtue of the Creation ... and the Incarnation, nothing here is profane to those who know how to see.'¹²⁸ This statement is similar to the 'nothing created is evil' of St Maximus noted above. In 1934, he stated that 'there are no sacred or profane things, no pure or impure: there is only a good direction and a bad direction.'¹²⁹ This confirms that the universe is imperfect as implied by St Maximus. It also implies that matter is neutral and its good or evil depends on the direction dictated by the element of which it is part. In 1950, Teilhard also took an optimistic view of matter stressing its 'convergence',¹³⁰ 'consistency'¹³¹ and 'gathering'.¹³² He also implied that matter as a whole will unite with God by saying that 'the world slowly accumulates, starting with the whole of matter, what will make of it the Heavenly Jerusalem or the New Earth.'¹³³ In that case, it appears that it is only the universe as a whole which moves towards God but also its parts.

As discussed above in connection with St Maximus, all matter has potential because it is part of the universe which will become united with God. Teilhard's expression 'incarnate matter' is not therefore out of place in the context of the approach of St Maximus. Matter would also have potential if it was part of an element which could unite with God. Also, all matter is part of the universe as a whole which will unite with God.

Teilhard however made another useful point by stating that 'I ... adore ... matter'¹³⁴ and the 'universe was potentially becoming for me something that loved and could be loved.'¹³⁵ As God loves all things, matter is therefore be a vehicle for His love but it is also a vehicle for the love by things or beings in the universe. Moreover, as the universe moves towards

¹²⁴ Teilhard, *My Universe*, 1924; 9SC, p. 56.

¹²⁵ Teilhard, *The Names of Matter*, 1919; 13HM, p. 236.

¹²⁶ Teilhard, *The Names of Matter*, 1919; 13HM, p. 233.

¹²⁷ Teilhard, *The Names of Matter*, 1919; 13HM, p. 231.

¹²⁸ Teilhard, *The Divine Milieu*, 1927; 4DM, p. 24.

¹²⁹ Teilhard, *The Evolution of Chastity*, 1934; 11TF, p. 72.

¹³⁰ Teilhard, *The Heart of Matter*, 1950; 13HM, p. 50: 'Universal Centre of convergence'.

Ibid, p. 48: 'Convergence of the cosmos'.

Ibid; p. 54: The World ... is a participated Being of pleromization and convergence.

Also, *ibid*, pp. 19, 30, 36, 38, 43, 44.

¹³¹ *Ibid*; p. 34: 'I saw in ... matter ... the very consistency of the World'.

¹³² Teilhard, *The Heart of Matter*, 1950; 13HM, p. 57.

¹³³ Teilhard, *The Divine Milieu*, 1927; 4DM, p. 19.

¹³⁴ Teilhard, *Letters to Two Friends*, 1926-1952 (London: Rapp & Whiting Limited) pp. 47-48.

¹³⁵ Teilhard, *The Heart of Matter*, 1950; 13HM, p. 50.

God, its matter becomes more and more worthy to be loved as is God.

Like St Maximus, it is likely that Teilhard understood that, at the *Pleroma*, God penetrates matter. For example, Teilhard stated that ‘God will penetrate ... the universe ... as a ray of light does a crystal.’¹³⁶ However, the context of such statements casts some doubt on whether such a penetration transforms an element or its activities.

We conclude that, at worst, matter is neutral regarding good and evil as ‘matter is not active in itself’¹³⁷ unless it constitutes an entity. Nevertheless, it appears that matter is not in itself an impediment to eschatological movement but is a vehicle for love.

The nature of humankind

The uniqueness of persons:

Although Teilhard does not make use of the principle that uniqueness arises from *logoi* which are in the *Logos* as does St Maximus, he appeared to support it in an indirect manner by linking it with ‘person’. Teilhard stated that ‘a person’ is such ‘as long as he remains a self-conscious unity, that is to say, distinct’¹³⁸ and also that ‘the culmination of our *originality* is not in our individuality but in our person.’¹³⁹ There appears to be little distinction between ‘being’ and ‘personhood’ in Teilhard’s terminology. The uniqueness of a human person in theology would be compatible with that in science as the latter confirms the uniqueness of a creature on account of its genome, the full set of DNA¹⁴⁰ in each of its cells.

He stated that ‘every being ... has its own particular essence crowned with a certain quality ‘which makes it ... part of the single whole.’ This statement is in the context that a human being is both unique and part of the ‘whole ... moving towards a total end.’¹⁴¹ It appears from this that human persons according to Teilhard can be regarded as parts or elements of the universe with *logoi* in accordance with *logos* theology but moving along the natural path. In the theology of St Maximus, Teilhard’s ‘person’ would have well-being..

The body in a religious context:

In a similar manner, those working for God do so as part of humankind as a whole. Such persons are therefore essentially linked to others as implied by Teilhard above. Georgen approached this subject by considering what is a human body. Physically, it is difficult to define a person only as a collection of matter as the body acquires matter and also discards it. As the universe has attributes of time and space as well as mass, it would be absurd not to consider all attributes. Georgen therefore concluded that a body ‘is more than a field or region than it is a particular amount of matter. My body is my sphere, my space, my world (and) each body or person is co-extensive with the whole.’¹⁴² He showed that his approach is consistent with that of Teilhard by quoting his statement that ‘my own body is not these cells that belong exclusively to me: It is what, in these cells and in the rest of the world, feels my

¹³⁶ Teilhard, *The Divine Milieu*, 1927; 4DM, p. 3.

¹³⁷ David Grumett, *Teilhard de Chardin; Theology, Humanity and Cosmos* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005) p. 15.

¹³⁸ Teilhard, *Sketch of a Personalistic Universe*, 1936; 6HE, p. 67.

¹³⁹ Teilhard, *The Human Phenomenon*, 1940, Rev 1948; 1HP, p. 187.

¹⁴⁰ Oxyribonucleic acid.

¹⁴¹ Teilhard, *The Universal Element*, 1912; 12WW, p. 296.

¹⁴² Donald Georgen, ‘The Eucharistic Presence: A Process Perspective’ (London: *Teilhard Review*, Vol 9.1, 1974) p. 17.

influence and reacts against me.’¹⁴³

This approach is the same as a view from a position unrestricted by the attributes of the universe. Such a view would regard a person as what they physically comprise, their movements and relationships. It is particularly through relationships in a broad sense that the effect of a person continues beyond themselves.

The relationship between body and soul:

Teilhard describes the ‘human being’ as ‘body and soul’¹⁴⁴ as does St Maximus. He also states that ‘man (is) a spiritual being’¹⁴⁵ and that the human person’s ‘soul (has a) spiritual nature.’¹⁴⁶ A human person is therefore spiritual because of its soul.

He particularly opposes the notion that a human person comprises only a soul by stating that ‘the soul ... does not constitute a being on its own’¹⁴⁷ as ‘a spiritual soul ... cannot exist in the world in isolation’¹⁴⁸ in line with the concept of St Maximus.

However, according to St Maximus, the soul has to rule the body if the person is to move eschatologically and, in the opposite case, movement ceases. It is possible that Teilhard agrees with this principle as he states that (when) ‘the soul is bound by the flesh, the cosmos winds away backwards.’¹⁴⁹

The heart, the home of the Spirit and divine love:

Because of his Christocentricity, Teilhard did not discuss the illumination of the heart *by the Spirit*. Nevertheless, he did appear to have an understanding of the heart. According to Teilhard, the heart is the organ which accepts divine love as he states that ‘God’s love (falls) upon the human heart.’¹⁵⁰ Teilhard stated that ‘the pure heart is the heart that not only loves God above all things but sees Him present in all things.’¹⁵¹ As God loves all things, the love of the pure heart is divine love. Also, Teilhard appeared to accept that the heart is more interior than the soul as Teilhard states that a ‘pure heart (is an) organ of the higher life towards which all the soul’s hopes are directed.’¹⁵² This is similar to the view of St Pseudo-Dionysius that the heart directs all the other organs. Teilhard also implies that the divine love can be in human hearts by stating that He merges himself ‘through my heart with the very heart of God’¹⁵³ and ‘the divine will be found in our innermost hearts.’¹⁵⁴

Despite the lack of mention of the Spirit, Teilhard acknowledges that there is divine power within the person as Teilhard states that ‘the believer ... in communion with God ... makes (God’s) power ... his own’¹⁵⁵ implying that God works through human persons in love.

¹⁴³ Teilhard, *What Exactly is the Human Body?*, 1919; 9SC, p. 13.

¹⁴⁴ Teilhard, *The Human Phenomenon*, 1940; 1HP, p. 208.

¹⁴⁵ Teilhard, *What Should We Think of Transformism?*, 1930; 3VP, p. 156 in the context of monogenism.

¹⁴⁶ Teilhard, *Palaeontology and the Appearance of Man*, 1923; 2AM, p. 57 in the context of evolution. Also, *My Universe*, 1924; 9SC, p. 80n.

¹⁴⁷ Teilhard, *Sketch of a Personalistic Universe*, 1936; 6HE, 60n.

¹⁴⁸ Teilhard, *The Names of Matter*, 1919; 13HM, p. 230.

¹⁴⁹ Teilhard, *Sketch of a Personalistic Universe*, 1936; 6HE, p. 89.

¹⁵⁰ Teilhard, *The Divine Milieu*, 1927; 4DM, p. 70n.

¹⁵¹ Teilhard, *The Struggle Against the Multitude*, 1917; 12WW, p. 107.

¹⁵² Teilhard, *The Cosmic Life*, 1917; 12WW, p. 53.

¹⁵³ Teilhard, *The Divine Milieu*, 1927; 4DM, p. 21.

¹⁵⁴ Teilhard, *The Divine Milieu*, 1927; 4DM, p. 43.

¹⁵⁵ Teilhard, *Operative Faith*, 1918; 12WW, p. 247.

The natural path in movement

St Maximus defined his concept of the ‘natural’ path as a movement towards God. Similarly, Teilhard believes in ‘the direction of ... beneficial unification (towards) the Supreme Good, that is, the Centre of universal convergence.’¹⁵⁶ Teilhard does not always use the term ‘natural’ in the same sense as did St Maximus but we shall continue to use the term.

We ascertained above that, according to Teilhard, the human person is able to move along the natural path towards union with God. According to St Maximus, such a person relates both to God and all things although relationship between persons differ from those between God and person in so far as God remains unchanged by a relationship. Accordingly, Teilhard stated there is ‘a person-to-person attraction (or) a love-attraction (comprising) God’s love for the world and for each of its elements, and the elements’ love, too, for one another and for God.’¹⁵⁷

We can therefore define Teilhard’s person as an individual who loves and relates to others but is also distinct from them. Relationship however implies distinction between the individual and others. This link between ‘person’, ‘relationship’ and ‘distinction’ is noted by Zizioulas of the eastern tradition in recent times. For example, Zizioulas states that ‘it is only a person that can express communion and otherness simultaneously.’¹⁵⁸ However, when we use the term ‘person’ when discussing Teilhard’s works, it will be particularly in the sense that it relates with love implying that a relationship without love is not a true one.

The unnatural state without movement

It is noteworthy that both St Maximus and Teilhard both regarded self-love as a major impediment to eschatological progress. One problem with self-love according to Teilhard is that a being with self-love ‘sets itself up as the centre of the universe’¹⁵⁹ in place of God. Teilhard concurs with the condemnation of self-love by St Maximus by referring to the ‘vice of egoism.’¹⁶⁰ Furthermore, Teilhard described ‘pride and selfishness’ as the ‘supreme solvents of ... spirituality.’¹⁶¹ Also, he stated that ‘the egocentric ideal of ... everyone for himself (is) false and contrary to nature.’¹⁶² This statement supports the view of St Maximus that the unnatural state is contrary to the nature of the human person.

As with St Maximus, Teilhard expresses the difference between the activities of the natural path and those of the unnatural state by stating that ‘good and evil are ... two directions in human activity’¹⁶³ and the unnatural state is ‘the direction of pernicious pluralization (and) nothingness.’¹⁶⁴ Strictly speaking, the unnatural state has no direction as the ‘direction’ of a creature with self-love is within itself. Someone with self-love is basically separate from others and presumably this what Teilhard means by pluralization. Teilhard also

¹⁵⁶ Teilhard, *My Universe*, 1924; 9SC, p. 51.

¹⁵⁷ Teilhard, *Introduction to the Christian Life*, 1944; 10CE, p. 152.

¹⁵⁸ John Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness* (London: T & T Clark, 2006) p. 29.

¹⁵⁹ Teilhard, *The Struggle Against the Multitude*, 1917, 12WW, p. 102.

¹⁶⁰ Teilhard, *The Divine Milieu*, 1927; 4DM, p. 29.

¹⁶¹ Teilhard, *The Struggle against the Multitude*, 1917; 12WW, p. 103.

¹⁶² Teilhard, *The Human Phenomenon*, 1940, Rev 1948; 1HP, p. 173.

¹⁶³ Teilhard, *My Universe*, 1924; 9SC, p. 76.

¹⁶⁴ Teilhard, *My Universe*, 1924; 9SC, p. 51.

stated that ‘non-being (and) sin are aspects ... of the same evil principle.’¹⁶⁵ St Maximus would use ‘ill-being’ rather than ‘non-being’.

He however acknowledged that the human person has a weakness to stray into the unnatural state by stating that ‘wrong ... appears ... as a result of the tendency towards ... selfishness found in creatures’¹⁶⁶ and recognizes that ‘occasions for stumbling are bound to come.’¹⁶⁷ This must affect our eschatological movement and accordingly, Teilhard stated that ‘hostile powers (which) hamper or deflect our progress.’¹⁶⁸

Teilhard regarded the problem of sin as serious because it is an impediment to progress. For example, he stated that ‘pride ... leads souls astray into selfishness and turns them against every principle of further unification.’¹⁶⁹ Consistently, he discussed the ‘isolation’ of those with self-love as ‘endangering the future spiritualization of the world.’¹⁷⁰

Like St Maximus, Teilhard was specific that there is a division in humankind but he extended it to the universe. He stated that there are the ‘spiritually impure who ... in selfishness introduce ... a division in the unification of the universe.’¹⁷¹ Also, there is a ‘dividing ... line ... between ... egocentrism and self-denial’.¹⁷² Furthermore, Teilhard described them as those who ‘egoistically segregate (themselves) from the mass’¹⁷³ as ‘radically destructive.’¹⁷⁴ There does not appear to be any difference between St Maximus and Teilhard on the division in humankind. Teilhard states that ‘shutting itself off from the rest (is not) the true nature of the person.’¹⁷⁵

Free will:

In accordance with the patristic tradition,¹⁷⁶ Teilhard agreed with the principle of free will by stating that ‘we are free as individuals’¹⁷⁷ and are ‘supremely free and conscious.’¹⁷⁸ Consciousness is linked and arose from the evolution of humankind.

The Fall

Teilhard regarded evil as due to the imperfection of the universe as he stated that ‘evil appears inevitably with the first atom’¹⁷⁹ so that ‘the universe (is) a unity burdened with imperfections.’¹⁸⁰ If the universe was imperfect, so would also be humankind but it could not truly act against God until it leant what was for and against God. Such a ‘Fall’ would be a faltering beginning rather than the catastrophic event often described. In any case, the

¹⁶⁵ Teilhard, *The Struggle Against the Multitude*, 1917; 12WW, p. 103.

¹⁶⁶ Teilhard, *Fall, Redemption, and Geocentrism*, 1920; 10CE, p. 40.

¹⁶⁷ Mt 19.7 quoted by Teilhard in *Christ the Evolver*, 1942; 10CE, p. 150.

¹⁶⁸ Teilhard, *The Divine Milieu*, 1927; 4DM, p. 37.

¹⁶⁹ Teilhard; *The Names of Matter*, 1919; 13HM, p. 232.

¹⁷⁰ Teilhard, *The Names of Matter*, 1919; 13HM, p. 232.

¹⁷¹ Teilhard, *The Divine Milieu*, 1927; 4DM, p. 95.

¹⁷² Teilhard, *The Soul of the World*, 1918; 12WW, p. 190.

¹⁷³ Teilhard, *The Grand Option*, 1945; 5FM, p. 47. Not in a Eucharistic context.

¹⁷⁴ Teilhard, *The Grand Option*, 1945; 5FM, p. 51.

¹⁷⁵ Teilhard, *The Human Phenomenon*, 1940; 1HP, p. 183.

¹⁷⁶ St Irenaeus of Lyons, *Haer* 4.4.3; PG 7, col. 983; trans. Cat 1730.

¹⁷⁷ Teilhard, *Faith in Peace*, 1947; 5FM, p. 152.

¹⁷⁸ Teilhard, *Centrology*, 1944; 7AE, p. 101.

¹⁷⁹ Teilhard, *The Modes of Divine Action in the Universe*, 1920; 10CE, p. 33.

¹⁸⁰ Teilhard, *My Universe*, 1918; 13HM, p. 199.

scriptural Fall did not prevent the prophets finding God and relating to Him.

According to Teilhard, sin arises because ‘all the ... reflective elements of the universe (are) imperfect’¹⁸¹ and this implies that sin arises from reflection and therefore from choice. Teilhard regarded the earthly Fall of Adam as a ‘moral crisis’¹⁸² but gave no indication that Adam’s decision was other than typical.

After considering the available scientific knowledge of the developing universe, Teilhard opposed the concept of an original paradise ‘outside a general state of the world’ with ‘an absence of death.’¹⁸³ Furthermore, Eden would be no different from the imperfect state arising from the first atom so that Eden could not be similar to the *Pleroma*. We conclude that Teilhard supported St Maximus in his opposition to the Origenist Fall condemned in 553 CE. The *Pleroma* would not therefore be merely a restoration of a paradisaal Eden.

Teilhard also stated that the Fall ‘cannot be located at one given moment or one given place. It is not written into our past as one particular “event” but transcending the limits of time and space’¹⁸⁴ so that it is spread ‘throughout the whole of human history.’¹⁸⁵ The Fall could not therefore be a discontinuation in the progress of humankind or the universe. It appears that Teilhard regarded the Fall as a *typical* event over the duration of humankind thus minimizing the significance of the first deviation from the natural path. In any case, the Fall could not be a significant barrier to eschatological movement as God works through the universe by means of the Spirit. Nevertheless, Adam laid bare our tendency towards self-love which we followed so that ‘by ... one man’s disobedience ... many were made sinners’¹⁸⁶

¹⁸¹ Teilhard, *My ‘Phenomenological’ View of the World*, 1954; 11TF, p. 215.

¹⁸² Teilhard, *Historical Representations of Original Sin*, 1922; 10CE, p. 52.

¹⁸³ Teilhard, *Historical Representations of Original Sin*, 1922; 10CE, p. 47.

¹⁸⁴ Teilhard, *Christ the Evolver*, 1942; 10CE, p. 149.

¹⁸⁵ Teilhard, *Historical Representations of Original Sin*, 1922; 10CE, p. 54.

¹⁸⁶ Rom 5.19.

C. A UNIVERSE CONTRARY TO THE PATRISTIC TRADITION

A non-Christian notion of the flawed universe

We have ascertained that, according to the patristic tradition, there is a divine Plan that the universe will move towards a fulfilment in union with God. The opposite view would be a universe which would be static relative to God so it would have no goal. God would therefore have no affect on the universe and presumably no relationship with it. The purest form of a flawed universe is probably the Gnostic one. In Gnosticism, the universe was associated with the underworld. One type of Gnosticism was Manichaeism which held that God and Satan had similar power and creation arose from their conflict. Manichaeism was founded by Mani (216-276 CE) and adopted features of other religions, including Christianity, in areas where they held sway. Although the universe was associated with the underworld, it believed that souls was associated with God. The goal of the human soul was to escape from the material prison into a final purification.¹⁸⁷ As time is part of the material world, human action other than measures to escape from the world would not have any significance. Manichaeism was heavily persecuted by the Emperor Theodosius in 382 CE.

The Fall according to Origenism

The Origenist concept was that ‘there once existed a unity (*henad*) of rational beings, by virtue of which we were connatural with God, in whom we had our remaining and abode. In addition to this they speak of a “movement” that came about, as a result of which the rational beings were variously dispersed, prompting God to look toward the creation of this corporeal world, so that He could bind them in bodies as a punishment for their former sins.’¹⁸⁸ There would thus be movement from rest in God rather than movement towards rest. In this way, movement would precede coming-to-be rather than coming-to-be preceding movement of the triadic series of St Maximus. The issue is dealt with the *Ambigua* to John of Kyzikos of St Maximus which is discussed in detail by Sherwood.¹⁸⁹ St Maximus further stated that

rational beings were moved from their abode and remaining in what alone is ultimately desirable, and consequently were broken up and scattered into multiplicity, we must ask in no uncertain terms: what proof do they have? For if what they say is true, it necessarily follows that rational beings, when found in the same circumstances, will undergo the same changes *ad infinitum*. For anyone who through experience is able even once to spurn something will find no reason to cease from doing so for all eternity. And if rational beings are to be swept about in this way, and are to be without hope for an immovable foundation in the Beautiful, what more pitiful condition of existence could there possibly be?¹⁹⁰

In other words, union with God would be insecure as it gave rise to a fall which could occur over and over again. For natural movement to take place, the state of its beginning must be

¹⁸⁷ This notion was taught in the author’s school classroom in 1942.

¹⁸⁸ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.2; PG 91, col 1069A, NC-AMB1, p. 77.

¹⁸⁹ Sherwood, *The Earlier Ambigua* (Rome: Herder, 1955).

¹⁹⁰ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.4; PG 91, col 1069C, NC-AMB1, p. 79.

different from that of its end. That notion of fall and restoration was condemned by Justinian in his fifteenth anathema prior to the Council of 553 which stated that ‘if anyone shall say ... that the end and the beginning shall be alike ... let him be anathema.’¹⁹¹ Incidentally, some modern scholars¹⁹² doubt that Origen personally held that the end is *exactly as* (as opposed to ‘like’) the beginning.

St Maximus diverted Origenism by replacing its initial transgression rational being by the perfect idea or *logos*. St Maximus stated that ‘all beings prior to their actual creation ... possess perfection in terms of their proper principle’¹⁹³ implying that this would be according to God’s Plan or *Logos*. Unlike the insecure Origenist initial being, ‘in God the *logoi* of all things are steadfastly fixed ... before they came into being.’¹⁹⁴

A Christian version of a flawed universe

We have ascertained that many believed in a flawed universe at the time of Teilhard. Such a universe would be unable to move eschatologically towards union with God. It is therefore unsurprising that many did not believe in eschatological movement.

According to Teilhard, ‘Christians believe in ‘a fallen and vitiated world’¹⁹⁵ and that the ‘faithful believe (that) *the whole universe* ... was perverted by Adam’s disobedience.’¹⁹⁶ It was believed that the flawed universe was due to Adam’s sin. Chauchard stated that ‘in the disobedience of original sin, man smashed that natural goodness ... *corrupting all nature* ... the Christian (therefore) shuts himself off from the world, that ... kingdom of Satan.’¹⁹⁷ Teilhard stated that ‘Christianity still confines us to the prospect of a fallen, *static nature*’¹⁹⁸ and understood that humankind is ‘*divided to its very depths*’ between the position that ‘we are moving (while) looking towards the horizon’ and ‘we are not moving at all.’

It is clear from the remarks to his cousin that the general view was that the universe had a static nature. Also, Charles Raven stated that ‘Christians had regarded this world and indeed the universe as of religious importance only because it was the theatre in which man’s redemption had been staged.’¹⁹⁹

Chauchard therefore regarded Teilhard’s achievement as the ‘*re-sacralizing* (of) a profane world.’²⁰⁰ Chauchard therefore implied that the original concept of a sacred universe was lost and that Teilhard was attempting to restore the patristic tradition regarding the universe. Teilhard and Chauchard thus agreed that the general view was that Adam corrupted the nature of the universe for the worse even though Adam was only an infinitesimal part of the universe. If the universe was flawed, it would be incapable of moving towards union with God as it would have no affinity with Him. Furthermore, a denial of the movement of humankind would be inconsistent with the movement of the universe according to St

¹⁹¹ Second Council of Constantinople, 553; trans. NPNF2, Vol. 14, p. 319.

¹⁹² e.g. Mark Julian Edwards, *Origen against Plato* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2002).

¹⁹³ St Maximus, *Amb* 42.23; PG 91, col. 1340A; trans. NC-AMB2, p. 167.

¹⁹⁴ St Maximus, *Amb* 7.19; PG 91, col. 1081A; trans. NC-AMB1, p. 99.

¹⁹⁵ Teilhard, *The Divine Milieu*, 1927; 4DM, p. 9.

¹⁹⁶ Teilhard, *Fall, Redemption and Geocentrism*, 1920; 10CE, p. 37.

¹⁹⁷ Paul Chauchard, *Man and Cosmos, Scientific Phenomenology of Teilhard de Chardin* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1965) pp. 149-50.

¹⁹⁸ Teilhard, *The Sense of Man*, 1929; 11TF, p. 26.

¹⁹⁹ Charles Raven, ‘Orthodoxy and Science’, from Neville Braybrook, ed., *Teilhard de Chardin: Pilgrim of the Future* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd Ltd., 1964) p. 50.

²⁰⁰ Chauchard, *Man and Cosmos*, pp. 166-67.

Maximus.

Nevertheless, there is a danger that the bias against a universe moving towards God with His help could continue. It is insufficient to merely remove notions which have displaced the original tradition. Efforts have to be made to restore that of the original tradition which has been lost. The above bias would also extend to the concept of a goal for the universe. For example, at the time of Teilhard, the concept of the union between God and the universe at the *Pleroma* has been reduced to 'relative obscurity (by) preachers and theologians'²⁰¹ Also, Wildiers, a reviewer of Teilhard's works, noted that in 'traditional theology ... eschatology, on the other hand, generally received little attention.'²⁰²

The human person as only a soul

If however the material world was flawed, human bodies would also be flawed implying that the human person was merely a soul. Teilhard confirmed this by stating that 'the masters of the spiritual life incessantly repeat that God wants only souls' and presumably not bodies or matter generally.²⁰³ He confirmed this by stating that human beings 'have often succumbed to the illusion of crudely contrasting good and evil, soul and body, spirit and flesh.'²⁰⁴ Consequently, 'the average Christian has ... come to look upon the soul as a transient guest in the cosmos and a prisoner of matter.'²⁰⁵ For all practical purposes, under such circumstances, the human person comprises only a soul.

With a view similar to that of St Maximus, Teilhard indicated the original position by stating that 'the *original* characteristic of Christian asceticism has been ... to respect the integrity, body and soul, of the human compound ... The Christian does not have to try to annihilate his body but to sanctify and sublimate it.'²⁰⁶ Teilhard thus implied that his circle have deviated from the original doctrine that a human person is both body and soul to one in which a person is only a soul with an attached flawed body which could not unite with God. Teilhard appeared to confirm this by stating that those who 'withdraw through a mystique of separation'²⁰⁷ and have their hopes 'directed towards a spiritual state or an absolute finality situated beyond and outside this world'²⁰⁸ describing this option as 'human ecstasy sundered from material things,'²⁰⁹ 'oriental,'²¹⁰ and a 'disdain the world.'²¹¹ He included the description 'oriental' because 'the oriental seeks to escape by abandoning time, space, and self.' It therefore appears that flawed universe of Christians took the least absurd but Manichaeist course that human souls separate from human bodies and the material world.

The nature of humankind and the Fall of Adam according to Augustine of Hippo and Anselm of Canterbury

²⁰¹ Teilhard, *The Awaited Word*, 1940; 11TF, p. 97.

²⁰² Norbert Max Wildiers, *The Theologian and His Universe* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1982) p. 206.

²⁰³ Teilhard, *The Divine Milieu*, 1927; 4DM, p. 18.

²⁰⁴ Teilhard, *The Divine Milieu*, 1927; 4DM, p. 65.

²⁰⁵ Teilhard, *How I Believe*, 1934; 10CE, p. 125.

²⁰⁶ Teilhard, *Introduction to the Christian Life*, 1944; 10CE, p. 169.

²⁰⁷ Teilhard, *The Grand Option*, 1939; 5FM, p. 46.

²⁰⁸ Teilhard, *Some Reflections on Progress*, 1941; 5FM, pp. 76-77.

²⁰⁹ Teilhard, *The Grand Option*, 1939; 5FM, p. 50.

²¹⁰ Teilhard, *The Road of the West*, 1932; 11TF, p. 53.

²¹¹ Teilhard, *Some Reflections on Progress*, 1941; 5FM, p. 77.

Augustine of Hippo (354-430 CE) became a Manicheist in 378 CE but in 386 CE became disillusioned with it after studying neo-Platonism. In 387 CE, he changed his religion to Christianity after Simplicianus, a colleague of Ambrose of Milan (ca 340-397), convinced him that it was compatible with Plato and Plotinus.²¹² However, Augustine amended Origen's neo-Platonist creation by saying that the cosmic calamity was not an argument in heaven but occurred in Eden and was caused by Adam's sin. By placing the Fall within the universe, the problem of a Fall from an unstable union with God would therefore be avoided. However, the calamity of the Fall was in the form of a change in nature as 'the order of nature was perfect before the fall of Adam.'²¹³ It is unclear how the perfect nature of Adam was different from that of the Origenist fallen angels. In fact, Augustine still accepted that there were 'fallen angels'²¹⁴ and 'angels that sinned.'²¹⁵

Augustine described the Fall by stating that 'our nature having ... been deteriorated by that great sin of the first man (who) was made a sinner, but (it) also generates sinners; and (by its) very weakness, under which the virtue of a holy life has dropped and died, is not really nature, but corruption.'²¹⁶ After the Fall, 'the whole mass of the human race was under condemnation, was lying steeped and wallowing in misery, and was being tossed from one form of evil to another, and, having joined the faction of fallen angels, was paying the well-merited penalty of that impious rebellion.'²¹⁷ Overall, Augustine's view of the Fall appears confused. If Adam had been perfect before the Fall, he would be either God Himself or at least united with Him. As God is One, the latter is more plausible.

If the state prior to the Fall was equal to that of the *Pleroma*, Adam would have eternal life with God and would therefore have immortality. Augustine of Hippo appears to support this view as he considered Adam was 'immortal' but became 'corruptible through transgressing the commandment.'²¹⁸

Such a fall would be little different from the Origenist view which has had some support in modern times. For example, Wolfgang Smith stated that the Fall was a '*primordial catastrophe* (from a) Paradise (in which) Adam was possessed with god-like faculties which we no longer possess, and with a kind of body which differs markedly from our own.'²¹⁹

Augustine's approach was also judicial as he states that 'since, as the Apostle says, all human beings die in Adam,²²⁰ from whom the origin of the *offence against God* spread throughout the whole human race – are a single mass of sin owing a *debt of punishment* to the divine and loftiest justice, and whether (the punishment that is owed) be exacted or forgiven, there is no injustice.'²²¹ He also stated that 'because Adam (forsook) God, he experienced the just judgement of God, that *with his whole race*, which being as yet all placed in him had sinned with him, he should be condemned.'²²² These citations were similar to those of

²¹² F. Holmes Dudden, *Life and times of St. Ambrose*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935), Vol 1 of 2, p. 331.

²¹³ Augustine of Hippo, *Civ Dei* 22.30; PL 41; trans. NPNF1, Vol 2, p. 391.

²¹⁴ Augustine, *Civ Dei* 11.15.13; trans. NPNF2, p. 212.

²¹⁵ Augustine, *Ench* 57; trans. Earnest Evans (London: SPCK, 1953) p. 51 after 2 Pet 2.4.

²¹⁶ Augustine, *Nup Con* 2.57 (34); PL 44; trans. NPNF1, Vol 2, pp. 272-73.

²¹⁷ Augustine, *Ench*; trans. NPNF 1, Vol 3, p 246.

²¹⁸ Augustine, *Pec Orig* 3; trans. LNPF 1, Vol 5, p. 238. Council at Carthage, 411 or 412, at which Bishop Aurelius presided.

²¹⁹ Wolfgang Smith, *Teilhardism and the New Religion* (Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1988) p. 137.

²²⁰ 1 Cor 15.22.

²²¹ Augustine of Hippo, *Div Quae* 46.4; PL 40; trans. AH-QU, p. 106.

²²² Augustine of Hippo, *Cor Grat* 10.28; PL 44; trans. NPNF1, Vol 5, p. 483.

Ambrose regarding the corruption of human nature. Augustine appeared to involve the whole of humankind with Adam's sin on the grounds that, at the time of their obedience against God, Adam and Eve were *the whole human race*.

Although Augustine gave the impression that human nature changed for the worse because of Adam's sin, we need to ascertain how disastrous was the change. The critical point is to ascertain whether or not the worsened human person could progress towards God. Considering Augustine's works overall, it is possible to conclude that progress was possible even though human nature had changed for the worse. For example, Augustine understood that it is important to convert 'self-love' into love of God²²³ implying that relationships with God are possible. If human persons were able to relate to God, human nature could not be *completely* flawed despite Augustine's words such as 'corruption'. There is therefore some uncertainty regarding the severity of Augustine's notion of the Fall.

The last point about the Fall of Adam is more about God than humankind. Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109) stated that Adam's sin 'dishonoured God.'²²⁴ Such a God would be difficult to reconcile with a God who loves the universe so infinitely that He wishes to unite with and assist it towards union. Being offended by the acts of others is a phenomenon of the unnatural state but turning the other cheek is a characteristic of the natural path. They therefore imply that God is in the unnatural state and therefore within the universe and not God.

The principal problem with a change of nature at the Fall would be that Adam would require infinite power to change created nature. If it was God who changed that nature, He would be inconsistent and not God. If the Fall was assumed to be primordial, we could assume that it was merely a fall to a state of imperfection with the opportunity for movement towards God but this would not deny the development of the universe and humankind.

Teilhard's principal argument against an exaggerated Fall was that a vast universe in movement could not be influenced significantly by a single event within time so that Adam's sin could not have any long term effect.²²⁵ Moreover, God is the centre towards which the universe converges²²⁶ and this principle cannot be changed. Moreover, God's love for the universe and for each of its parts and its response underlies the fundamental dynamism of the universe²²⁷ which also cannot be changed.

Judicial approach to sin: Introduction

There has been a general tendency to regard sin in a judicial manner and Teilhard criticized the over-development of Pauline scripture. Teilhard also attacked 'exaggerated ideas of sin' of his circle.²²⁸ He stated that:

Without being unjust to the Latin Fathers, might one not blame them for having overdeveloped the rabbinical and legalistic side of St Paul in their theology? Under their influence the Christian history of the world has assumed the appearance of a *legal trial*

²²³ Augustine, *Civ Dei* 14.28; trans. NPNF1, Vol 2, pp. 282-83.

²²⁴ Anselm of Canterbury, *Virg Con*, 10; Hopkins, p. 443.

²²⁵ Teilhard, *Christology and Evolution*, 1933; 10CE, pp. 79-86.

²²⁶ Teilhard, *The God of Evolution*, 1953; 10CE, pp. 239.

²²⁷ Teilhard, *Introduction to the Christian Life*, 1944; 10CE, p. 152.

²²⁸ Teilhard, *The Sense of Man*, 1929; 11TF, p. 34.

between God and his creatures.²²⁹

Judicial approach to sin: Original guilt

The terms original sin and original guilt can cause confusion. Original sin comprises the tendency to sin or concupiscence but also includes original guilt, only the later being judicial in character. The term original sin is often used even if original guilt is meant. In this study, the term original guilt is used for the judicial aspect of original sin.

Augustine and Anselm of Canterbury stated that Adam acquired a debt of sin which was then spread by procreation. For example, Anselm stated that ‘all who are propagated (in) the nature that Adam had received are born obligated by his debt.’²³⁰ In this way, the *personal sin* of Adam passes over to all who are naturally propagated from him, and in them it is natural, or original, sin.²³¹ Anselm also stated that ‘the (change of) nature caused in Adam (was caused by) the voluntary desertion of justice.’²³² The debt that continues from Adam is therefore a result of the Fall and human persons are accountable for the sin of Adam. This is because, at the time of the Fall, ‘the whole of human nature was in Adam and Eve.’²³³ However, debt is a matter of justice and not of nature. The debt is therefore over and above the tendency to sin due to the imperfection of human nature. Procreation merely continues imperfect human nature and is nothing to do with matters of justice.

Teilhard reasonably linked the notion of original guilt with that of Adam’s sin being an ‘offence’ presumably against God.²³⁴ The word ‘offence’ implies that God takes offence and therefore requires retribution for sin. Teilhard’s circle followed this notion of original guilt. For example, Cognet, in opposition to Teilhard, states that ‘the traditional notion of Redemption is linked with the idea of a *guilt* to be wiped out, a ransom to be made, a slavery to be destroyed future.’²³⁵

Teilhard condemned original guilt by stating that it has a ‘pernicious quality’ and ‘is constricting and debilitating.’²³⁶ In the same context, Teilhard also stated that ‘the historical representation of that sin and the too purely judicial way in which we commonly describe its being passed on (should be) restated.’²³⁷

When a person turns to God and commences a relationship with Him, God will assist the person to take the natural path rather than the unnatural state. Acceptance of Christianity is accompanied by baptism but this is administered by the Church. Baptism therefore involves God, the person and the Church. When human persons discover the God of Infinite Love and wish to relate to and work with Him, it would make sense to belong to a body committed to assist such persons. Likewise, the Church is obliged to do this but this is not always the case. For example, some persons relate to the true God but are unconvinced that the Church they experience is able to assist their work with God and therefore do not become baptised. Also,

²²⁹ Teilhard, *Sketch of a Personalistic Universe*, 1936; 10CE, p. 89.

²³⁰ Anselm, *Virg Con* 10, Hopkins, p. 443.

²³¹ Anselm, *Virg Con* 23, Hopkins, p. 457.

²³² Anselm, *Virg Con* 27; trans. Hopkins, p. 462.

²³³ Anselm, *Virg Con* 2; trans. Hopkins, p. 430.

²³⁴ Teilhard, *Christ the Evolver*, 1942; 10CE, p. 150 and n. Also Cat 1440.

²³⁵ Louis Cognet, *Le Père Teilhard de Chardin et la Pensée Contemporaine* (Paris: Flammarion, 1952) p. 131, trans. Corte, *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, His Life and Spirit* (London: Barrie and Rockcliff, 1960) p. 93.

²³⁶ Teilhard, *Christology and Evolution*, 1933; 10CE, p. 80.

²³⁷ Teilhard, *Note on the Universal Christ*, 1920; 9SC, p. 16.

some of those who become baptised do not relate to or work with God.

Regarding baptism, Augustine regarded it as necessary to cancel original guilt stating that ‘he who is baptized ... loses all guilt for all evils, but not all evils.’²³⁸ On this matter, Augustine was influenced by Ambrose who stated that ‘infants who have been baptised are reformed from the wickedness that was present at the formation of their nature.’²³⁹ As such a baptism would not involve the heart of the infant, it appears that principal purpose of baptism was judicial. Those present however hope that the infant will find the true God and work with Him at some later time with the help of the Church. This implied that God shows no mercy upon those who die without baptism even though they have knowingly done nothing against God’s law of love. This lack of love from God would cast doubt on whether a God linked with the judicial approach to sin was the God of Infinite Love.

The general judicial approach to sin

The connection between sin and lawfulness is not absent from scripture. In the Old Testament, the Jews considered the possibility of guilt for sin but that God would forgive it²⁴⁰ and that God forgave sins,²⁴¹ Pauline scriptures and Johannine scripture imply an unlawfulness of sin.²⁴² The Law is however the Law of Love which is God’s will.²⁴³ God’s will is to unite the universe to Himself so a fall from the natural path would be against His will. However, in the traditional approach to sin, Hughes stated that ‘in the teaching of religion, the image of God ... is of God the judge, a God whose ‘main interest to us is in the sins we commit, and whose main occupation is in deciding the appropriate punishments.’²⁴⁴ In medieval theology, a ‘satisfaction’ or penalty for sin had to be made over and above the forgiveness of sins. The judicial notions of ‘penance and satisfaction’ for sin were associated with the notion of Purgatory²⁴⁵ which involved ‘punishment’²⁴⁶ for sin. This implies that Purgatory is within the world of time and distinct from both the *Pleroma* and *Gehenna* (γέεννα), the state of permanent separation from God. Purgatory would apply only to those on the natural path because those in the unnatural state would be in *Gehenna*. The notion of Purgatory would have no bearing upon eschatological movement except as a deterrent against sinning.

For God to determine the appropriate punishment, there has to be a system which quantifies that punishment. That system is the notion of merit which Duchesne explained as follows:

The relation between man and God is, above all, a question of merit and no-merit. In the great book of deserts each man’s account is kept in two columns, debit and credit. As a man’s merits pile up, as he lessens his faults, so does his situation improve. At the end,

²³⁸ Augustine, *Con Jul* 6.16(49): trans. FC 35, p 357.

²³⁹ Ambrose of Milan, *Ev Luc* 1,37; PL 15.

²⁴⁰ Pss 102/103.3 and 129/130.3-4.

²⁴¹ Pss 24/25.18, 64/65.3, 78/79.9.

²⁴² For example, Rom 2.23; 4.15; Gal 3.19. Also, 1 Jn 3.4.

²⁴³ Ps 39/40.8. Mt 5.18: ‘Not one stroke of a letter will pass from the law until all is accomplished.’

Mt 22.37, 39: The law is that ‘you shall love ... God (and) your neighbour.’

²⁴⁴ Gerry Hughes, *Cry of Wonder*, p. 265.

²⁴⁵ John Corner Spokes, *Life, Now and Forever* (London: Robert Scott, 1926) p. 51.

²⁴⁶ C. C. Martindale, *The Faith of the Roman Church* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1950) p. 91.

God balances the account and places us according to the excess of credit over debit.²⁴⁷

If separation from God in Purgatory for a time was regarded as a ‘punishment’, it could not be by an infinitely loving God.²⁴⁸ We are however left with the problem of ascertaining what in the universe punishes souls of persons after the death. A compromise system of Purgatory believed by some would be to regard it as merely an expression of cleansing *at* death but such a system would render the system of satisfaction superfluous. A further problem with the notion of merit is that, if one assumes that good works achieve merit, there is danger that it could lead to self-love and consequently a fall from the natural path.

Elsewhere, we ascertained that when a person works according to the divine Plan, it is actually God who works through the person as implied by Teilhard. All good works originate from God’s love so that no one can earn merit by good works. We have ascertained that progress towards union with God is made by allowing God to work with us. Furthermore, those who are humble to God would seek no reward other than the joy of working with Him as noted in Chapter Two. As followers of God have no merit, they would never leave Purgatory under the judicial system. Overall, the merit of that person would be negative because in imitation of God the person would take upon himself or herself the sins of the world.

Regarding persons in the unnatural state, their sin would be based upon self-love. The direction of their deeds would have no common direction because it would be directed to a multitude of self-centres. The difference between good and bad works would be that good works would all be directed towards the union with God and the universe while bad works would have no common direction and no value. Good and bad works cannot therefore be opposite in direction in a single category.

The notion of merit fails because it is based upon earthly mathematics. A God who is above mathematics could not possibly judge in a mathematical manner. We conclude that the patristic principle appears is at variance with the notion of merit. The above judicial approach is very different from the view of Teilhard who regarded death as a victory²⁴⁹ because ‘death becomes a resurrection’²⁵⁰ and ‘death is turned into life’²⁵¹

²⁴⁷ Mgr. Louis Duchesne, *Les Eglises Séparées* (Paris: Librairie Thorin et fils, 1896); trans. Philip Hughes, *The Church in Crisis, A History of the Twenty Great Councils* (London: Burns and Oates, 1961) p. 8.

²⁴⁸ Lk 6.29.

²⁴⁹ Teilhard, *The Divine Milieu*, 1927; 4DM, p. 46: ‘We are like soldiers who fall during an assault which leads to peace. We are therefore part of the victory.’

²⁵⁰ Teilhard, *The Divine Milieu*, 1927; 4DM, p. 75.

²⁵¹ Teilhard, *The Priest*, 1918; 12WW, p. 213.

D. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

We ascertained that both St Maximus and Teilhard similarly emphasized the unity of the universe as a whole because of its potential union with God at the *Parousia*. This overall unity did not detract from the potentiality of its parts or elements.

Both St Maximus and Teilhard agreed that the universe is good but imperfect and not evil and that it and its parts are moving eschatologically towards union with God under divine influence. The reasoning by St Maximus was chiefly based upon *Logos* theology and that of Teilhard upon the Pauline epistles. They also agreed that the unchanging nature of the human person comprised a body, soul and heart and possessed free will.

Their views were contrary to the notions of an exaggerated Fall and a flawed universe which were supported by Augustine of Hippo and Anselm of Canterbury and continued into modern times. These notions in turn depended on a 'God' offended by the sins of His people implying that He is within time and therefore not God.

Those who equate God and Satan are incorrect because God has a Plan that the universe and its parts will move towards unity with Him. The opposite to movement towards God is movement without direction which is chaos. Movement towards Satan is not really a movement at all.

If the history of the universe had a beginning which is the same as the end, the overall movement of the universe would be zero so that God would have no overall influence. This is absurd as God might just as well not exist.

As there can be no compromise between a universe in movement towards God and one which is not, we conclude that Teilhard was correct that there was a schism between those who supported the movement and those who did not. As those who believed in the static universe also believed that souls escaped towards God from the corrupt universe, the schism would also involve whether or not the body is part of the person. It also appears that the notion of the corrupt universe is a remnant of Manichaeism.

An infinite God cannot suffer loss. The only loss as a result of Adam's sin must be his own fall from the natural path. If there was a judicial case by God against Adam regarding the latter's sin, there would therefore be no case to answer. Furthermore, even if God had won a judicial case against Adam, God would ask for no damages because His nature is infinite love. The fundamental problem of the notion of original guilt is that the associated penalties imposed by God involve events within time and are therefore incompatible with infinite love.

Regarding Eden, nothing within the universe can change the nature of the universe destined to unite with God. Even if the story of Eden was merged with Creation, Adam and the universe would be insignificant compared with the infinite God and could not change their natures. Moreover, a universe which was too flawed to move towards union with God would be contrary to His Plan. It was inevitable that the notion of the flawed universe would lead to the further notion that human persons comprised only a soul.

Regarding the general approach to sin, the same problems arise. The punishment for sin involves quantity, events and time while God is not directly involved in the attributes of the universe. Furthermore, from a point of view unrestricted by time would regard a person as a whole and individual acts of a person would give an accurate indication of the life of a person as a whole. It is therefore difficult to reconcile the God of Otherness with the 'God' who imposes punishment.

The problems arising from the judicial approach to sin regardless whether it is original guilt or the general approach is that union with God is an act of God alone and cannot be negated or delayed by earthly judicial means such as judicial baptism. A 'God' who was compliant with such judicial matters would be brought within time and would not be God. We conclude that the God of Love is incompatible with the 'God' who punishes sin in a judicial manner.

Word count, 4 July 17: 15,249.