# THE IDEA OF REFORM

## Its Impact on Christian Thought and Action in the Age of the Fathers

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# PART ONE

# VARIETIES OF RENEWAL IDEOLOGY AND THE CHRISTIAN IDEA OF REFORM

# CHAPTER I

# DISTINCTION OF THE IDEA OF REFORM FROM OTHER IDEAS OF RENEWAL

A definition of the reform idea which may serve as point of reference for a study of the history of that idea in early Christian and subsequent times must be based on quite obvious specific differences between any idea of reform and other representative types of renewal ideology. For the idea of reform is a variant of the more general idea of renewal. The renewal idea itself is more specific than the wider and more general concepts of this kind such as alteration, change, becoming. These concepts do not necessarily imply that emphasis on the relationship between the old and the new in the irreversible process of time which is presupposed in all renewal ideas; even less do they bear the special marks of the reform idea among which the most evident are the notions of reassertion and augmentation of value.

The idea of reform may be considered as essentially Christian in its origin and early development. It is true that adumbrations of the reform idea are not lacking in non-Christian renewal ideology, especially in Greek and Roman literature. Yet such occurrences are of relatively minor significance as compared to the massive importance of the idea in Christian thought;[1] it will therefore be sufficient to refer to them as antecedents or parallels of Christian reform terminology and ideology when occasion arises.[2] Other types of renewal ideas were on the whole of greater prominence and consequence in pre-Christian Antiquity.

The more important of these ancient ideas, most of which survived or reappeared in various transformations and in concomitance with the

[1] In this connection see, for instance, p. 47, n. 61, on the significant absence of the reform idea proper—as distinct from the idea of conversion—from Plato's thought.

[2] Cf., for instance, pp. 40–41, on Seneca's and Pliny the Younger's moral and political use of the term *reformatio* and on the application of reform terminology to Roman legal and institutional ideology by the great jurists of the second and third centuries.

reform idea in the Christian ages, must now be described and distinguished from the idea of reform. The idea of reform must be confronted also with the most relevant fundamentals of Christian renewal ideology.

## 1. Cosmological Renewal Ideas

A first group of renewal ideas other than the idea of reform may be classified as *cosmological*. It includes the theories elaborated in Antiquity about the perpetual cyclical recurrence of identical or similar situations and events. Such theories are rooted in a widespread archaic mentality which attempts to "deny" the relentless course of time by a belief in ever new beginnings;[1] and yet, as early as 500 B.C. Alcmaeon of Croton had recognized that the reason for man's physical death is just his inability to link beginning to end.[2]

Not all cyclical renewal ideas of Antiquity[3] conceive of renewal as a sequence of periodic destructions and restorations of the universe followed by the return of *identical* situations, events, and persons. The interpretation of Heraclitus' doctrine of eternal flux in this sense originates only from the Stoics.[4] Empedocles,[5] Plato,[6] Aristotle,[7] Polybius[8] envisaged cosmic or historical cycles, but these cyclical correspondences are only generic ones. Of the greatest importance for ancient cosmological renewal ideology is the conception of the τέλεος ἐνιαυτός, which first appears in Plato's *Timaeus*.[9] The length of this perfect "world year" is defined by the simultaneous occurrence

[1] See M. Eliade, *Le mythe de l'éternel retour* (Paris, 1949).

[2] Fragm. 2, Diels, *Vorsokratiker* I, 215.

[3] For a cursory survey, also for the survival of these ideas in the Middle Ages, see P. A. Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics* II (New York, 1937) 315–379, based in part on P. Duhem, *Le système du monde* (reprinted Paris, 1954) and also on L. Thorndike, *History of Magic and Experimental Science* (New York, 1923—); for the ancient and early Christian period in particular see H. Meyer, "Zur Lehre von der ewigen Wiederkunft aller Dinge," *Beiträge zur Geschichte des christlichen Altertums und der byzantinischen Literatur: Festgabe Albert Ehrhard . . .* (Bonn, Leipzig, 1922) 359 ff.

[4] Cf. J. Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophers*, 4th ed. (London, 1948) 158 ff.

[5] Fragms. 17 and 30, Diels, *Vorsokratiker* I, 315 ff. and 325.

[6] *Statesman* 269 ff.; *Laws* 677A.

[7] *De generatione et corruptione* 377 f.; *Metaphysics* XII, 8, 1074B; cf. W. Jaeger, *Aristotle* (Oxford, 1948) 130 ff., on the doctrine, contained in the fragments from *On Philosophy*, that truth returns periodically.

[8] *Histor.* VI, 44 ff. and 57.

[9] *Timaeus* 39D.

of the completions of the eight heavenly revolutions, that is to say, those of the moon, the sun, the five planets then known, and the heaven of fixed stars. Perhaps, already the Pythagoreans, and in any case the Neopythagoreans, expected that the beginning of a new world year would bring about a general renewal of the world.[10] The Stoics linked it to their doctrine of cosmic destruction and renewal through *ἐκπύρωσις*;[11] according to Seneca[12] the Babylonian priest of the Hellenistic period, Berossus, taught the periodical recurrence not only of conflagrations but also of deluges;[13] Plato himself had known of cataclysmic as well as of fiery upheavals of the universe.[14] It would seem, however, that the Stoics' dogma of *identical* repetition of the same, after an *ἐκπύρωσις*, owes less to the doctrine of the great world year than to their belief that the cosmic elements, after various transformations and after return to the unity of the primitive divine fire, will again form the same pattern, "so that there will be again Socrates and Plato and every man, with their friends and fellow citizens, sharing the same opinions, meeting the same persons, engaged in the same business, and that there will be restored (*ἀποκαθίστασθαι*) also every city, village, and countryside: this restoration (*ἀποκατάστασις*) to happen not once but often, in fact boundlessly and endlessly."[15] In such terminology the expression *ἀποκατάστασις* has become a technical term of cosmological renewal; in Christian renewal ideology it will assume further meanings.[16] If the great world year played only a secondary role in Stoic natural philosophy, it was all the more essential to the Roman Neopythagoreans of the late republican and imperial period: a new *magnus annus* was to renovate the whole

[10] Cf. E. Zeller, *Die Philosophie der Griechen* I, 1, 6th ed. (Leipzig, 1919) 549 f., 535 f.

[11] *Ecpyrosis* already in Zeno, v. Arnim, *Stoic. Veter. Fragm.* I, 27, fragm. 98; for its connection with the great world year see Arius Didymus, v. Arnim II, 185 f., fragm. 599, and Nemesius, *De natura hominum* 38, v. Arnim II, 190, fragm. 625.

[12] *Naturales quaestiones* III, 29.

[13] Cf. P. Schnabel, *Berossos und die babylonisch-hellenistische Literatur* (Berlin, 1923).

[14] *Timaeus* 22 f. The question of the priority of Greek or of Persian and Indian ideas concerning periodical catastrophes of the world cannot be discussed here; cf. J. Bidez, *Eos ou Platon et l'orient* (Bruxelles, 1945) 82 ff., also Eliade, *Eternel retour*, 167 ff.

[15] Nemesius, *op. cit.*, 38, v. Arnim. Cf. Origen, *Contra Celsum* IV, 68, v. Arnim II, 190, fragm. 626, Alexander of Aphrodisias, *In Aristot. analyt. pr.*, v. Arnim II, 189, fragm. 624, Tatian, *Adversus Graecos* 5, v. Arnim I, 32, fragm. 109.

[16] See below, Part Two, Chapter I and Chapter III, 1.

world and to break the chain of reincarnations.[17] Under Neopythagorean influence, Virgil in his *Fourth Eclogue* found the greatest poetical expression of ancient cosmological renewal ideology, not without combining it with the idea of the Golden Age and with vitalistic renewal ideas:

> Ultima Cumaei venit iam carminis aetas;
> magnus ab integro saeclorum nascitur ordo.
> Iam redit et virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna;
> iam nova progenies caelo demittitur alto.
> Tu modo nascenti puero quo ferrea primum
> desinet ac toto surget gens aurea mundo
> casta fave Lucina; tuus iam regnat Apollo.
> Teque adeo decus hoc aevi, te consule inibit,
> Pollio, et incipient magni procedere menses.[18]

More or less explicit formulations of the world year doctrine and of the idea of eternal recurrence are found also in Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*,[19] in the third century grammarian Censorinus,[20] and in the interpretation of the *Timaeus* passage mentioned above[21] in Ps.-Plutarch, *De fato*.[22] Stoic cosmological renewal ideas may have influenced the *Latin Asclepius*, which perhaps dates from the fourth century and may be derived from a Greek original of the third; the translator's phrase: *haec enim mundi* ⟨*re*⟩*genitura* (or ⟨*nova*⟩*genitura*): *cunctarum reformatio rerum bonarum et naturae ipsius sanctissima et religiosissima restitutio*[23] may be influenced by Christian terminology, but has little relation to Christian ideas of regeneration or reform.

[17] Cf. J. Carcopino, *Virgile et le mystère de la IVe Eglogue*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1943) 84 f. The idea of reincarnation or metempsychosis itself is not a renewal idea in the proper sense.

[18] *Fourth Eclogue* 4–12. See also *Aeneid* VI, 745 ff., for the interruption of reincarnations at the turn from one world year to the next.

[19] *De re publica* VI, 21, 23 ff. See P. Boyancé, *Etudes sur le songe de Scipion* (Limoges, 1936) 160 ff.

[20] *De die natali* XVIII, 11.

[21] See p. 10.

[22] *De fato* 3 (569).

[23] *Asclepius* III, 26 a, Scott, *Hermet.* I, 346; cf. the edition by Nock, with French translation by Festugière, *Corp. Hermet.* II, 331, where the reading *genitura* is adhered to. It is in any case clear from the context that the passage refers to "rebirth"; for the relation to cosmological renewal, which nevertheless exists, see the commentary of Scott, *Hermet.* III, 177 ff.

The idea of eternal recurrence could be combined with the myth of a Golden Age at the beginning of history, which in Greece first appeared in Hesiod where it had only the vaguest connection with the notion of cyclical return.[24] Later however, for instance, in Virgil's *Fourth Eclogue* the two ideas clearly appear together.[25] The myth of successive ages of decreasing excellence—in Hesiod they are the ages of gold, silver, brass, of the heroes, and of iron—also appears in Indian and Persian sources of the syncretistic period and may be of old-Iranian origin. At first these ages apparently were conceived as purely historical; they also were of the same number as the four Hesiodic metals (not counting Hesiod's age of heroes); later, under the influence perhaps of Hellenized Babylonian astrology, the Mazdaist priests of Asia Minor, Cumont's so-called *mages hellénisés* or *Maguséens*,[26] transformed this conception into that of a planetary world week of seven cosmological and historical ages. Each of these seven ages stood under the ascendency of a planet, as did the seven periods of individual human life, and it was a planet which gave its name to each age as to the days of an ordinary week. Since Saturn was the first and the Sun the last in the sequence,[27] the Golden Age could be conceived of as the return of the age of Saturn, heralded by the still present age of the sun god. Thus Virgil could say in the *Fourth Eclogue*: *redeunt Saturnia regna* and *iam regnat Apollo*.[28]

[24] Hesiod, *Works and Days* 109–201. The only suggestion of a cyclical idea is found in Hesiod's wish to be born if not before then after the end of the last and worst (iron) age (v. 175).

[25] See also *Aeneid* VI, 791 ff., for Augustus as bringer of a new Golden Age. For Hesiod's myth in Ovid see *Metamorphoses* I, 89 ff.

[26] For this whole complex of ideas see F. Cumont, "La fin du monde selon les mages occidentaux," *Rev. hist. rel.* CIII (1931) 29 ff., and J. Bidez and F. Cumont, *Les mages hellénisés* I (Paris, 1938) 131 ff., 218 ff. Cf. also R. Reitzenstein and H. H. Schaeder, *Studien zum antiken Synkretismus aus Iran und Griechenland* (Studien der Bibliothek Warburg VII, Leipzig-Berlin, 1926) Part I/II: "Vom Töpferorakel zu Hesiod," especially 45 ff., where also the most important Indian sources, not discussed by Cumont, are given. For Hesiod and the Golden Age, see also the recent discussion between H. C. Baldry, "Who Invented the Golden Age," *Classical Quarterly*, New Ser. II (1952) 83 ff., "Hesiod's Five Ages," *Jour. Hist. Ideas* XVII (1956) 553 f., J. G. Griffiths, "Archaeology and Hesiod's Five Ages," *ibid.* 109 ff. Cf. R. Eisler, "Metallurgical Anthropology in Hesiod and Plato and the Date of a 'Phoenician Lie'," *Isis* XL (1949) 108 ff.

[27] Cf. Cumont, "Fin du monde" 48 ff., 54 ff.

[28] See Virgil, *Fourth Eclogue* 6–10. The syncretistic series of planetarian gods from Kronos (Saturn) to Helios (Sol or Apollo) which stands behind these Virgilian verses (cf. Carcopino,

In spite of contaminations with cyclical cosmology the Magusean hebdomadal scheme, in which the number of related metals was likewise increased to seven, differs in important respects from the doctrine of the great world year. Instead of eternal recurrence of planetary conjunctions and corresponding recurrent cosmic and historical situations the idea of the great world week envisaged only one succession of planetary ascendencies, each to last a thousand years. After its completion a definitive eschatological renovation of the world would take place, bringing about an eighth age of the heaven of fixed stars, to which the seventh or sun-millennium is only a prelude (to be followed directly by an interlude allowed to the powers of evil).[29] This conception, enriched by Jewish and Early Christian apocalyptic elements, was to become the basis of the chiliastic or millenarian renewal idea which is fundamentally different from that of eternal recurrence.[30] The connecting link between the two conceptions of the world year and the world week is the idea of the Golden Age, the characteristics of which the seventh millennium retains to some extent.

The Hesiodic and Indo-Persian scheme of four or five ages also survived on the historical noncosmical level. In conjunction with the metal myth it appears as the idea of the succession of four world empires[31] in late classical historians from the second century B.C.

*Virgile* 50 ff., for Virgil's substitution of Apollo for Sol under Neopythagorean and Magusean influence) is different from the sequence of both the official pagan Roman and the Christian order of week days. About Saturday as the first and Sunday as the second day of the Roman week and for Sunday as the first day of the Christian week even before Constantine the Great cf. F. J. Dölger, "Die Planetenwoche der griechisch-römischen Antike und der christliche Sonntag," *Ant. u. Chr.* VI (1950) 202 ff. See also below, Part Two, Chapter V, 6.

[29] Cf. Cumont, "Fin du monde" 46 f., 56 f., 70 f.: some elements of this conception are found in Origen (Celsus), *Contra Celsum* VI, 22, *GCS, Orig.* II, 92, who refers in this connection to the mysteries of Mithras; Lactantius, *Divinae institutiones* VII, 23–26, *CSEL* XIX, 655 ff., depends in part on the Ps.-Hystaspes, i.e., indirectly on Magusean sources (cf. also Bidez and Cumont, *Mages hellénisés* I, 217 ff., and Lactantius' citations from Hystaspes, quoted *ibid.* II, 364 ff.).

[30] See below, Part One, Chapter I, 3.

[31] Cf. Eduard Meyer, *Ursprung und Anfänge des Christentums* II (Stuttgart, Berlin, 1921) 189 ff.; *idem., Hesiods Erga und das Gedicht von den fünf Menschengeschlechten* (*Kleine Schriften* II, Halle, 1924) 15 ff.; J. W. Swain, "The Theory of the Four Monarchies: Opposition History under the Roman Empire," *Class. Philol.* XXXV (1940) 1 ff. Meyer and Swain discount a possible connection between Hesiod and the Indian and Persian myths, whereas Reitzenstein and Schaeder, *Synkretismus* 577 ff., think that Hesiod was dependent on early forms of the latter; see also the article by Griffiths, quoted in n. 26. For the idea of the

to the third century A.D.,[32] in the Book of Daniel,[33] and in Christian commentaries on the latter. The most influential identification of the four world empires was that with the monarchies of the Assyrians (or Babylonians), Persians (or Medes), Macedonians, and Romans, which we find, for instance, in Pompeius Trogus and in St. Jerome.[34] In the Middle Ages this succession scheme was developed in the theory of the so-called *translatio imperii* (transfer of the Roman Empire from one people to another) and of a corresponding *translatio studii* (transfer of wisdom and knowledge).[35] In such conceptions, too, an idea of eternal renewal can be implied, in conjunction, for instance, with the ideology of eternal Rome.[36]

The recurrence idea in its most extreme form, the conception of an eternally cyclical and numerically repetitive renewal of the cosmos and of a cosmologically determined renewal of humanity, was of course essentially incompatible with the rectilinear and chronologically limited Christian view of history[37] and with the Christian approach to the problems of causal determination, contingency, human freedom, and divine predestination. Yet modified in various ways, it did

four world empires see also C. Trieber, "Die Idee der vier Weltreiche," *Hermes* XXVII (1892) 321 ff., and T. E. Mommsen, "St. Augustine and the Christian Idea of Progress," *Jour. Hist. Ideas* XII (1951) 346 ff.

[32] The most important among them was Pompeius Trogus, who wrote in Augustus' time; cf. Swain, "Four Monarchies" 16 ff.

[33] Dan. 2:31 ff. and 7:1 ff.

[34] Jerome, *Comment. in Danielem* 2:31 ff. and 7:1 ff., *PL* XXV, 526 f., 552 ff.; also his translation of the chronological "canon" of Eusebius world chronicle, *GCS, Euseb. VII*, 2nd ed. (cf. Swain, "Four Monarchies" 19 ff.). For ancient and Byzantine identifications of the fourth world empire with Macedon rather than Rome see Swain, "Four Monarchies," and M. V. Anastos, "Political Theory in the Lives of the Slavic Saints Constantine and Methodius," *Harvard Slavic Studies* II (1954) 17 ff.

[35] See now P. van den Baar, *Die kirchliche Lehre der Translatio Imperii Romani . . .* (Analecta Gregoriana LXXVIII, Roma, 1956), and W. Goetz, *Translatio Imperii* (Tübingen, 1958), also Anastos, "Political Theory" 22 ff., and for the *translatio studii* E. Gilson, *La philosophie au moyen âge*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1947) 193 f., E. R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. W. R. Trask (Bollingen Series XXXVI, New York, 1953) 29, 384 f., H. Grundmann, "Sacerdotium—Regnum—Studium," *Arch. Kult. Gesch.* XXXIV (1951) 8, 13 f.

[36] Cf. below, Part One, Chapter I, 2.

[37] Cf., for instance, Origen, *Contra Celsum* IV, 67 f., V, 20 f. *GCS, Orig.*, I, 337 f., II, 21 ff.; *idem.*, *De principiis* II, 3, 4, *GCS*, Orig. V, 119; Augustine, *De civitate Dei* XII, 14, *Corp. Christ., Ser. Lat.* XLVIII, 369. See also R. Niebuhr, *Faith and History* (New York, 1949) 16, 21.

survive the end of paganism, especially in combination with certain vitalistic and millenarian renewal ideas.[38]

The idea of reform differs from all cosmologic-deterministic renewal ideas through its element of *freedom*.[39]

## 2. Vitalistic Renewal Ideas

Vitalistic renewal ideas in the widest sense of the term are founded upon analogies with the reproduction and growth of human life and of life in general. Such are the idea of Renaissance and the idea of evolution; the latter lies on the whole outside the scope of this study—but see the remarks in Excursus IV, 4.

The Renaissance idea, it is true, is not without connection with that of spiritual regeneration[1] and even with that of reform.[2] The remote common roots lie no doubt in very ancient ideas of redemptive sacrificial death and rebirth.[3] The most characteristic trait of the Renaissance idea is at any rate the assumption of rebirth or renewed growth

[38] The most important of these modifications in the early Christian age itself is that of Origen; Origen's adaptation and Augustine's complete rejection of ancient recurrence ideology are well contrasted by H. Meyer, "Ewige Wiederkunft" 368 ff. Origen's idea of periodical *apocatastasis* or restoration of the world will be discussed more fully below, Part Two, Chapter III, 1. Modified ideas of this general type are found also in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. For the idea of the Golden Age in the early Christian period and its combination with the biblical Paradise see G. Boas, *Essays on Primitivism and Related Ideas in the Middle Ages* (Baltimore, 1948) and below, Part Two, Chapter III, 1.

[39] For the "shortcomings" of the myth of eternal recurrence and of the Golden Age (and to some extent even of the *nostalgie du paradis*) see the excellent remarks of M. Eliade, *Traité des religions* (Paris, 1949) Chapters 10 and 11; cf. also H. de Lubac, S. J., *Catholicisme: Les aspects sociaux du dogme*, 4th ed. (Paris, 1947) 107 ff.

[1] Konrad Burdach and his school, the principal representatives of a trend which W. K. Ferguson, *The Renaissance in Historical Thought* (Boston, New York, 1948) 329 ff., calls "the revolt of the medievalists" against an autonomous concept of the Renaissance, have gone too far in deriving the Italian Renaissance altogether from late ancient, early Christian, and mediaeval ideas of spiritual regeneration; see Burdach's great work *Vom Mittelalter zur Reformation* (Berlin, 1921–1939) and his essay "Sinn und Ursprung der Worte Renaissance und Reformation," *Reformation Renaissance Humanismus*, 2nd ed. (Berlin, Leipzig, 1926). Similarly, the study of F. Heer, "Die 'Renaissance'-Ideologie im frühen Mittelalter," *Mitt. Inst. Öst. Gesch. Forsch.* LVII (1949) 23 ff., which contains much interesting material and some excellent interpretations, does not always sufficiently distinguish between "Renaissance" ideas and the ideology of reform.

[2] Cf. below, p. 23, n. 27.

[3] See Introduction.

or return of vital values in an individual, community or institution, in a nation or in humanity as a whole; this is a quasi-biological revival which has no longer a direct relation to sacrifice. One finds this conception long before the Italian Renaissance, for instance, in the Augustan[4] and Theodosian eras,[5] and all through the Late Roman and

[4] Beside Virgil's *Fourth Eclogue* with its mixed cosmological and vitalistic connotations (cf. below p. 21, n. 20) see, for instance, Horace, *Carmen saeculare* 58: . . . neglecta redire virtus; *idem*, *Ars poetica* 70: Multa renascentur quae iam cecidere cadentque/quae nunc sunt in honore vocabula . . .; Livy, *Histor.* VI, 1: . . . ab secunda origine (i.e., after the destruction by the Gallic invaders) velut ab stirpibus laetius feraciusque renatae urbis; *idem*, *ibid.* III, 9, 1: . . . res Romana in antiquum statum rediit; cf. also *ibid.* XXVI, 41, 22–24, XXIV, 45, 3.

[5] Cf., for instance, Claudian, *De bello Gildonico* 17–27, and especially 208 ff., Koch, 38 f. and above all 44:

. . . adflavit Romam meliore iuventa.
Continuo redit ille vigor seniique colorem
mutavere comae. . . .

See also Claudian, *In Rufinum* I, 50 ff., Koch 12 (of Theodosius as victor over the Furies):

Heu nimis ignavae quas Iuppiter arcet Olympo,
Theodosius terris. En aurea nascitur aetas.
En proles antiqua redit . . .

(dependence on Virgil's *Fourth Eclogue* is here obvious). See furthermore Prudentius, *Contra Symmachum* II, 656 ff., *CSEL* LXI, 271 (of Rome under Theodosius):

. . . sub quo senium omne renascens
deposui vidique meam flavescere rursus
canitiem : nam cum mortalia cuncta vetustas
imminuat, mihi longa dies aliud parit aevum
quae vivendo diu didici contemnere finem.

See also *ibid.* I, 541 ff., *CSEL* LXI, 239:

Denique nec metas statuit nec tempora ponit,
imperium sine fine docet, ne Romula virtus
iam sit anus, norit ne gloria parta senectam

(with this cf. Virgil, *Aeneid* I, 287 ff.). See finally Rutilius Namatianus, *De reditu suo e Roma in Galliam Narbonensem* I, 137 ff., Vessereau and Préchac 9:

Quae restant nullis obnoxia tempora metis,
dum stabant terrae, dum polus astra feret.
Illud te reparat quod cetera regna resolvit :
ordo renascendi est crescere posse malis

(cf. again *Aeneid* I, 287 ff., see also C. Pascal, "Una probabile fonte di Rutilio Namaziano," *Graecia Capta* [Firenze, 1905] 163 ff., for possible dependence upon the famous oration in praise of Rome by Aelius Aristides, the Greek rhetor, second century A. D.). Most of the texts cited are discussed by Curtius, *European Literature* 104.

Middle Ages, in connection with the belief in the eternal life and ever-repeated rejuvenation of Rome and with the so-called Roman *Renovatio* idea.[6]

Because the reform ideas of the great Fathers of the late fourth and early fifth century, which this book will study in some detail, stood out against the spirit of the so-called "Theodosian Renaissance," which not a few of them vigorously opposed,[7] it will be well to insert here a few comments on this phase in the history of vitalistic renewal ideas. The occurrence of a vitalistic renewal ideology and Renaissance terminology was neither the reason for the formulation of the concept of a Theodosian Renaissance nor does this term designate more than

[6] In general see F. G. Moore, "On Urbs Aeterna and Urbs Sacra," *Trans. Amer. Philol. Ass.* XXV (1894) 34 ff., W. Gernentz, *Laudes Romae* (Rostock, 1918), M. Vogelstein, *Kaiseridee-Romidee und das Verhältnis von Staat und Kirche seit Konstantin* (Historische Untersuchungen VII, Breslau, 1930), especially Excursus III, W. Rehm, *Der Untergang Roms im abendländischen Denken* (Leipzig, 1930), E. Pfeil, *Die fränkische und deutsche Romidee des frühen Mittelalters* (München, 1929), P. E. Schramm, *Kaiser, Rom und Renovatio* (Studien der Bibliothek Warburg XVII, 1 and 2, Leipzig, Berlin, 1929), F. Heer, " 'Renaissance'-Ideologie," E. K. Rand, *The Building of Eternal Rome* (Cambridge, Mass., 1943), W. Paatz, "Renaissance oder Renovatio?," *Beiträge zur Kunst des Mittelalters* (Berlin, 1950) 16 ff. Tibullus, *Carmina* II, 5, 23, seems to have been the first to speak of the *urbs aeterna*, and already the coins of Galba's faction show the legend *Roma renascens*. Dreams of the eternity and of the rebirth, restitution, reparation, renovation of Rome, coupled with Golden Age ideology, determined the official and semiofficial propaganda of the pagan and later of the Christian Empires for many centuries. This well-known fact can nowhere be verified as easily as on the coins. See, for instance, J. Gagé, "Le «Templum Urbis» et les origines de l'idée de «Renovatio»," *Mélanges Franz Cumont* I (Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'Histoire Orientales et Slaves, Université Libre de Bruxelles, IV, 1, Bruxelles, 1936) 151 ff., H. Mattingly, "Felicium temporum reparatio," *The Numismatic Chronicle and Journal of the Royal Numismatic Society*, Ser. V, XIII (1933) 182 ff., *idem*, *The Cambridge Ancient History* XII (Cambridge, 1939) 713 ff.: *Appendix on* Sources 2: *Coins*, P. L. Strack, *Untersuchungen zur römischen Reichsprägung des zweiten Jahrhunderts*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart, 1931–37). It is characteristic of the link which exists between Roman *renovatio* ideology and vitalistic renewal ideas that Constantine the Great used one of the mystical pagan names of Rome, "Flora," in Greek translation: "Anthusa," for Constantinople (cf. V. Burch, *Myth and Constantine the Great* [Oxford, 1927] 76 ff., A. Alföldi, *The Conversion of Constantine and Pagan Rome* [Oxford, 1948] 114), thus connecting his new capital, the second Rome, with the flowering of the first (cf. W. Hartke, *Römische Kinderkaiser* [Berlin, 1951] 298 ff., on the *Floralia*). For the ideology of the "Second Rome," related to that of the *translatio imperii* (see above, p. 15), cf., for instance, F. Dölger, "Rom in der Gedankenwelt der Byzantiner," *Z. Ki. Gesch.* LVI (1937) 1 ff., W. Hammer, "The Concept of a New or Second Rome . . .," *Speculum* XIX (1944) 50 ff., E. H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies* (Princeton, 1957) 82f.

[7] Cf. pp. 251–256, for Augustine's rejection of a renewal ideology centered in Rome.

one aspect of the Theodosian age. The modern term "Theodosian Renaissance" is based above all on the evidence of a strong classicist trend in the history of art during the reigns of Theodosius the Great and his sons which produced works of great beauty such as the silver missorium of Theodosius the Great, the Symmachorum-Nicomachorum diptych, and the Stilicho diptych.[8] In literature and thought, too, the "Theodosian Renaissance" thus understood is characterized by a genuine affinity to classical Antiquity, similar in this respect, and perhaps historically not unrelated, to Italian Renaissance humanism.[9] It is eminently represented by the Roman Neopythagorean-Neoplatonic circle of Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, Quintus Aurelius Symmachus, and Virius Nicomachus Flavianus,[10] which forms the milieu of Macrobius' *Saturnalia*.[11] Among the concerns of these last defenders of paganism and its integral culture were those revisions of the classical authors to which we owe much of what we possess of Roman literature.[12] In one of its aspects then, the age of the "Theodosian Renaissance" prolongs earlier fourth century attempts at a

[8] Cf. R. Delbrueck, *Die Consulardiptychen und verwandte Denkmäler* (Berlin, 1929), especially 28ff., where these works are placed in the historical background here discussed. See also K. Weitzmann and S. Schulz, "Zur Bestimmung des Dichters auf dem Musendiptychon von Monza," *Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts* XLIX (1934) 128 ff., especially 132 ff., 135 ff. For the classicist character of the imperial portraits around 400 see Delbrueck, *Spätantike Kaiserportraits von Constantinus Magnus bis zum Ende des Westreichs* (Berlin, Leipzig, 1933). See further J. Kollwitz, *Oströmische Plastik der Theodosianischen Zeit* (Berlin, 1941). Cf. finally the comprehensive essay by E. Garger, "Zur spätantiken Renaissance," *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien, Neue Folge*, VIII (1934) 1 ff., where the persistence of the Theodosian Renaissance element through fifth-century art down to the era of Theodoric and Justinian I (paralleled in literature by figures like Apollinaris Sidonius and Ennodius of Pavia [cf. below, pp. 369 f. and 375]) is also traced.

[9] On the possibility of this relation see below, p. 23, n. 27.

[10] On these representatives of "the last pagan revival in the west" see now above all H. Bloch, "A New Document of the Last Pagan Revival in the West," *Harv. Theol. Rev.* XXXVIII (1945) 199 ff., where most of the older literature is cited.

[11] Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, ed. F. Eyssenhardt, 2nd ed. (Leipzig, 1893). For Macrobius see P. Courcelle, *Les lettres grecques en occident: De Macrobe à Cassidore*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1948).

[12] Cf. Bloch, "Pagan Revival," also *idem*, review of E. A. Lowe, *Codices Latini Antiquiores* IV, in *Speculum* XXV (1950) 279. See also H. Usener, *Anecdoton Holderi* (Bonn, 1877) 28 ff., E. Lommatzsch, "Literarische Bewegungen in Rom im vierten und fünften Jahrhundert," *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Literaturgeschichte*, Neue Folge, XV (1904) 177 ff., L. Traube, *Einleitung in die lateinische Philologie des Mittelalters* (ed. P. Lehmann, *Vorlesungen und Abhandlungen von Ludwig Traube*, ed. F. Boll, II, München, 1911) 124 f.

revival rather than at a Christianization of pagan civilization, attempts in which the senatorial aristocracy of the city of Rome played an important role;[13] in another it continued Constantinian renewal ideas and especially a Christianized "political" reform ideology in which the Kingdom of God and the Roman Empire were more or less fused —Ambrose and Prudentius followed to some extent the tracks of Eusebius of Caesarea—an ideology which was definitely overcome only by St. Augustine.[14]

In a recent study on the philological roots of the Renaissance idea, J. Trier has shown[15] that the metaphorical meaning of *renasci* (*rinascita*) is not necessarily "to be reborn," but may be "to grow again," the metaphor being taken from the realm of the horticulturist and forester, from tree life, where the "damage" done by cutting (pruning) results in new growth, in a "Renaissance." One might add that *renasci* is thus closely related to *revirescere* ("to grow green again," "to grow strong, young again," "to reflourish") and to *reviviscere* ("to revive"), both terms frequently used by Cicero, also to *reflorescere* ("to blossom again"), found, for instance, in Pliny[16] and in Silius Italicus.[17] Trier's thesis that the modern as well as the Roman Renaissance concept originated from the meaning given to *renasci* by Roman writers *de re rustica* in the widest sense is however convincing only up to a point. For both in Christian and in non-Christian Latin mystery language *renasci* and related expressions could, just as *regenerari-regeneratio*, be used in the sense of a spiritual rebirth, with

[13] Beside Bloch's article cf. especially A. Alföldi, *A Festival of Isis in Rome under the Christian Emperors of the IVth Century* (Dissertationes Pannonicae, Ser. II, VII, Budapest, 1937), *idem, Die Kontorniaten, ein verkanntes Propagandamittel der stadtrömischen Aristokratie in ihrem Kampf gegen das christliche Kaisertum* (Budapest, 1942–1943), *idem, A Conflict of Ideas in the Late Roman Empire: The Clash between the Senate and Valentinian I* (Oxford, 1952); see furthermore below, pp. 147–150, about the affair of the Altar of Victory. I am much indebted to Professor Bloch for clarifying in correspondence with me the rather ambiguous concept of the "Theodosian Renaissance"; the pagan revival trend is, of course, far from being the only one characteristic of the Theodosian age.

[14] For these developments see below, Part Two, Chapter III, 3, Chapter IV, Chapter V, 7.

[15] J. Trier, "Zur Vorgeschichte des Renaissance-Begriffs," *Arch. Kult. Gesch.* XXXIII (1950) 45 ff. (also in: *Holz: Etymologien aus dem Niederwald* [Münster-Köln, 1952] 144 ff.).

[16] *Naturalis Historia* XVIII, 43.

[17] *Punicor.* XV, 741.

connotations which could range all the way from vegetative[18] to cosmological renewal. *Renasci* and *regeneratio* could, for instance, be felt as equivalent to the Greek παλιγγενεσία,[19] and even as related to ἀποκατάστασις.[20] That vitalistic renewal ideas are not exclusively of a vegetative kind can be seen above all from the widespread and ever-recurring myth of the miraculous bird phoenix, who is reborn from his own ashes. Here the connection with cosmological renewal ideology is quite obvious, since according to the myth the life-span of the phoenix corresponds to cosmic periods which vary all the way from the apparent diurnal course of the sun around the earth to the great world year.[21]

[18] For a much more profound interpretation of classical and Christian vegetative renewal symbolism—as it appears, for instance, in the well-known relationship between the paradisiacal trees and the Cross, but also in the motifs of the mandragora and the willow tree—see H. Rahner, S. J., *Griechische Mythen in christlicher Deutung* (Zürich, 1945) 92 ff., 314 ff., 382 ff. Cf. my article "Vegetation Symbolism and the Concept of Renaissance," in *De Artibus Opuscula XL, Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky* (New York, 1961), 303 ff.

[19] Cf. below, p. 33. See also R. Newald, "Renatae Litterae und Reformatio," *Hist. Jb.* LXXI (1951) 137 ff.

[20] Cf. above, p. 11. For Virgil's *Fourth Eclogue* in particular see pp. 12–13, and cf. the cosmological interpretation in Servius' commentary to v. 4, ed. G. Thilo, *Servii grammatici qui feruntur in Vergilii Bucolica et Georgica Commentarii* (Leipzig, 1887) 45, also Servius to v. 34, Thilo, *loc. cit.*, 49, where a relation to the *apocatastasis* of the universe is explicitly established. For the combination of vitalistic and cosmological renewal ideas in the *Fourth Eclogue* and for the derivation of the Augustan renewal term *saeculum* (as in Horace's *Carmen saeculare*) from *serere*, to sow, see Nilsson, article "Saeculares ludi," in PW, *RE*, Reihe II, II (I, 2), 1708 and 1697. For Apuleius see below, p. 40, for the *Latin Asclepius* above, p. 12.

[21] For the phoenix myth see J. Hubaux and M. Leroy, *Le mythe du Phénix dans les littératures grecque et latine* (Bibliothèque de philosophie et lettres de l'Université de Liège LXXXII, 1939), with a thorough discussion of the sources such as Herodotus II, 73, Ovid, *Metamorph.* XV, 391 ff., Tacitus, *Annales* VI, 28, Pliny, *Natur. Hist.* X, 2, Ps.-Baruch 6–8, Tertullian, *De resurrectione* 13, Lactantius, *Carmen de ave Phoenice*, Claudianus, *Phoenix*, the *Physiologus;* the authors also deal with renewal ideas connected with other great birds, such as the griphon and the eagle; for the latter's role in Christian renewal ideology according to Ps. 102:5: . . . Renovabitur ut aquila iuventus tua, cf. below, pp. 314–315. Cf. also J. Lassus, "La mosaique du Phénix provenant des fouilles d'Antioche," *Fondation Eugène Piot: Monuments et mémoires publiées par l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* XXXV (1938) 81 ff.; A. J. Festugière, "Le symbole du Phénix et le mysticisme hermétique," *ibid.* XXXVIII (1941) 147 ff.; D. Levi, *Antioch Mosaic Pavements* I (Princeton, 1947) 253 ff., 351 ff.; C.-M. Edsman, *Ignis Divinus* (Skrifter . . . Vetenskap-Societeten i Lund . . . XXXIV, Lund, 1949) 178 ff. (with important remarks on the relation of the phoenix myth to the Stoic cosmological ideology of *ecpyrosis*, cf. above, p. 11), and now the illuminating chapter "Phoenix" in Kantorowicz, *Two Bodies* 385 ff.

The most typical occurrences of vitalistic renewal ideas are found, of course, in the age which is still called the Renaissance.[22] It is possible that the Italian humanists of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century who applied the rebirth concept to their own age were influenced not only by Livy and the other Augustans, but also by "Theodosian" poets such as Rutilius Namatianus who had used the term *renasci* in a pregnant meaning.[23] This was the thesis of an erudite study by K. Borinski,[24] which however connected Machiavelli's Renaissance concept too exclusively with the rediscovery of Rutilius Namatianus' poem, whereas Machiavelli's relation to the Augustan authors, to Livy, for instance, must have been at least equally important.[25] In Machiavelli's *History of Florence* the life of the nations is seen as a succession of cycles each of which turns from *virtù* (civic and political excellence) through peace and quiet to disorder and ruin whence new order is born.[26] In a famous chapter of the *Discourses on the First Decade of Livy* Machiavelli discusses the necessity of periodically renovating states and nations by a return to their beginnings (*riduzione verso il principio, rivocare al segno*), so that they may be reborn (e.g.: *che Roma . . . rinascesse*) to new life and new *virtù*.[27]

[22] Dante in this respect, too, stands at the threshold of the new age, for instance, in his conception of a *vita nova*. Cf. Kantorowicz, *Two Bodies* 484, where it is said that Dante built up "a doctrine of purely *human* regeneration which was not identical with the doctrine of Christian regeneration—though the one did not need to contradict the other."

[23] See above, p. 17, n. 5.

[24] K. Borinski, "Die Weltwiedergeburtsidee in den neueren Zeiten," *Sitz. Ber. Bayer.*, Philos.-philol. u. hist. Klasse 1919, 1, 1 ff.

[25] See the examples from Livy and Horace quoted above, p. 17, n. 4. Cf. Trier, "Renaissance-Begriff" 159, also Borinski himself in his review article "Politische symbolik des Mittelalters und werden der Renaissance: Anmerkungen und zusätze zu Konrad Burdach: Rienzo und die geistige wandlung seiner zeit," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* XLVIII (1920) 460.

[26] Machiavelli, *Istorie Fiorentine*, V, 1; also I, 39: antica virtù rinata; I, 31, about the impact of Cola di Rienzo upon Italy: vedendo come Roma era rinata. . . . Cf. Machiavelli's *Discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio* I, 2, dependent on Polybius' *Histories*, especially VI, 9, 10, that is to say, on his conception of recurrent cycles of political constitutions, which again are related to ancient cyclical cosmology. See also *Discorsi* II, proem, where the scheme of the succession of world empires is transformed into that of a migration of *virtù* from one people to another.

[27] *Discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio* III, 1. One other possible contact between Machiavelli and an author of the "Theodosian Renaissance" may be mentioned in passing. The ancient source of the Machiavellian terms *ridurre* (*riduzione*) *al segno*, *ritirare al segno*, *ritornare al segno*—the latter only in a trivial meaning, in the comedy *Clizia* (*Opere*, edd.

The Renaissance idea of spontaneous rebirth[28] is qualified by the explicit reintroduction of an over-arching divine providence in Vico's concept of *ricorso*. Vico's *ricorso* is the first stage of a new cycle of human history and, formally, corresponds to Machiavelli's *riduzione verso il principio*. But Vico abandoned all remnants of the idea of cosmological determination and of the *identical* repetition inherent in such variants of vitalistic renewal ideology. A *ricorso*, such as the Middle Ages, is for him both primitive barbarism and the first phase of an entirely new civilization.[29]

G. Mazzoni and M. Casella [Firenze, 1929] 690); cf. E. W. Mayer, *Machiavelli's Geschichtsauffassung und sein Begriff virtù* (München, Berlin, 1912) 77, n. 1—have, as far as I know, never been ascertained. These expressions must originate in military language. Now, the metaphor *vocare ad signa*, i.e., "to call to the standards (to arms)," occurs in Claudianus' *Panegyricus Manlio Theodoro Consuli* 174 ff., Koch 134, where this philosopher addresses *iustitia* thus:

. . . Agrestem dudum me, Diva, reverti
cogis et infectum longi rubigine ruris
ad tua signa vocas. . . .

Did Machiavelli know these verses? It is interesting also that Theodorus who became consul in 398, returning to the service of the state from philosophical rural solitude, had earlier been one of the transmitters of Platonic wisdom to St. Augustine and also one of his human models in the Cassiciacum period. *De beata vita* (*CSEL* LXIII) is dedicated to him, cf. I, 1–5, *loc. cit.*, 89 ff. (That Augustine considered Theodorus' return to public life as a betrayal of higher ideals is supposed by Courcelle, *Lettres grecques* 126 ff., on the strength of *Confessiones* VII, 9, 13, Skutella 137, but hardly with sufficient reasons; the text does not mention Theodorus and may refer rather to Porphyry; cf. J. J. O'Meara, *The Young Augustine* [London, etc., 1954] 125 f.) *Revocare ad signum* could also be used in a Christian sense: Cassian, *Conlationes* I, 4, 4 (*CSEL* XIII, 10) uses the phrase for recall to the Kingdom of God. For *revocare* see below, p. 46. It may finally be mentioned in this connection that Machiavelli used the phrase *ritirare verso il suo principio* for the renewal of the Church by St. Francis of Assisi and St. Dominic, thus coming close to an ideology of reform; cf. *Discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio* III, 1.

[28] For other ideological aspects of the Italian Renaissance see J. Huizinga, "Le problème de la Renaissance," *Revue des cours et conférences* XL, 1 (1938–39) 163 ff., 301 ff., 524 ff., 603 ff. (also in *Wege der Kulturgeschichte* [München, 1930]); T. E. Mommsen, "Petrarch's Conception of the 'Dark Ages,'" *Speculum* XVIII (1942) 226 ff.; E. Panofsky and F. Saxl, "Classical Mythology in Mediaeval Art," *Metropolitan Museum Studies* IV (1932–1933) 228 ff.; E. Panofsky, "Renaissance and Renascences," *Kenyon Review* VI (1944) 201 ff.; J. Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan Gods: The Mythological Tradition and Its Place in Renaissance Humanism and Art*, trans. from the French by Barbara F. Sessions (Bollingen Series XXXVIII, New York, 1953); also my review article in *Traditio* X (1954) 578 ff. For Renaissance theories on historical cycles, on the Golden Age, and on world empires see H. Weisinger, "Ideas of History during the Renaissance," *Jour. Hist. Ideas* VI (1945) 426 ff.

[29] The final version of Vico's main work, *La Scienza Nuova*, was published in 1744 (modern

In order to emphasize the distinctness of the idea of reform from vitalistic renewal ideas, it may be helpful to refer briefly to two modern expressions, one philosophical and one historical, of a vitalistic concept of renewal: to Bergson's principle of *élan vital*[30] and to Toynbee's sequence of challenge and response.[31]

It is characteristic of these antimaterialistic forms of vitalistic renewal ideas that they pass somewhat abruptly from instinctive and unconscious development to mystical transfiguration, so that rational finality recedes into the background.[32] In Bergson's philosophy the intermediate sphere between the infrarational (the biological and social-collective) and the suprarational (the mystical) is thus to some extent lost sight of; the realm of ethics, of human morality, freely oriented towards ends, "vanished into thin air."[33] But this intermediate sphere is inseparable from what we call reform.[34] Arnold Toynbee's spiritual kinship to Bergson is evident and clearly stated by himself.[35] He too has a well-founded, but perhaps somewhat excessive,

critical edition by F. Nicolini, 3rd ed. [Bari, 1942], English translation by T. G. Bergin and M. H. Fisch [Ithaca, N.Y., 1948]; see also the English translation of Vico's *Autobiography* by the same authors [Ithaca, 1944], with a good introduction on Vico).

[30] The idea of an *élan vital*, formulated by Henry Bergson in his *Evolution créatrice*, first published in 1907, has been resumed by him twenty-five years later in *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion*.

[31] Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History* (Oxford, 1934–54), especially, I, 271 ff., II, 1 ff.

[32] For Bergson's rejection of rational finalism as well as of mechanism in favor of an *élan vital* which tends toward "*une imprévisible création de forme*" see *Evolution créatrice*, 77th ed. (Paris, 1948) 39 ff., especially 45, and *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion*, 58th ed. (Paris, 1948) 118 f. For his relative disparagement of intellect and rationality—not a necessary but an actual consequence of his fundamental intuitions—and for the resulting radical distinction between static (institutionalized) religion and dynamic religion (mysticism) see *Les deux sources* 222 ff., and, especially, 252 ff.

[33] Cf. Jacques Maritain, "The Bergsonian Philosophy of Morality and Religion," *Ransoming the Time* (New York, 1941) 92 ff.; see also R. Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man* (New York, 1949) 37 f.

[34] Recognition of the importance of the intermediate ethical sphere is the key to the thought of Albert Schweitzer, but he in turn does not do full justice to what he calls "super-ethical (self-perfecting) mysticism," i.e., to the contemplative life; see his *Philosophy of Civilization* (New York, 1950) I, Chapter IV: "The Way to the Restoration of Civilization," and II, Chapter XXV: "The Ethic of Self-Devotion and the Ethic of Self-Perfecting."

[35] Cf. Toynbee, *Study* III, 118 f.; 232.

distrust of institutionalism in civilization. The "mechanicalness of mimesis," understood in the sense of uninspired imitation, the "intractability of institutions," the "idolization of an ephemeral institution" or "technique" are for him among the most important causes of the breakdown of civilizations.[36] And the remedy is a "transfiguration," a "palingenesia," which is the mystical continuation of that same vital response which had brought about the genesis and growth of a civilization.[37] In an apparent paradox, but not without deeper consistency, Toynbee considers the concrete cultural phenomenon which is called *the* Renaissance, and similarly other Renaissances, as "necromantic," artificial ghost raisings of dead cultures by living ones; they are not, therefore, in his view true revivals—except as it were accidentally; he does admit that in the fifteenth–sixteenth century European Renaissance "a springlike outburst of fresh vitality" was associated with "the renaissance of [the] dead antecedent culture" of Greece and Rome.[38] Only this "spring-like outburst" then would correspond to a genuine challenge-response sequence in Toynbee's sense or to a vitalistic renewal concept, whereas the other, "necromantic," component of Renaissance movements, though deprecated by Toynbee, may in fact contain authentic elements of reform, as defined in this book.[39]

The present study is undertaken on the assumption that there is reform which is neither merely response (perhaps because there are evil, hybris, and sin, which are more than challenge) nor sterile return

[36] *Ibid.* IV, 119 ff.; 133 ff.; 303 ff.; 423 ff.

[37] *Ibid.* V, 27 ff.; 390 ff.; VI, 149 ff.; 169 ff. For late pagan and early Christian meanings of the term παλιγγενεσία see below, pp. 40 and 50 f. With Toynbee's views compare those of F. S. C. Northrop, *The Meeting of East and West* (New York, 1947) 458 ff. in the chapter on "The Criteria of Cultural Reform," where a synthesis of the "aesthetic" (biological and mystical) and the "theoretic" (scientific and technological) components of man's nature is postulated.

[38] For Toynbee's conception of Renaissances see *Study* IX, 1 ff.; cf. also *ibid.* 4 f., VIII, 97 ff., VI, 49 ff., for his distinction between Renaissance and archaism. For the "new" and the "old" component in the fifteenth–sixteenth century Renaissance, according to Toynbee's view, see *ibid.* IX, 148.

[39] I hope to show in a later volume that the so-called Carolingian Renaissance and other phases of western civilization, dealt with in Toynbee's chapters on Renaissances, are far from being adequately characterized in categories of necromancy and ghost raising or in those of challenge and response.

to a dead past.[40] It will also be found that there are fruitful religious categories of "mimesis" (*Χριστομίμησις, imitatio Christi*)[41] as well as productive sociological ones: to use an expression of Tarde's, there is a *logique sociale* of imitation;[42] the inventive, quasi-creative elements in history could not survive without their being repeated over and over again. This is a part, especially, of every religious experience[43] and is related again to the repetitive character of sacrifice:

> Since human being cannot be preserved
> But where dark sacrifice repeats itself.[44]

Contrary to all vitalistic renewal ideas, the idea of reform implies the conscious pursuit of ends. Whether reform be predominantly contemplative or active, its starting point is the element of *intention* rather than of spontaneity, urge, or response.[45]

In spite of the distinctness of the ideas of reform and rebirth their terminologies can sometimes merge with one another. This is particularly true of terms expressing a "revival"—even in modern English "revival" can have connotations of "reform" as well as of "rebirth."

[40] Cf. J. Maritain's remarks on Toynbee in his *On the Philosophy of History* (New York, 1957) 171 ff.; in this book Maritain suggests several axiomatic and typological formulae (functional and vectorial laws of history) which are considerably deeper than those advocated by Toynbee, for instance, the latter's law of challenge and response. Maritain's conception, incidentally, of a law of "two-fold contrasting progress" (pp. 43 ff.), i.e., of "degradation" on the one hand and of "revitalization" on the other (p. 46) is not without relation to the idea of reform. See also J. Daniélou, S.J., *Essai sur le mystère de l'histoire* (Paris, 1953) 236 ff., where P. Daniélou illustrates a conception of ambivalent historical progression similar to that of Maritain by an analysis of St. Gregory of Nyssa's doctrine of *ἀκολουθία*; cf. *ibid.* 37 on hybris and on renewal through purification.

[41] This is recognized also by Toynbee in his remarks on St. Francis of Assisi and on other saints and reformers, *Study* IX, 149.

[42] Cf. G. Tarde, *Les lois de l'imitation*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1895); *idem*, *La logique sociale* (Paris, 1895); *idem*, *Les transformations du pouvoir* (Paris, 1899).

[43] See, for instance, Kierkegaard's *Repetition*, trans. W. Lowrie (Princeton, 1946); cf. F. H. Heinemann, "Origin and Repetition," *Review of Metaphysics* IV (1950–1951) 201 ff.

[44] Stefan George, *Der Stern des Bundes*:

> Da menschenwesen sich nur dort erhält
> Wo sich das dunkle opfer wiederholt.

[45] The phenomenon of reform, especially the element of intention in renewal, is, it would seem, not sufficiently stressed in the otherwise so interesting work of A. L. Kroeber, *Configurations of Culture Growth* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, 1944).

### 3. Millenarian Renewal Ideas

A third group of renewal ideas, sometimes combined with those of the first and second groups, may be defined as *messianic-millenarian-utopian*, or more generally as ideas of *absolute* or *total perfection*.

Christian millenarism is the expectation of a thousand years of bliss at the end of, but still within, history.[1] The millennium could be conceived of in a material or in a spiritual manner, but was to be in any case a reign of peace and overflowing blessing. St. Irenaeus[2] is the most important among the early Fathers[3] who on the strength of Apocalypse 20:1–6 ff. expected that at the end of history Christ and His saints would reign on earth for a thousand years, the devil being fettered during that time. One source of this idea is the late Jewish messianic hope which oscillated between political utopia and apocalyptic transcendence,[4] another is oriental-Hellenistic cosmology, the millenarian aspects of which were, about the time of Christ, fused with Jewish messianism. In the tracks of such Jewish-syncretistic speculations[5] the Christian millenarists combined the Magusean

[1] See pp. 13–14 for the connection between world ages and world cycles, between the Golden Age and the millennium. The literature on millenarism (chiliasm) and on the ancient and early Christian division of world history in historical and meta-historical ages (cf. also below, Part Two, Chapter V, 6) is very extensive. I mention only H. Gelzer, *Sextus Julius Africanus* (Leipzig, 1898) 24 ff.; V. Ermoni, "Les phases successives de l'erreur millénariste," *Revue des questions historiques* LXX (1901) 353 ff.; L. Gry, *Le millénarisme dans ses origines et son développement* (Paris, 1904); A. Wikenhauser, "Die Herkunft der Idee des tausendjährigen Reiches in der Johannes-Apokalypse," *Röm. Quart.* XLV (1937) 1 ff.; J. Daniélou, S.J., "La typologie millénariste de la semaine dans le christianisme primitif," *Vigil. Christ.* II (1948) 1 ff.; *idem*, "La typologie de la semaine au IVe siècle," *Rech.'s sc. rel.* XXXV (1948) 382 ff.; B. Botte, O.S.B., "Prima Resurrectio: Un vestige du millénarisme dans les liturgies occidentales," *Rech.'s théol. a. m.* XV (1948) 5 ff. For the decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office against millenarism of July 21, 1944, see *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* XXXVI (1944) 212; cf. P. Gilleman, S.J., in *Nour. rev. théol.* LXVII (1945) 847 ff.; J. Huby, S.J., *Mystiques paulinienne et johannique* (Paris, 1946) 226 ff.

[2] *Adversus haereses* V, 28, 3, V, 34 f., 36, Harvey II 402 f., 419 ff.

[3] Such as Ps.-Barnabas, Papias, St. Justin, Tertullian, St. Methodius, St. Victorinus of Pettau, Lactantius, Commodianus.

[4] Cf. W. Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums im späthellenistischen Zeitalter*, 3rd ed. by H. Gressmann (Tübingen, 1926) 259 ff.; also E. Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi*, 4th ed., II (Leipzig, 1907) 579 ff.

[5] Cf. Wikenhauser, "Tausendjähriges Reich" 2 f., and Daniélou, "Semaine dans le christianisme primitif" 3, especially for the idea of the millennium in the *Slavonic Enoch*

seven-millennial world week[6] with the seven days of Genesis 1, with Apocalypse 20 f., and also with Psalm 89:4: "For a thousand years in thy sight are as yesterday which is past" and with the Second Letter of Peter 3:8: ". . . one day with the Lord is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day." They thus arrived at a conception of history as the succession of six millenniums (corresponding to the six days of creation), to be completed by a seventh millennium of abundance, rest, and peace on earth (identified with the millennium of Apocalypse 20 and corresponding to God's Sabbath, illogically contaminated at times with the idea of the Golden Age, which already Virgil had seen both as a returning first and as a perfecting seventh age).[7] This seventh age was to be followed—after a last onslaught of Satan—by the Last Judgment, the resurrection of the bodies, and by an eighth "ageless age" which is eternity.[8] The great religious and social role of early Christian millenarism and of the fervent expectation of the imminence of the second coming of Christ connected with it is an undeniable fact,[9] however little its spirit may have had in common with that of the Gospels. Origen and the Cappadocians had rejected millenarism,[10] but it was above all its reinterpretation by St. Augustine, his identification of the millennium of Apocalypse 20 (during which the devil is prevented from exercising his full power) with "ordinary" Christian history in the sixth age, which meant a momentous "revirement" of Christian thought important also for the Augustinian doctrine of reform.[11] Nevertheless, millenarism survived in the Middle Ages, especially in connection with the ineradicable belief in the coming of

33, 1 (longer redaction). The text of the *Slavonic Enoch* has not been sufficiently ascertained to permit a decision as to whether the eighth day here symbolizes the beginning of a new cycle of millennia or a final timeless age; see the two different translations by G. N. Bonwetsch. *Abhandl. Gött.*, Philol.-Hist. Klasse, Neue Folge, I, 3 (1896) 31, and *idem*, *Texte u. Untersuch.* XLIV, 2 (1922) 31; for other translations, cf. Wikenhauser, "Tausendjähriges Reich" 3.

[6] See above, pp. 13–14.

[7] See above, p. 13.

[8] For the eighth age, see above, p. 14, and Daniélou, "Semaine dans le christianisme primitif" 3, 7 and 10.

[9] See the remarkable pages in E. Buonaiuti, *Storia del Christianesimo* I (1942) 82 ff.

[10] See, for instance, Origen, *De principiis* II, 11, 2, *GCS*, *Orig.* V, 184 ff.; Gregory Nazianzen, *Carm.* II, I: *De seipso* XXX, 177–180, *PG* XXXVII, 1297.

[11] See p. 231.

a savior-ruler at the end of history.[12] While such ideas did not radically alter the Augustinian "climate" of the earlier mediaeval west, Joachism and its ideological progeny really undid St. Augustine's transformation of early patristic millenarism without exactly returning to the latter.

The Calabrian abbot Joachim of Flora (died 1202) and his followers conceived of a third age of spiritual perfection by applying to history a trinitarian scheme. An ultimate age of the Holy Spirit, corresponding to the sabbatial seventh age of the older tradition, would follow in terrestrial history upon the relatively imperfect ages of the Father (pre-Christian times) and the Son (Church history).[13] Joachimite hopes, prophecies, and anticlerical attacks continued through the later Middle Ages, through the Renaissance and Reformation, and beyond. In religious and secularized forms, the idea of three historical stages, of a third age of perfection, remained consciously and unconsciously a very important element in modern and even recent intellectual history.[14]

[12] See the survey given in my article "Erneuerung," to appear in *RLAC*; F. Kampers, *Die deutsche Kaiseridee in Prophetie und Sage* (München, 1896); *idem*, *Vom Werdegang der abendländischen Kaisermystik* (Leipzig, 1924); E. Sackur, *Sibyllinische Texte und Forschungen* (Halle, 1898); Rzach, articles "Sibyllen" und "Sibyllinische Orakel," PW, *RE*, Reihe II, IV (II, 2) 2073–2183; C. Erdmann, "Endkaiserglaube und Kreuzzugsgedanke im 11. Jahrhundert," *Z. Ki. Gesch.* LI (1932) 384 ff.; W. Meyer, "Der Ludus de Antichristo und über die lateinischen Rythmen," *Sitz. Ber. Bayer*, Philos.-philol. Klasse, 1882, 1, 1 ff. (also in *Gesammelte Abhandlungen zur mittellateinischen Rythmik I* [Berlin, 1905] 136 ff.); E. Kantorowicz, *Kaiser Friedrich II.* (Berlin, 1927) 460–478 and 629 ff., Erg. Bd. (1931) 207 ff. and 251; H. Grundmann, "Die Papstprophetien des Mittelalters," *Arch. Kult. Gesch.* XIX (1928) 77 ff.; F. Baethgen, "Der Engelspapst," *Schriften der Königsberger Gelehrten Gesellschaft*, Geisteswiss. Klasse, X, 2 (1933); Burdach, *Mittelalter zur Reformation* II, 1, 604 ff.

[13] Joachim's trinitarian theology of history also uses and alters a patristic-mediaeval typological division of world history into three ages: *ante legem* (before Moses), *sub lege* (from Moses to Christ), *sub gratia* (after Christ).

[14] For Joachim and Joachism see above all H. Grundmann, *Studien über Joachim von Floris* (Leipzig, 1927), and *idem*, *Neue Forschungen über Joachim von Fiore* (Marburg, 1950); also E. Benz, "Joachim-Studien" I–III, *Z. Ki. Gesch.* L (1931), LI (1932), LIII (1934), and *idem*, *Ecclesia Spiritualis* (Stuttgart, 1934); K. Löwith, *Meaning in History* (Chicago, 1949) Chapter 8 and Appendix I: "Modern Transfigurations of Joachism"; furthermore the illuminating pages in E. Przywara, S.J., "Die Reichweite der Analogie als katholischer Grundform," *Scholastik* XV (1940) 339 ff., 508 ff., and in M.-D. Chenu, O.P., "Le dernier avatar de la théologie orientale . . .," *Mélanges Auguste Pelzer* (Université de Louvain, Recueil de travaux d'histoire et de philologie, Ser. III, Fasc. XXVI [Louvain, 1947]) 159 ff., especially 162–164; finally M. W. Bloomfield, "Joachim of Flora: A Critical Survey of His Canon, Teachings, Sources, Biography and Influence," *Traditio* XIII (1957) 249 ff.

Other important perfectionist renewal ideas are those of Utopia, of revolution, and of continuous progress.

The term and concept *Utopia*, taken from Thomas More's novel of that name, is of too late an origin to be of concern to this study, but revolution and progress, though eminently modern ideas, stretch their roots to very ancient times. For the purpose of distinction, it is sufficient to recall a few basic facts.

The term revolution is of astronomical origin, derived from the revolution of the heavens,[15] and therefore not without connection with the idea of cosmic cycles and with the cataclysms (fires or deluges) which were thought to accompany the transition from one world year to the next.[16] The concept of revolution was not applied to social and historical change until the period of transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance.[17] There is no doubt that the assumption of a relation between sidereal and terrestrial social revolution was an appreciable element in the ideological background even of the English Glorious Revolution and the Great French Revolution.[18] To posit revolution as the dominant idea in the movement of European history is however to confuse revolution and reform.[19] The former idea is distinguished from the latter by the inherent belief in the possibility of violent, total, and definitive improvement of human destiny.

The idea of progress can be part of many different world views. There can be progress, alternating with decline, in a cyclical and deterministic conception of history. But freedom, spiritual ascent,

[15] Cf. Copernicus, *De revolutionibus corporum coelestium* (1543).

[16] See above, pp. 10–12.

[17] See Matteo Villani, *Cronica* IV, 89, ed. Firenze, 1825, vol. II, 285: . . . la subita revoluzione fatta per i cittadini di Siena . . .; IX, 34, vol. IV, 209: . . . il reame de Francia in tanta rivoluzione e traverse . . .; cf. E. Rosenstock-Huessy, *Out of Revolution: Autobiography of Western Man* (New York, 1938) 500, A. Hatto, " 'Revolution': An Enquiry into the Usefulness of an Historical Term," *Mind* LVIII (1949) 502 and 510 ff.

[18] Rosenstock-Huessy, *Revolution* 188, 340 ff.; *idem*, *Die Europäischen Revolutionen* (Jena, 1931) 7 ff.

[19] This is very evident in Rosenstock's treatment of the Middle Ages and their reforms. See *Revolution* 485: "The nations of the Western world were called into being by five hundred years of clerical revolution"; also pp. 516 ff., Chapter X: "The Revolution of the Holy See." Rosenstock's confusion of reform and revolution leads him to such remarkable statements as "True action is not responsible to so-called ethics" (*Revolution* 721). This is not to deny that there is a grain of truth in Rosenstock's ideas.

and the return of creatures to God can also be conceived as progressive steps. In this sense as well as in other more material respects the idea of reform is an idea of progress. Since the Enlightenment, however, and especially since its alliance with the biological idea of evolution in the nineteenth century, the idea of progress has acquired connotations of continuity, irresistibility, and all-inclusiveness which are lacking in the concept of reform.[20]

As compared with all absolute or total perfectionist renewal ideas the idea of reform, at least in so far as it has preserved essential elements of its earliest Christian origins, is characterized by the belief both in ineradicable terrestrial imperfection and in a *relative perfectibility*[21] the extent of which is unforeseeable.

[20] That belief in progress which until the more recent past was so characteristic of the modern era was strikingly expressed by Spencer, when he said that the ultimate development of the ideal man was logically certain, that progress was not an accident but a necessity and that, civilization being a part of nature and all of a piece with the development of the embryo or the unfolding of a flower, man must become perfect. Cf. Herbert Spencer, *Social Statics* (reprinted New York, 1883) 79 f. For the idea of progress in general see J. Delvaille, *Essai sur l'histoire de l'idée de progrès jusqu'à la fin du XVIII^e siècle* (Paris, 1910); J. B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress* (American edition with introduction by C. A. Beard, New York, 1932); *The Idea of Progress: A Collection of Readings*, selected by J. F. Teggart, revised edition with an introduction by G. H. Hildebrand (Berkeley, Los Angeles, 1949). For Christian thought on progress see E. Dupréel, *Deux essais sur le progrès* (Bruxelles, 1928); Christopher Dawson, *Progress and Religion* (London, 1929); E. Mounier, "Le christianisme et l'idée de progrès," *Progrès technique et progrès moral* (Rencontres internationales, Genève, Paris, 1947) 181 ff.; G. Thils, *Théologie des réalités terrestres* II: *Théologie de l'histoire* (Bruges, Paris, 1949). Cf. also Part Two, Chapter IV on Tertullian, Cyprian, Ambrose, and Part Three, Chapter III, 3, on Vincent of Lérins.

[21] Bury's belief that the defender of the doctrine of original sin must reject the doctrine of perfectibility (*Idea of Progress* 265) is correct only with regard to absolute perfection, not with regard to relative perfectibility. Yet, too comprehensive ideologies of decline and decay could lead to destruction of Christian reform ideology; cf. p. 252, n. 57.

## 4. The Ideas of Conversion, of Baptismal Regeneration, and of Penance in Their Relation to the Idea of Reform

The ideas of religious conversion and of individual spiritual regeneration through baptism are closely connected, but not identical, with the Christian idea of reform. They may within Christianity be considered as the all-important foundations of the reform idea[1] and yet they are distinct from it, though the terminologies can at times be the same.[2]

Baptismal regeneration is *instantaneous* and *nonrepeatable* since in it the Christian shares in the one death and Resurrection of Christ, which are the fundamental facts of all Christian belief in the renewal of man. The idea of reform on the contrary contains as an essential element multiplicity involving *prolongation* and *repetition*, and the ceaselessly repeated sacrifice of Christ in the sacrament of the altar may perhaps be seen as the exemplary cause and the vivifying center of Christian reform, even though in the age of the Fathers this meaning was not yet very often formulated explicitly, except in the liturgy itself.[3]

Conversion[4] may be prebaptismal, and such it was and is in the case of the conversion of Jews and pagans to Christianity, or postbaptismal, in which case it is closely related to penance. Essentially, postbaptismal as well as prebaptismal conversion is a *unique* experience, but examples of repeated conversions after a "reversion" are not un-

[1] See Part Two, Chapter II, of this study. It may be added that in Christianity death and resurrection are the eschatological end terms of all conversion, regeneration, and reform; also, purification of the soul—see below, pp. 91 ff., 294 ff.—may have to be continued in Purgatory (on the Christian and non-Christian religious and ideological background of this continuity, see C.-M. Edsman, *Le baptême de feu* [Acta Seminarii Neotestamentici Upsaliensis IX, Leipzig, Uppsala, 1940]).

[2] See, for instance, p. 135, nn. 13 f., for *reformari* as baptismal regeneration and as conversion.

[3] But see below, p. 98, n. 59, for Gregory of Nyssa and p. 280 f. and 311 for Augustine; for the liturgy see below, p. 294 f. See also below, Part Two, Chapter V, 7, for the role in the history of the reform idea of the doctrine of the ecclesiological Body of Christ, which again is of course closely linked to that of the eucharistic Body of Christ (cf. H. de Lubac, S.J., *Corpus Mysticum*, 2nd ed. [Théologie III, Paris, 1947]).

[4] For the biblical term and concept *ἐπιστροφή-conversio* and the Platonistic origins of the term, see also below, pp. 49 f.

known. In the early Christian period penance too was at first non-repeatable, but by the end of the fourth century, at the latest, this original strictness had begun to give way to a milder practice.[5] While then baptism is the first and foremost sacramental basis of Christian reform, postbaptismal conversion and penance may be indispensable new starts in the long *process* of reform.[6]

There is a vast amount of theological, psychological, and historical literature on conversion[7] and there are dogmatic, canonistic, liturgical, and historical works on the sacraments of baptism and of penance and on pre-Christian ideas of spiritual regeneration or rebirth.[8] But little has been written on the religious roots of the idea and reality of reform, except in so far as it is treated as a part of the doctrine of justification and sanctifying grace in Catholic dogmatics.[9]

Primitive Protestantism had on the whole not much use for a

[5] See below, Part Two, Chapter VII, 2.

[6] From the fourth to the sixth century, especially, the term *conversio* was often used for a Christian's turning away from worldly life and also for entry into the monastic life; see below, Part Three, Chapter II, 3.

[7] For the idea of conversion in pagan and Christian Antiquity see A. D. Nock, *Conversion: The Old and the New Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo* (Oxford, 1933); *idem*, "Conversion and Adolescence," in *Pisciculi F. J. Dölger* 165 ff.; G. Bardy, *La conversion au christianisme durant les premiers siècles* (Paris, 1949); G. Misch, *A History of Autobiography in Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass., 1951); H. Pinard de la Boullaye, article "Conversion," *DSpir*, fasc. XIV–XV, 2224 ff. See also A. H. Dirksen, C.PP.S., *The New Testament Concept of Metanoia* (Diss., Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., 1932) and the recent article by Y. M.-J. Congar, O.P., "The Idea of Conversion," *Thought* XXXIII (1958) 5 ff. Cf. below, pp. 49 ff.

[8] For the latter see the remarks above, p. 12 and pp. 16 ff. See also J. Dey, *ΠΑΛΙΓΓΕΝΕΣΙΑ* (Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen XVII, 5, Münster, 1937). Dey shows that in pagan Graeco-Roman and in Jewish thought the idea of individual spiritual regeneration is much rarer than is often assumed and that on the whole it lacks the ethical element characteristic of the Christian concept of rebirth (Tit. 3:5, etc.). In most cases the pre-Christian concept of *palingenesia* concerns cosmology and metempsychosis, though in Apuleius' Isis mysteries (see below, p. 40) there is a slight spiritual overtone and in the famous *Libellus XIII* (*Hermes Trismegistus on Rebirth*) of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, Scott, *Hermet.* I, 238 ff., also Nock and Festugière, *Corp. Hermet.* II, 197 ff., a definite conception of spiritual regeneration; cf. Festugière, *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste* IV (Paris, 1954) 216 f., 264, 267. For the rest A. Harnack's *Die Terminologie der Wiedergeburt und verwandter Erlebnisse in der ältesten Kirche* (Texte u. Untersuch. XLII, 2, Leipzig, 1917) is still of great value. Cf. also V. Iacono, "La *ΠΑΛΙΓΓΕΝΕΣΙΑ* in S. Paolo e nell' ambiente pagano," *Biblica* XV (1934) 369 ff.

[9] See below, pp. 59 ff.

religiously founded idea of repeated reforms; the Reformation[10] seemed to be a unique and final collective conversion. Only later, Protestant reformers saw that it could become necessary to proceed "even to the reforming of the Reformation itself."[11]

[10] The Protestant term "reformation" is, of course, still the early Christian term *reformatio*. Needless to say, Luther first meant to reform the Church, not to break away from it.

[11] Milton, *Areopagitica* (first published, 1655; Everyman's Library edition, 1927) 32: "Now once again by all concurrence of signs, and by the general instinct of holy and devout men . . . God is decreeing to begin some new and great period in this Church, even to the reforming of Reformation itself . . ." (in part quoted by Rosenstock, *Revolution* 362). It is interesting to see that William James treats of "saintliness" as a continuation, as it were, of conversion and as a pragmatically verifiable leaven of civilization, although he does not use the concept of reform. See William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York, 1902), Lectures XI–XV. Cf. below, pp. 59–61, about the relation between reform and sanctification in Catholic doctrine. For the relation between the reform idea and heretical or sectarian ideologies see, for instance, the remarks below, pp. 162 ff. and 258 ff., on Pelagians and Donatists; also below, p. 252, n. 57, on connections between the ideology of reform and that of decline.

# CHAPTER II

## DEFINITION OF THE IDEA OF REFORM

On the basis of the distinctions made, the idea of reform may now be defined as the idea of free, intentional and ever perfectible, multiple, prolonged and ever repeated efforts by man to reassert and augment values pre-existent in the spiritual-material compound of the world.

This definition, however, requires two important qualifications. First: its role is that of a provisional conceptual tool only (see above, p. 5), which may not always fit the historical material exactly. Various types of renewal ideas did, of course, mix and blend with the idea of reform.

Second: granted the possibility of defining the idea of reform and of studying and describing it as a historical fact, as a phenomenon essentially Christian in origin and early development, it does not follow implicitly that the idea corresponds to a reality. That it often does not is no serious problem, but whether it ever does is a question whereby the terms contained in the definition are transposed from the history of ideology to that of preterideological existence. Is there possibility at least of spirit besides matter, of value besides indifference, of liberty besides determination, of final besides efficient causality, of relative perfectibility besides the absolute, of multiplicity besides unity; in short, is there possibility of reform besides changelessness and besides other types of renewal and change? No cogent answer can be expected from the historical sources alone. In basing this study on an affirmative answer the author is conscious of certain metahistorical preconceptions which are made explicit in Excursus II.

There are few in any case who would deny that some of the great events which truly transformed history ultimately depended on changes, often only slight and subtle, in the realm of ideas. It is not unreasonable to expect that the idea of reform, because of its content, may have played a particularly important part in historical change.