

SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

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A GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ABGESCHIEDENHEIT. Johannes (Meister) Eckhart (1260-1327) used this compound German word to describe his doctrine on "how to deny oneself." It means "to separate apart." *Abgeschiedenheit* is more sublime than love and is the source of all the human virtues.

ANALOGICAL LANGUAGE. St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) taught that when one makes a statement about God, language is being used in a very special way. The words have neither a univocal nor an equivocal sense (the Lamb of God is not sheep). Nor can an Infinite God be described by a finite language. Valid statements about God are *analogical*. God is not our earthly Father but He is our Heavenly Father by reason of personal relation to Him and similar relationships.

ANTHROPOCENTRIC THEOLOGY. A theology centered on man, i.e., it begins with what man knows about the nature and experience of man and tries to lead to some knowledge of God. Or, extreme anthropocentric thought produces a strict humanism devoid of concepts of God.

ASCETICISM. The view that the body is evil and a detriment to a moral, spiritual life and is ill-pleasing to God. This issues in an attempt to master the body through drastic privations related to the basic appetites of the body.

AVERROISM. The commentary on Aristotle made by Averroes (Mohammed ibn Roshd, 1126-1198). His thought and writings had an effect upon the style and writings of St. Thomas Aquinas.

CARTESIAN OCCASIONALISTS. Occasionalism is the theory that matter and spirit do not interact causally. What happens in one is the occasion for something to happen in the other, both of which are brought about by a higher being. The cartesians are also rationalists who believe that thought is the clue to everything. Descartes was a rationalist.

CONCEPTUALISM. A theory of the status of universal concepts which says that they are neither wholly independent of absolute mind nor the creation of finite minds. They are subjective to God but objective to man (Abelard and Thomas Aquinas).

COSMOLOGICAL PROOFS. Attempts to prove that God's existence follows from the fact that things exist. It alleges that causes presuppose causes; that the series of causes can only come to an end in a cause which does not depend on something else for its existence, therefore—God (Thomas Aquinas and Aristotle).

DEISM. An attempt to justify the Christian religion in a scientific world based on the Newtonian model of determinism. God was for them a Being who brought nature into being but was almost totally withdrawn from nature. Man was left to fend for himself, and his religion was really a natural phenomenon (Toland, Collins and Thomas Jefferson).

DEMIURGE. The term used by Plato in the *Timaeus* to designate the intermediary maker of the world.

DIALECTIC. (Greek: *dia legein*—discourse). Commonly conceived as the kind of debate carried on by question and answer as appears in the arguments of Socrates in the Platonic dialogues. In modern use, Kant employs the dialectic as the name of the method with which he deals with difficulties rising out of the "transcendental illusion" which tries to apply the categories of the understanding beyond space and time. Hegel's dialectic explains the appearance of new phenomena in terms of synthetic categories derived from the opposition between conflicting categories (thesis—antithesis).

DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM. The school of philosophy founded by Marx and Engels for the basis of Marxism. Hegel's dialectic is inverted and thought to be useful in predicting the future of history by introducing strong antitheses into the process. Ultimate Reality is material.

EMPIRICISM. (1) A proposition about the sources of knowledge: that the source of knowledge is experience—data of the senses only. A denial that there are universal and necessary truths. (2) That ideas are reducible to reference to directly presented data or content of experience, subject to scientific verification (English Sensism—Hume).

EPISTEMOLOGY. The branch of philosophy that investigates the origin, structure, methods and validity of knowledge.

EQUIVOCAL LANGUAGE. Language that is obscure, inaccurate, dubious, uncertain or enigmatic. The opposite of *univocal language* which has one evident meaning.

ESOTERIC KNOWLEDGE. Knowledge for a sect like the Gnostics and others. It was designed for them and was known or understood only by them. It was thought that one who could master this knowledge would be saved by it from the ravages of death and become immortal.

EXISTENTIALISM. This school of thought has emphasized the "self" as the Ultimate Reality. The being and experiences of the self within its particular allotted time (bounded by birth and death) become "existence" when one rises to grasp the full meaning and possibilities of the moment. Freedom and responsibility are important themes.

GESCHICHTE—HISTORIE. Two German words for "history" which have no accurate translation into English but are very important for a clear understanding of the writings of Rudolf Bultmann and other Existentialists. *Geschichte* means "historic" in the sense that an event in history continues to be important for people and events in later history. *Historie* designates what actually happened as historical data which can be recorded and analyzed.

HELLENIZE. To change to a more Greek-like interpretation. *Hellenism*—a body of humanistic and classical ideas associated with ancient Greece.

HISTORICAL CRITICISM. A critical study of the Bible in the light of its literary character, its contemporary history in the world, and the data that archeology has provided for more insight into the text. *Formgeschichte*, the method of Gunkel which studies comparative religion and folklore along with religious tradition, is a later development. *Redactions Criticism* studies the editing of sacred traditions.

HUMANISM. Any one of a number of views in which the welfare and happiness of a man in this life are primary. In the Renaissance it began with a revolt against the religious limitations of knowledge and a stress on the enjoyment of this present life. In America, the American Humanist Association has organized a sort of "atheistic religion" which is "naturalistic" and "materialistic."

INSTRUMENTALISM. The pragmatic system of John Dewey more properly called "experimentalism." "The hypothesis that works is the true one." "'Truth' is an abstract noun applied to the collection of cases, actual, foreseen, and desired, that receive confirmation in their work and consequence."

JANSENISM. The doctrines of Cornelius Jansen (1585-1638) which practically denied the free will of man in religion. They also denied that Christ died for *all* men. It was a sect of moral rigorism. Its insistence on Augustinian predestination and election had a profound influence upon the philosophy of Pascal.

KERYGMA. The message which is proclaimed in preaching the Gospel is the *kerygma*. In the New Testament, it appears in concise form.

LOGICAL POSITIVISM. The philosophy of the Vienna Circle (M. Schlick, G. Bergmann, R. Carnap, H. Feigl, P. Frank, R. Gödel, H. Hahn, O. Neurath and F. Waismann) which relied heavily and almost exclusively upon sense data and the scientific method. Much of its energy and scholarship was spent on "language analysis" which was considered the chief task of philosophy. A. J. Ayer's *Language, Truth and Logic* (1936) helped to popularize *Logical Positivism* which later was called *Scientific Empiricism* (Wittgenstein).

METAPHYSICS. The part of philosophy which studies the ultimate causes and the underlying nature of things (the title of the writings of Aristotle on the subject).

- MONASTICISM.** The ascetic philosophy embraced and practised by monks and nuns (Christians, and Buddhists).
- MONISM.** The theory that there is only one Ultimate Reality, whether spirit, matter or neutral substance.
- MYSTICISM.** The belief that Ultimate Truth is to be attained by a great intuition, not by analysis, and that contact with the Ultimate Real is by an immediate merging with it (Plotinus, Joachim, and Eckhart).
- NATURAL (GENERAL) THEOLOGY.** The belief that a responsible knowledge of God is revealed in nature (Romans 1:20) without the benefit of special revelation, but that a knowledge of salvation is received by revelation (Thomas Aquinas and Brunner).
- NEO-PLATONISM.** The philosophy of Plotinus, a mysticism which promised fellowship with "the One." Although he repudiated much of the system, Augustine of Hippo used some of its insights in his influential theology.
- NOMINALISM.** The theory that universal concepts are merely names or impulses of the voice.
- ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT.** A name by which Kant designates the alleged proof of God's existence devised by Anselm of Canterbury.
- PANTHEISM.** The belief that the universe taken as a whole is God—"God is in everything; everything is God."
- POSITIVISM.** "Positivism, as taught by Comte, meant the willingness to leave behind both the theological and the metaphysical stage of human development and to accept unreservedly the new day, which is the day of science. All prescientific explanations or descriptions are thus suspect in the very nature of the case. To be scientific is to be mature" (David Elton Trueblood, *Philosophy of Religion*. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1957, p. 168).
- PRAGMATISM.** The theory that the test of the truth of a belief is in the way in which it works, the latter being left to the judgement of the believer in the idea, as well as the choice of what idea is tested (W. James, J. Dewey—instrumentalism).
- RATIONALISM.** The teaching that thought is the criterion for the nature of reality and of ethical value.
- REALISM.** The theory that reality is ultimately independent of any knowledge of its existence.
- SCEPTICISM.** The doctrine that it is beyond a human's ability really to know, and that all efforts made to know are futile.

SCHOLASTICISM. "The term refers to those medieval schools of thought which were concerned with defining and systematizing the Christian understanding of reality . . ." Above all they were concerned with the relations of God and the world.

STOICISM. A school of thought founded by Zeno of Citium, Cyprus. It was founded in Athens in 308 B.C. Virtue is the only good the Stoics recognize. The virtuous man is the man who has gained happiness through knowledge. He is happy within regardless of the circumstances of his world when he is able to master himself completely. This thought is basically pantheistic.

SYNCRETISM. A system that seeks to reconcile positions in philosophy or religion which are really somewhat opposed or very different (the Christian faith with pagan practices).

TAUTOLOGY. A term of propositional calculus. In Logical Positivism it refers to a statement of self-evident truth that does not submit to verification or to a definition which is beyond question.

TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT. The argument from design. There seems to be a purpose toward which things move. Purpose presupposes a Designer who has destined the fulfilment of purpose. The Designer is God.

TRANSCENDENTAL PHILOSOPHY. Kant's name for his proposed *a priori* science of pure science ("pure reason") which would include both a detailed analysis of its fundamental concepts and a complete list of all derivative notions. Such a study would go beyond the purpose and scope of his *Critique of Pure Reason*. Schelling used the term for his Science of the Mind.

UNIVERSAL. A term which can be applied throughout the universe. A possibility of discrete being. According to Plato, an Idea. In psychology, a concept.

VOLUNTARISM. The theory that reality is of the nature of will rather than knowledge, or of inert matter (Kant, Fichte, Schopenhauer, Ward and Royce).

WELTANSCHAUUNG. German. A world view, a perspective of life, a conception of things.

WORLD SOUL. An intelligent, animating, indwelling principle of the cosmos. An integrating cause, the source of motion (Plato, Stoicism, Neo-Platonism, and Bruno).