Terms and Conditions of Use of Digitised Theses from Trinity College Library Dublin

Copyright statement

All material supplied by Trinity College Library is protected by copyright (under the Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000 as amended) and other relevant Intellectual Property Rights. By accessing and using a Digitised Thesis from Trinity College Library you acknowledge that all Intellectual Property Rights in any Works supplied are the sole and exclusive property of the copyright and/or other IPR holder. Specific copyright holders may not be explicitly identified. Use of materials from other sources within a thesis should not be construed as a claim over them.

A non-exclusive, non-transferable licence is hereby granted to those using or reproducing, in whole or in part, the material for valid purposes, providing the copyright owners are acknowledged using the normal conventions. Where specific permission to use material is required, this is identified and such permission must be sought from the copyright holder or agency cited.

Liability statement

By using a Digitised Thesis, I accept that Trinity College Dublin bears no legal responsibility for the accuracy, legality or comprehensiveness of materials contained within the thesis, and that Trinity College Dublin accepts no liability for indirect, consequential, or incidental, damages or losses arising from use of the thesis for whatever reason. Information located in a thesis may be subject to specific use constraints, details of which may not be explicitly described. It is the responsibility of potential and actual users to be aware of such constraints and to abide by them. By making use of material from a digitised thesis, you accept these copyright and disclaimer provisions. Where it is brought to the attention of Trinity College Library that there may be a breach of copyright or other restraint, it is the policy to withdraw or take down access to a thesis while the issue is being resolved.

Access Agreement

By using a Digitised Thesis from Trinity College Library you are bound by the following Terms & Conditions. Please read them carefully.

I have read and I understand the following statement: All material supplied via a Digitised Thesis from Trinity College Library is protected by copyright and other intellectual property rights, and duplication or sale of all or part of any of a thesis is not permitted, except that material may be duplicated by you for your research use or for educational purposes in electronic or print form providing the copyright owners are acknowledged using the normal conventions. You must obtain permission for any other use. Electronic or print copies may not be offered, whether for sale or otherwise to anyone. This copy has been supplied on the understanding that it is copyright material and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement.
Hastings Rashdall: Revelation for the Modern World

By

Michael Stephen Goldrick

A thesis submitted to the University of Dublin in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of PhD.

April 2013.
I Michael Stephen Goldrick declare that this thesis has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university and it is entirely my own work.

I agree to deposit this thesis in the University's open access institutional repository or allow the library to do so on my behalf, subject to Irish Copyright Legislation and Trinity College Library conditions of use and acknowledgement.

Signed:

Date:
Acknowledgements

To the people who helped me:

My thesis supervisor, Dr Andrew Pierce for his pertinent advice and diligence in guiding me through the stages of researching and completing a thesis. He opened up new avenues of enquiry and offered new perspectives on various issues and themes.

The library staff at the Irish School of Ecumenies, Trinity Library, New College and Bodleian Libraries, Oxford, and Birmingham Central Library.

My sister Clare, and husband Stuart, and Nic Paterson who gave me plenty of Highland hospitality, and my brother Martin. My relatives, Agnes, Mary and Ena who looked after mother when I visited Dublin and Jo Sheridan for his interest and good advice.

Finally, the good people of Balla, County Mayo who welcomed a ‘blow-in’ like myself.

I dedicate this work to my mother Teresa Goldrick, nee Sheridan, who passed away last year; she guided me, and was my inspiration and encouragement, throughout my life.
Abstract.

Hastings Rashdall will be placed in context and a crucial aspect of his theology, his theology of revelation or revelatory theology, will be examined, establishing the centrality and significance of revelatory theology for his theological project. Initially, methodological remarks will be made establishing and defining Rashdall’s revelatory theology.

Rashdall was a late Victorian, early Edwardian theologian and it will be argued his theological project, including his revelatory theology, was defined by a crisis of modernity. The theological legacy of Rashdall has been viewed in negative terms but my exploration of his writings discovers a complex revelatory theology which has been influenced and shaped by a unique mixture of historical criticism, theological exposition and ethical philosophy. This thesis will show Rashdall’s revelatory theology was influenced by history, philosophy and theology.

Changing perspectives on revelation will be examined, including definitions and late Victorian perceptions of revelation. Rashdall’s exposition of revelatory theology will be shown to be influenced by the the Lux Mundi school when he outlined the significance of miracles for theologies of revelation. The theological background of Rashdall’s revelatory theology will be assessed, noting that he both inherited and rejected early 19th century theologies of revelation; in particular, criticisms of evidential justifications of revelation, allied with Biblical outlooks of inerrancy and verbal inspiration. These perceptions of revelation were challenged by new discoveries in history and evolution.

Several case studies in revelational theology are investigated including the importance of ethics for Rashdall’s theology of revelation. It will be argued that Rashdall’s ethical stance related to his opinions on the significance of religious experience in relation to revelation. The significance of philosophical theology for Rashdall’s revelational theology will be outlined, and it will be argued Rashdall contributed to theologies of revelation by his stress on the centrality of doctrinal development. His stress on the importance of continuing revelation for theologies of revelation is a natural progression from this. Further considerations of revelatory theology also include the relation between revelation and other world religions, and the relation between Christianity and Judaism.

Rashdall’s revelational theology will be applied to specific theological issues and will be found to be central to them. These will include Rashdall relating his revelatory theology to the atonement, Christology and Trinity. Rashdall is innovative when he relates theologies of atonement to his revelational theology, using an exemplarist model promoted by the medieval scholastics. The
concept of revelation plays a crucial role in Rashdall’s christologies; these include the advocacy of Sonship, degree and Logos christological models. He engaged in christological controversies concerning the Jesus of history and the eschatological question, and outlined a Logos Christology at a Girton conference. Rashdall emphasised the importance of the Trinity in his revelatory theology.

Rashdall’s views on revelation will be evaluated, together with critiques of him in relation to modern theologies and current studies of revelation. A vindication of Rashdall and his place in modern theology will be outlined. Rashdall aimed to reconcile and harmonise new perceptions with his revelatory theology and here, his Anglican modernist presuppositions shaped his revelatory theology. His criticisms of established views of revelation anticipate both 20th and 21st century perspectives on the subject, foreshadowing the outlook on revelation framed by the Second Vatican Council.
Introduction

Chapter One: Reading Rashdall on Revelation

1.1. Introduction to Chapter One
1.2. The Life of Hastings Rashdall in the Crisis of Modernity
1.3. Rashdall as a Theologian of Modernity
1.4. Reading Rashdall
1.5. Rashdall the Philosopher
1.6. Rashdall the Theologian
1.7. Church Affairs, Ecclesiology and Resurrection
1.8. Posthumously Published Essays
1.9. Other Writings
1.10. Conclusion to Chapter One.

Chapter Two: Changing Perspectives on Revelation

2.1.1. Introduction: Definitions of Revelation
2.1.2. The Lux Mundi School
2.1.3. Rashdall's 1899 Exposition of Revelational Theology
2.1.4. Late-Victorian Views of Revelation: Influences on Rashdall
2.1.5. The Significance of Miracles for Theologies of Revelation
2.1.6. Faith Revelation and Atheism
2.1.7. Conclusions


3.1. The Importance of Ethics for Rashdall's Theology of Revelation
3.1.1. Reason with Conscience in Revelation.
3.1.2. Religious Experience in relation to Ethics.
3.1.3. Philosophical Theological Issues Relating to Revelation
3.2. Revelation in Relation to Theories of Doctrinal Development

3.2.1. Development of Doctrine

3.2.2. Criticisms of Rashdall's Doctrine of Development

3.2.3. Revelation in the Theology of Continuing Revelation

3.2.4. Conclusions.

3.3. Christian Revelation and the World Religions

3.3.1. Revelation in Rashdall's Typology of Religions

3.3.2. Conclusions.

3.4. Relations between Christianity and Judaism: Correspondence with Claude Montefiore

3.5. Conclusions.

Chapter Four: Applications of Rashdall's Revelational Theology

4.1. Introduction

4.2.1. Rashdall's Early Doctrine of Atonement: Anselm and Abelard

4.2.2. The Ransom Theory of Atonement

4.2.3. The Importance of Sacrifice and the Influence of F.D. Maurice and B. F. Westcott

4.2.4. Revelational Theology of Atonement in The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology

4.2.5. Rashdall and J Moltmann on The Suffering God. Comparisons and Contrasts

4.2.6. Moltmann and The Suffering God

4.2.7. Differences between Rashdall and Moltmann

4.2.8. Similarities between Rashdall and Moltmann

4.2.9. The Reception of Rashdall's Theology of the Atonement

4.2.10. Rashdall's Mature Position on Revelation and Atonement

4.2.11. Conclusion

4.3. Christology

4.3.1. Introduction

4.3.2. Christologies of Revelation in Doctrine and Development
3.3. Degree Christologies and the impact of Pantheism on Christology 120
4.3.4. Christological Controversies Concerning the Jesus of History 123
4.3.5. Revelation and the Eschatological Question 126
4.3.6. Rashdall’s Girton Conference Christology and its Reception 128
4.3.7. The Later Christological Views of Rashdall Relating to Revelational Christology 132
4.3.8. Conclusions 133

4. 4. Trinity 134
4.4.1. Introduction 134
4.4.2. Trinitarian Theology in Doctrine and Development 134
4.4.3. Controversies Relating to the Athanasian Creed 136
4.4.4. The Girton Conference: Controversy with Gore 137
4.4.5. Conclusions to Chapter Four 140

Chapter Five: Evaluations and Conclusions 143
5.1. Evaluation of Rashdall’s Revelational Theology 143
5.2. Critiques of Rashdall 144
5.3. Rashdall on Ritschlianism 144
5.4. The Significance of Theological Modernism for Rashdall’s Revelatory Theology 147
5.5 Rashdall and Post-modernism; Rashdall and Post-liberal Theology 150
5.6.1. Rashdall and George Lindbeck 151
5.6.2. Rashdall and Hans Frei 153
5.6.3. Rashdall and H.Richard Niebuhr 154
5.6.4. Rashdall and Post-modernism; Rashdall and Post-liberal Theology. Conclusions 156
5.7. Avery Dulles on Revelation 157
5.8. Contemporary Studies of Revelation; Views of Revelation 162
5.9. Vindication 163
5.10. Rashdall’s Place in Modern Theology 164
5.11. Conclusions 166
Chapter Six: Final Conclusions. The relevance of Rashdall's revelatory theology for the Modern World.

6.1. Rashdall and The Second Vatican Council 168
6.2. Conclusion 173
7. Areas of further research. 175
8. Bibliography 177
Introduction

In Chapter One, the introduction provides a guide to the structure of this thesis, with some introductory remarks on the methodology employed, and argues Hastings Rashdall's (1853-1924) theological project was defined by a crisis of modernity.

Rashdall's theology was primarily concerned with articulating what I shall call a revelational theology.

This thesis advances in the following steps:

The theology of revelation expounded by Rashdall was influenced by what were then seen as new views of history and evolution; these challenged established views of Biblical inerrancy and verbal inspiration.¹

It will be established that the theology of Rashdall, including his theology of revelation, was influenced by a distinctive mixture of historical criticism, theological reflection and moral philosophy. Furthermore, it will be shown the theology of Rashdall offered a positive contribution to late 19th and early 20th century theologies of revelation, and I shall argue that Rashdall's insights retain certain relevance for current theology.

First a reader's guide and remarks on the methodology employed. This chapter contains the literature survey of the thesis, including secondary literature, particularly evaluations of Rashdall's work. It also elaborates on the precautions taken while researching the thesis before offering an introduction to the life and thought of Rashdall as well as an assessment of his work, in the light of a crisis of modernity. The next sections of the chapter examine the primary writings of Rashdall in terms of the following categories: as a historian, philosopher and theologian. Subsequent sections examine Rashdall's articles and essays on several topics including church affairs, ecclesiology and resurrection, and his posthumous published essays.

Initially, the background to Rashdall's revelatory theology is explored, including the changing theories of revelation throughout the 19th century; it will be related to Rashdall as a theologian of modernity.

In Chapter Two some key assumptions in Victorian theologies of revelation are analysed which Rashdall inherited, and against which he reacted. Theologies of revelation were changing slowly away from propositionalist views of revelation, which presented revelation primarily in terms of the communication of supernatural truths, towards an understanding of revelation which was increasingly represented in terms of the self-disclosure of God.

The significance of the theologies of revelation of the *Lux Mundi* school will be evaluated in relation to Rashdall, before an examination of his 1899 exposition of revelational theology and the significance of late-Victorian perspectives on revelation. An analysis is provided of definitions of revelation given by Rashdall, leading to an appraisal of Rashdall's criticisms of late 19th century perceptions of revelation; a time when ideas hitherto pivotal to a Christian theology of revelation, i.e. Biblical inerrancy and literal verbal inspiration, were challenged and re-interpreted in the light of changing views of history and new perceptions of evolution.

By the turn of the 20th century, the christological focus shifted from epistemology to soteriology which influenced changing perceptions of revelation. The crux of the issue was that the inadequacy of older theories had become apparent. The significance of miracles for Rashdall's theology of revelation will be addressed, especially the challenge of the 'rational sensibility'.

Chapter Three consists of three case studies examining the revelatory theology of Rashdall in greater detail. These are ethics, development of doctrine and Rashdall's revelatory theology placed in relation to the world religions.

This chapter will establish Rashdall made a lasting contribution to late 19th and early 20th century theology by his emphasis on the importance of ethics which impacted on his theology of revelation. A basic theological position of Rashdall had emerged by 1916 when he related his ethical standpoint with Christian theology, thereby harmonising Christ's ethical principles with the...
Incarnation; Christ revealed morality in his character. Rashdall emphasised Christ's moral ideal which placed Christians under an obligation to love universally, to teach God’s Fatherhood of all, and the equality of humanity.

The place of reason and conscience is then considered. Rashdall's outlook on religious experience is examined in relation to his revelatory theology. Unlike other Anglican modernists, Rashdall did not place an exclusive stress on experience but rather that Christ's message appealed to reason, conscience and experience. Echoing Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), Rashdall interpreted revelation as a recovery of truths made available to human reason, putting forward the existence of an objective moral law. Rashdall's dismissal of mystical experience will be compared with the outlook of Karl Rahner (1904-1984) who emphasised the universality of mystical experience for all.

It will be shown how certain philosophical presuppositions influenced Rashdall's theological method, particularly his idealist outlook and his concentration on the ethics of the historical Jesus.

The second case study assesses Rashdall's doctrine of development. Significantly, Rashdall appealed to theological concepts of doctrinal development and, influenced by his reading of John Henry Newman (1801-1890), connected doctrinal development with revelation leading him to construct a concept of continuing revelation.

The third case study examines a crucial aspect of Rashdall's theology of revelation concerning the relationship between the Christian revelation and the other world religions. The relationship of Christianity towards the other world religions gave rise to sustained debate in which there are three main interpretative models: exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralist.

Rashdall’s revelational theology included a mixture of approaches evidencing elements of exclusivism but also allowing aspects of inclusivism; Rashdall was emphatically not a pluralist. Rashdall's typology of world religions is examined and his revelatory theology assessed in relation to Rahner's theory of anonymous Christianity. It will be established that Rashdall's approach is open to severe criticism because he was influenced by contemporary Victorian outlooks on race, culture and

---

6 Gavin D’Costa defines these three conceptual models of pluralism, exclusivism, and inclusivism. Pluralism perceives all religions as equally valid paths; exclusivism puts forward the outlook that only Christians are saved. Lastly, inclusivism locates salvation in other religions, but this takes place only through Christ. D’Costa, 'Theology of Religions,' in David Ford and Rachel Muers (ed.), Third edn., *The Modern Theologians: An Introduction to Christian Theology Since 1918* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), pp. 626-644; p. 627.
religion. Rashdall advanced a 'pyramid' theory of religions, which envisaged a hierarchy of the
religions. At the bottom are the so-called 'lower' religions and at the apex Christianity, the
culmination of 'a revelation of ethics'.

In addition, Rashdall's consideration of the relation between Christianity and Judaism will be
evaluated, together with his correspondence and dialogue with Claude Montefiore (1858-1938).
Rashdall held a fulfilment supersessional model of Jewish-Christian relations: Christianity is complete
and transforms Judaism. Yet, even here, Rashdall was innovative in appealing to the scholarship of
the liberal Jewish scholar Claude Montefiore to shed light on the importance of the Jewish
background of the New Testament for understanding the teachings and acts of Jesus Christ.
Rashdall applied evolutionary concepts of history to the development of religions, thus perceiving
the Old Testament as a record of the religious development of the Jewish people, on the basis of
which he argued that Judaism culminated in Christianity.

Rashdall's revelatory theory can be applied to three main areas of systematic theology:
Atonement, Christology and Trinity in Chapter Four.

His doctrine of atonement will be analysed. Rashdall related the doctrine of atonement to
theologies of revelation, relying on an exemplarist interpretation associated with the medieval
scholastic Peter Abelard (1079-1142), and the validity of this interpretation will be assessed.
Abelard, the progenitor of the 'Abelardian view of the atonement', envisaged the atonement in
terms of a revelation of love from God towards creation. The influence of Abelard and Anselm

---

7 James Livingstone observes the importance of Victorian theologians commenting, 'In the sphere of religious
thought, the late Victorian writers here studied set an agenda of issues that were to remain at the centre of
British theological discussion through most of the twentieth century.' Livingstone, Religious Thought in The

8 Moreover, Rashdall asserts that Christianity is not an ethical system alone, commenting, 'Even the revelation
which Christ gave us, or rather the revelation which Christ Himself eternally is for us, would not be complete
(as he Himself-taught) without another revelation the revelation of the Spirit.' Rashdall, 'Revelation by
Character,' Lecture VII (1894) in Doctrine and Development: University Sermons (London: Methuen and Co,
1898), pp. 110-127; pp. 122-123.

9 Peter Ochs refers to supersessionalism as the outlook Christianity has superseded Judaism and established a

10 Claude Montefiore attacks distorted views of Judaism when he said, 'My interest in the matter partly arose
from the attacks of the German Lutheran critics. Their general line was not, That in the year 30 AD there
happened to be many bad Pharisees and immoral Rabbis, but that from Legalism, or the Jewish religion, There
can only flow badness and bad people and immorality and religion.' Montefiore highlighted the unconscious
bias against Judaism often held by New Testament scholars. Bodleian Library, Letter, June 1916; Montefiore to
Rashdall, p. 3.

11 Abelard is called the 'Father of Scholastic philosophy.' Abelard's scholastic method is outlined in his Sic et

12 Rashdall first mentions the Abelardian view of atonement in the 1892 sermon found in this collection.
Rashdall quotes approvingly from Abelard's Opera, 'Accordingly our redemption lies in that supreme love
working in us through the passion of Christ, which not only liberates us from the slavery of sin, but acquires for
(1033-1109) in relation to the ransom theory of the atonement of Gregory the Great (c.540-604) will be assessed.

Rashdall's revival of an Abelardian theory of atonement mirrored the development of 19th century doctrines of atonement, although these generally stressed the objective sacrificial aspect of the atonement. The importance of sacrifice, and the influence of Frederick D. Maurice (1805-72) and Brooke F. Westcott (1825-1901) to Rashdall, will also be elaborated.

Rashdall made a landmark contribution to 20th century theologies of the atonement by relating atonement to revelation in the publication of his *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology* (1919). A further development made by Rashdall highlighted his belief that the significance of the atonement lay in its ethical dimension. Christ is viewed by Rashdall as the supreme revelation of God, and is unsurpassed due to the perfect moral ideal made manifest in his words, character and deeds. During the First World War, he spoke of a God who suffered through humanity because of the Incarnation. Rashdall's theology of a suffering God will be related to a contemporary 21st century theologian, Jürgen Moltmann.

Rashdall's theology of the atonement proved to be extremely influential but also faced severe criticism. Still, his contribution to specifically Anglican, and to 20th century discussions of the atonement in general, is a positive one unlike his far more controversial views on Christology. The Jewish scholar C. Montefiore commended Rashdall's theology of atonement, perceiving in Rashdall's *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology* 'a justification of Judaism', particularly in Rashdall's stress on 'forgiveness, repentance and atonement'.

The next section of Chapter Four examines Rashdall's Christologies in relation to his revelatory theology. Rashdall's basic christological outlook was elaborated in his *Doctrine and Development* (1898) and remained consistent throughout his later theological writings. He did not advocate a single Christology but elaborated several, variously emphasising Sonship, degree and Logos Christologies; the concept of revelation, however, remained central to his Christologies. By 1903 Rashdall had expanded his degree Christology and defined it in terms of a communication of the revelation of God to an exceptional degree, taking place in one person, Jesus Christ. In 1907, Rashdall published a paper on the relationship between religion and history which related to
christological issues. The chapter continues by examining christological controversies concerning the Jesus of history, establishing the relationship between the Christ of faith and history, and maintaining the importance of the quest for the historical Jesus.

The chapter then outlines the importance of the eschatological question in relation to Rashdall's revelatory theology. The eschatological question relates to the significance of the Kingdom of God in the preaching of Jesus of Nazareth and whether the end of creation and the apocalypse would take place sooner rather than later. Rashdall would later defend his theology of revelation in relation to the eschatological question, arguing the case for a realised rather than a consistent eschatology. The Gospel of John is then evaluated and Rashdall considers Westcott's theological influence on his revelatory theology.

Rashdall made an important contribution to 20th century Anglican theology in a paper to a conference of Liberal Anglican clergymen at Girton College, Cambridge in 1921. In his paper, Rashdall put forward a Logos Christology. According to Rashdall, appealing to Logos Christology safeguarded the absolute revelation of God in Christ, whilst the character of Christ revealed the fullest disclosure of God. Rashdall's account of both Sonship and degree Christologies was influenced by Albrecht Ritschl (1822-1889) and Adolf Harnack (1851-1930). Despite criticisms, the uniqueness of the revelation of God given in Jesus Christ remained the basis of Rashdall's preaching and teaching. Finally, the later christological views of Rashdall relating to revelational theology and Christology will be assessed.

The third part of chapter Four discusses Rashdall's trinitarian theology in relation to his revelatory theology. The concept of revelation influences Rashdall's trinitarian theology. His doctrine of the Trinity is framed by his interpretation of the trinitarian theology of both Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) and Augustine (354-430). He argued that the Trinity might be represented with an analogy drawn from 'distinct mental activities of one human mind'. Rashdall's interpretation of the word 'person' caused the greatest controversy; he ignored the concept of perichoresis, the mutual indwelling of the persons of the Trinity, which would have clarified this problem. Rashdall and his critics neglected the Cappadocian's notion of perichoresis in this debate.

---

16 Ibid.
Revelation is an underlying theme in the theological project of Rashdall affecting and determining his concepts of atonement, Christology and Trinity. The criticisms that were and are made of his theology of revelation go to the heart of his overall theological project.\(^{20}\)

In the conclusions and evaluations in Chapter Five, revelation is shown to be a key component in Rashdall’s theological project; a project which was shaped by a combination of intellectual concerns: historical, theological, philosophical and ethical. His stress on revelation as embodied in a person, Jesus Christ, rather than in a body of doctrine, anticipates aspects of later 20th and 21st century outlooks on revelation as found in the theologies of Paul Tillich (1886-1965), Karl Rahner (1904-1984) and John Macquarrie (1919-2007).

Employing a typology developed by Hans Frei (1922-1988), George Lindbeck and H. Richard Niebuhr (1894-1962), Rashdall’s revelational theology is evaluated. Rashdall’s theology of revelation is propositionalist because of its stress on the importance of the ideals of Christ and his view of Christianity as ‘a revelation of ethics.’\(^{21}\) In relation to Hans Frei’s typology, Rashdall’s theology is a mixture of type 2 (where Christian identity has to be maintained and explained to the world), and type 4 (where modern philosophy is used to integrate Christianity with modernity).\(^{22}\) Rashdall’s theology of revelation can be viewed as flawed, particularly in his idealist presuppositions and their application to theology, but it is important to acknowledge that he grappled with questions and issues that Christian theologians had to face in an era of rapid change and transition.

Rashdall’s theology of revelation is framed by late Victorian criticisms of received views of revelation. However, it is important to acknowledge that he grappled with questions and issues that Christian theologians had to face in an era of rapid change and transition.

The chapter concludes with Rashdall’s place in modern theology and his vindication. Several major criticisms of Rashdall focus on his idealist and ethical presuppositions but the allegation that Rashdall’s theology functioned as an unconscious agent of secularisation is rejected.

Chapter Six establishes the contention of the thesis that Rashdall’s revelatory theology has relevance for the modern world today. Rashdall attempted to justify the intellectual standing of the concept of revelation against 19th and 20th century discussions of the viability of this concept. A comparison of Rashdall’s revelatory theology with the Second Vatican Council document on revelation is also undertaken.


Methodologically, approaches are drawn on that are characteristic of both historical and systematic theology, and which are geared towards historical and critical interpretation. Historical theology is a recovery, according to James C. Livingstone, of the study, interpretation and evaluation of our past and present theological situation. Insights of John Macquarrie, Francis Schüssler Fiorenza, David Tracy, Bernard Lonergan (1904-1984) and Paul Avis are employed.

John Macquarrie has written persuasively about theological method and he outlines his approach in his *Principles of Christian Theology*. Macquarrie outlines six formative factors that influence theologians; these include experience, revelation, scripture, reason and tradition. All theologians have particular methods; for example, Rudolph Bultmann’s (1884-1976) programme of demythologisation, Paul Tillich’s method of correlation, and Karl Barth’s dialectical theology. Any particular method can be vindicated by an exploration of the type of theology it produces.

Macquarrie stresses the importance of reason in theological endeavour; in particular, how reason relies on hermeneutical principles to interpret revelation. Macquarrie’s method helps to illuminate the symbolic language of revelation with existential-ontological language drawn from post-Heideggarian philosophy. The interpretative language found here builds on a descriptive analysis. F. Schüssler Fiorenza outlines a variety of approaches that are taken in modern theology by theologians. The transcendental method of Karl Rahner centred on the human subject for example; Schüssler Fiorenza contrasts this with approaches that stress the priority of language, cultural environment, hermeneutics and meaning.

The hermeneutical view of the relation between language and experience has profoundly affected theological reflection. David Tracy goes so far as to define systematic theology as hermeneutical. Bearing in mind these approaches, interpretative ways of understanding need to be underscored by explanatory modes, such as the historical-critical and social-critical analyses. Hermeneutical theology concerns interpretation, hence language and its relation to experience are

---

25 Ibid.
28 Ibid. pp. 46-47.
crucial. Analytical approaches to theological method include a discussion of the roles of models and paradigms to aid theological reflection.

Bernard Lonergan resolves theological issues by using philosophical solutions and by advocating a critical realism over idealism. Lonergan puts forward two essential phases in the theological task. The first involves data assembling, then its interpretation, history and a clarification of the issues, and the stand taken on them. The second stage involves a movement from foundational theology to truth judgements (doctrinal theology), to understanding them (systematic theology), and to experience (practical theology).^2

Avery Dulles (1918-2008) has also made use of theological models, particularly in his theology of the Church and of revelation. Theologians have realised that theology contains various categories, and that the analysis of these is important for theological method. Various methods of correlation have been employed by theologians as diverse as Paul Tillich and David Tracy. Schüssler Fiorenza views theology today as being affected by a cultural pluralism, therefore a synthesis cannot exist between theology and culture.

A crisis of rationality has taken place, but theology challenges reductionist and positivist accounts of human reason.

Historical traditions and linguistic communities have moulded theological discourse. Background theory is important because prior assumptions, either unconsciously or consciously, influence theologians and their theologies. Paul Avis in The Methods of Modern Theology (1986), contrasts methods of theology that are 'open' with 'closed' theological systems. By these he means theologies employing methodologies ready to be flexible or theologies which do not admit new insights or change, holding fixed answers to all questions. Theology, he insists, must be self-critical, open to new knowledge and insights, flexible and versatile.

This project is concerned principally with Rashdall's notion of revelation and with its central role in his theological project, arguing that Rashdall's whole theological project was defined by a crisis of modernity. Other Rashdall studies have concentrated on his theological project but not on his theology of revelation.

---

^5 Paul Avis discusses 'open' and 'closed theologies. By which he means theologies employing methodologies ready to be flexible or theologies which do not admit new insights or change, with fixed answers to all questions. Avis, The Methods of Modern Theology (London: Marshall Morgan and Scott, 1986), pp. 214-219.
After having examined key source material, it is established that a theology of revelation is the key component to his thought and theological method. This thesis thus offers a new interpretation of Rashdall's work.

This thesis relies heavily on original material: books, articles and pamphlets of Rashdall. Several precautions were taken against bias, maintaining a critical distance between Rashdall and my own presuppositions and concerns. The documents were scrutinised and dominant themes and concerns emerged, as seen particularly in the emergence of the centrality of Rashdall's revelational theology.

The methodology for the data collection is appropriate. The thesis, as we have seen, relies heavily on the collection of original source material; this is divided into primary and secondary material.

The thesis evaluates articles by Rashdall housed at the Bodleian Library, Oxford and also source material examined at Birmingham Central Library and Trinity College, Dublin. Original letters and other materials relating to Rashdall were consulted in New College, Oxford. Rashdall has an extensive corpus of publications which include numerous books and articles, and the research was greatly assisted by an invaluable list of his works by Mark Chapman, as well as by the catalogue in the British Library.

A list of Rashdall's shorter articles may be found in Margaret Marsh, Hastings Rashdall: Bibliography of the Published Writings. Marsh and Dorothy Postle have also produced a life of Rashdall as a public figure, using official documents, newspapers, sermons and journals, in their Hastings Rashdall: Dean of Carlisle 1917-1924 (2000). Although this thesis belongs to the discipline of historical theology, its concern with the notion of revelation entails a claim for Rashdall's continuing significance for systematic theology.

---

Chapter One: Reading Rashdall on Revelation

1.1 Introduction to Chapter One

This study examines an aspect of the theology of Hastings Rashdall hitherto unexplored by previous researchers. Specifically, the role of revelation, and will argue that his theology of revelation turns out, on closer inspection, to be central to his theological work. Rashdall's theology opens up several other areas of enquiry and leads on to a consideration of important theological problems and issues.

The writings of Hastings Rashdall were first encountered while studying 20th century Anglican Christology, in particular the theology of Rashdall's contemporary, Bishop Charles Gore (1853-1932). When investigating the significance of an Anglican Modernist conference, my attention was drawn specifically to one contributor to the conference, Hastings Rashdall. Further exploration led to an awareness of a whole corpus of writings by him, aspects of which had not been fully investigated before. The thesis aims to show revelational theology is central and pivotal to the theological project of Hastings Rashdall.

Rashdall was influenced by 19th century perceptions of revelation, which defined it as the receiving of divinely given supernatural truths. Rashdall highlighted the significance of doctrinal development for revelation and aspects of his revelational theology are still relevant today. He notes the centrality of 'the evolution of Christian language' and follows the 19th century trend of the 'transforming impact of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ'.

Rashdall's revelational theology is, in essence, the self-disclosure of God in Christ and this central notion is defined in various ways. It is illustrated in his writings, particularly in his *Doctrine and Development* where his Christology is shown to be revelational. Rashdall comments:

That God is revealed after a unique manner in Christ is and must always be the central truth of any Christianity that can aspire to be regarded as in any sense an absolute, a permanent or a final religion.

Rashdall places the truth and veracity of the Christian religion, in relation to the revelation of God through Christ, as both final and absolute.

---

36 Ibid. p. 277.
His theology of atonement is revelational as commented:

In all modern statements of the doctrine this aspect of the Atonement as a revelation of divine love occupies the first place.\(^{38}\)

Rashdall revived a medieval interpretation of the doctrine of atonement associated with Abelard, known as the Abelardian doctrine of atonement which stressed the atonement as a revelation and expression of God’s love. Rashdall’s trinitarian theology is revelational. He pointed out:

Technicalities apart, the essence of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is surely this—that God reveals Himself, that it is His nature eternally to reveal Himself.\(^{39}\)

Trinitarian theology involves God’s revelation and would be incomprehensible without that revelation. Rashdall’s revelational theology is central to his conception of ethics. Christianity is a progressive revelation of ethics, involving a revelation of God through Christ and his character.

God and humanity possess a special relationship, particularly an ethical one. Rashdall and other Anglican theologians, including Gore, distinguished revelation in terms of inspiration; biblical inspiration conceived in terms of the Holy Spirit’s action, ‘upon Christian society and the individual soul.’\(^{40}\)

Another characteristic of Rashdall’s revelational theology is the overcoming of a rigid dichotomy between the spheres of the natural and the supernatural, illustrated by Rashdall’s exposition of grace, found in his *Christus in Ecclesia* (1904). When discussing the sacraments Rashdall said:

Do sacraments confer grace, it is asked? Of course they do, if grace means spiritual influence. Everything which makes a human soul better confers Grace.\(^{41}\)

Rashdall has a place for grace in his revelational theology which had a historical dimension and, as a noted historian, Rashdall was aware of revelation as salvation history. The idea of revelation is a basic hermeneutical key to interpret not just his theology, but his philosophy, history and ethics, providing a guide to his thought. It will be established why revelation figures so centrally

\(^{38}\) Ibid. p. 140.
\(^{39}\) Ibid. p. 24.
\(^{41}\) Rashdall, *Christus in Ecclesia: Sermons on the Church and its Institutions* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1904), p. 87.
in the Christian story, illustrated by the revelational theologies of Francis Schüssler Fiorenza and John Macquarrie. For Schüssler Fiorenza, revelation is the product of tradition and needs to take account of background interpretative theories. For Macquarrie, faith is a product of revelatory experience and is behind any 'verbal formulations of it'.

The issues raised by Rashdall's theology continue to concern theologians today, for instance the role of revelation and the changing perceptions of it; the significance of theories of doctrinal development; outlooks on ethics and religion; and the relation between Christianity and the other world religions. Rashdall's theology is representative of liberal-modernist theology in early 20th century Anglicanism and it illustrates both the strength and weakness of this approach. Rashdall's theology has to a certain extent been ignored, and his influence marginalised, because his theology was widely perceived as nothing but a liberal-modernist theology, mainly due to his contribution to the 1921 Girton conference of Modern Churchmen.

Rashdall concurred with a statement of liberal Churchmen in 1899 that Divine revelation is not a static immutable body of knowledge, rather revelation is continuous, ongoing, advancing through history. The Spirit of God is active in imparting revelation. Rashdall realised ideas of revelation had changed. His late-Victorian position on revelation presupposed a new awareness of the theological significance of historical change. Older theories became inadequate due to the emergence of modern theories of history, evolution and literature.

Revelation plays a regulative role in determining his theological methodology. Rashdall's theological programme, based on his revelational theology, indicates how an apologetic motivation was central to his theological endeavours. Rashdall tried to rethink traditional theology which he thought had become unintelligible to modern people who did not have a technical knowledge of its history and content. His views on revelation exemplify his theological method: ancient formulas can

---

42 Fiorenza, 'Systematic Theology,' pp. 84-85.
43 Macquarrie, Principles of Christian Theology, p. 103-4.
44 A perceptive definition of modernism has been given by Rashdall's contemporary Cyril Emmet, for whom modernism meets a major problem, 'a restatement of religion which shall be a Gospel and preserve the fundamental values of the past.' Emmet, 'The Modernist Movement in The Church of England,' in The Journal of Religion, 2 (November 1922), pp. 561-576; p. 561.
46 Statement of liberal Churchmen, 1899.
be held, but this requires a constant development of revelation. Rashdall asserted the centrality of a continuing revelation for Christian theology.47

During my research several concerns emerged relating to bias, especially to the question of whether the study was slanted to a particular interpretation of the given material. Because the thesis is a humanities study, it has definite characteristics peculiar to its field: it analyses literature and does not include empirical study alone, unlike a statistical science or social science thesis. Even so, the basis of this study involved the collection of data which was collected, analysed, interrogated and interpreted.

As a researcher, my own pre-suppositions, background, life and experience have to be acknowledged in the approach taken towards the subject. Today we are aware of the interpretative nature of history. There is no such thing as a neutral standpoint but despite this proviso, objectivity is still something to strive for. The historical theology of Rashdall can be evaluated using tried methods of research and enquiry. This work of research is concerned with both history and theology, and their relation to historical theology, and this thesis involves systematic theology and philosophy.

1.2 The Life of Hastings Rashdall in the Crisis of Modernity

Rashdall lived through an age of great transition, and was witness to massive social, economic and cultural change.48 His work was conditioned by a crisis of modernity.

For the purposes of this work, 'modern' theology is to be understood as a phenomenon influenced by several phases of Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment developments. In the response to these developments, theology as traditionally understood faced great changes in the West, including industrialisation and secularisation.

47 Similarities between the early Rashdall and the Barthian John Webster emerge in their views of revelation. According to Webster, 'Revelation is thus God's own being in its movement towards humanity in covenant love, above all in God's taking flesh in the person of Jesus Christ.' Both possess an incarnational Christology, and for them Jesus Christ is the living revelation of God. Webster, 'Revelation,' in Alister McGrath (ed.), The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Modern Christian Thought (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), pp. 557-561; p. 559.

48 For two general historical surveys of the period covered, consult Paul Thompson, The Edwardians, 2nd edn. (London: Routledge, 1992) and David Powell, The Edwardian Crisis: Britain 1901-1914 (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996) These authors stress the rapidity of change in this period, particularly the experience of a crisis leading on from the earlier Victorian era, to the First World War. For another perspective examine James A. Winders, European Culture since 1848: From Modern to Postmodern and beyond (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p. 74. The phrase literally end of century; became applied to the early 20th century. Representing a time of crisis in comparison to the earlier Victorian and the pre-First World War era.
David Ford analyses modernity in the following terms:

A major feature of modernity has been its concern with history. Underlying this is a heightened awareness of change and innovation. The tools that have served this are new methods of research and new criteria for historical reliability.49

The theology of Rashdall relating to revelation belongs in this context of crisis. In Britain, the writers of the *Essays and Reviews* (1860) experienced this crisis, particularly B. Jowett when he compared Biblical interpretation as comparable to the interpretation of literature.50 Burrow points out the importance of *Lux Mundi* and the influence of Thomas H. Green (1836-1882) and F. D. Maurice in responding to the changing environment.51 The Christian Churches all responded to the challenge of Darwinism.

1.3 Rashdall as a Theologian of Modernity

The aim of this section is to define both modern theology and modernity in relation to Rashdall. It will be argued throughout this thesis that Rashdall’s revelatory theology can be vindicated by both. His revelatory theology was especially influenced by modern theology, with its emphasis on the significance of history and the application of the historical-critical method to theology. This approach also entailed the use of literary critical methods and the application of evolutionary concepts. Rashdall was both a historian and theologian and he examined both the Bible and the history of Christian doctrine, in the light of the then current Victorian and Edwardian historical research and enquiry. This is particularly evident in his work on atonement.52

The onset of modernity overturned established ideas which impacted on theories of revelation. The Victorian era witnessed an erosion of belief in the certainty and veracity of the Christian revelation. Rashdall’s work itself exhibits themes of doubt and anxiety and he deals with these issues, particularly those created by the new advances in science which took place during the latter half of the 19th century.53

A characteristic approach of modern theology and modernity is a concentration on the relation of faith to history. They were not now viewed in terms of opposition to each other or, as in

the past, where history had been ignored by theologians. Faith and history are now harnessed together. Rashdall utilised historical criticism, and used historical methods to reconstruct not just the life of Jesus, but to clarify and retrieve his teachings.

Issues concerning the onset of modernity arose during the 19th century and as a result various Christian responses to modernity took place; Rashdall exemplified this process. David Ford points out the significance of 19th century theologians for modern theologians, highlighting their relevance for the modern world. The 19th century cannot be ignored in the subsequent historical development of theology because issues and concerns faced by 20th and 21st century theologians had already been faced and discussed by earlier 19th century theologians.

These criticisms of Rashdall do not concentrate on his revelatory theology but fault his liberal-modernist outlook, which is seen as unduly influencing his theological position. However, concerns he raised are still pursued by theologians today. Moreover Rashdall is a product of modernity, and was in a situation similar to theologians of today; he was simply the product of an earlier stage of modernity. The onset of modernity is seen to involve several phases.

Another major feature of 19th century theology which influenced 20th and 21st century theology was the relating of knowledge and rationality to theology. This was a concern of Rashdall when he related philosophical theology to revelation. Alternative explanations of religion were not engaged. As outlined by Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), and similar to modern theologians, Rashdall focuses on the practical or ethical dimensions of Christianity. Rashdall’s theology of revelation and its appropriation by the believer were challenged by naturalistic and reductive explanations of religion and morality which were emerging by the end of the 19th century. Rashdall’s approach was in a way similar to F. Schleiermacher (1768-1834) who aimed to integrate faith with modernity. Rashdall was also influenced by Hegel (1770-1831) in that he espoused a trinitarian evolutionary perspective on history.

Other variables discovered by modern thinkers include the significance of the situation in which theology is done. It is now realised how social, political and economic forces mould both the formation and practice of theology and theologians. Theology has to be contextualised, leading to the conclusion that Rashdall’s theology was a product of his social and institutional context. This is

---

54 Ibid, p. 5.  
55 Ibid. p. 7.  
56 Ibid. p. 8.  
57 Ibid.  
58 Ibid. p. 9.  
59 Ibid. p. 12.
exemplified by his attitude to world religions, which was conditioned by his colonial heritage and the position of the British Empire as a world power. Together with a belief in the supremacy of Western European culture, this shows him to have been moulded by the ideological interests of a certain class, group and culture. Still, despite Rashdall’s limitations, this thesis aims to establish and retrieve the enduring parts of Rashdall’s thought rather than concentrating on its transitory elements.

Hastings Rashdall was born in 1858, in London, and died in Worthing in 1924. After reading Greats at Oxford, he became a Tutor at New College Oxford (1895-1905). Thereafter, he served as a Canon at Hereford (1910-1917) and ended his career as Dean of Carlisle (1917-1924). The current neglect of Rashdall and his theology is symbolised by his omission from *The SPCK Handbook of Anglican Theologians*.

Detailed evaluations of Rashdall’s published works appeared soon after his death. An appreciation of his theological contribution is found in a book by Henry D. A. Major (1871-1961) who edited his essays, *Principles and Precepts* (1927). Major perceptively notes how the theology of Rashdall diverged from that of contemporary theologians, including William R. Inge (1860-1954) who emphasised the significance of affective experience in the appropriation of revelation. Rashdall’s sermons, by contrast, do not appeal to the emotions. Rashdall did not advocate that religion be based on affective experience, but rather on moral consciousness, hence his appeal to the ethics of Christ and his teaching.

The standard biography of Rashdall by Percy Ewing Matheson (1859-1946) appeared in 1928 and is an invaluable source of information and interpretation of Rashdall. This book contains excerpts from the correspondence of Rashdall, as well as an evaluation of Rashdall as a philosopher and theologian by his friend and colleague Clement Webb (1865-1954).

During the 1930’s, Rashdall’s theology of atonement proved to be his enduring theological legacy. Gustav Aulén’s (1879-1977) *Christus Victor* (1931) discussed the theory of the atonement

---

60 Ibid. p. 13.
advocated by Rashdall; although critical of the position adopted by him, Aulen’s book brought Rashdall to international attention.\(^6^4\)

Aulen recommended a retrieval of earlier patristic views which connected the atonement with redemption. However, this account did not accord with the interpretation given by Rashdall of Abelard’s theology of atonement, where the atonement is to be understood in the light of the Incarnation and the love of God. An influential survey of Anglican theology appearing in 1960 from Michael Ramsey (1904-88) envisaged Rashdall as a marginal figure in comparison to Charles Gore.\(^6^5\)

George L. Prestige (1889-1955) published a biography of Gore which mentions the nature of his relations with Rashdall, such as their disagreements over symbolic theology and particularly, Rashdall’s negative appraisal of the doctrine of the Virgin Birth.\(^6^6\)

Rashdall’s theology is also discussed by Bernard Reardon (1913-2006), who notes Rashdall’s defence of the Abelardian doctrine of atonement as an influential theological contribution illustrating an example of the love of God.\(^6^7\) Reardon suggests that Rashdall anticipates late Victorian debates, which were highlighted by Gore, in relation to the limited nature of the human knowledge of Christ.\(^6^8\) These discussions led to a renewed emphasis on the humanity of Christ; a position outlined in Rashdall’s *Doctrine and Development* which sketched out a kenotic theory that went beyond the proposals of Charles Gore.\(^6^9\)

Reardon criticises Rashdall for being heterodox in his doctrine of the Trinity and, in doing so, voices a persistent criticism of Rashdall made by other earlier theologians, particularly Gore. Rashdall envisaged the inner nature of God as consisting of three essential properties or activities. His critics could label this outlook as a repetition of a heterodox, patristic theological view of modalism or Sabellianism. Rashdall denied this position in his *Doctrine and Development*.\(^7^0\)

Later surveys of Anglican theology by Keith Clements give a negative appraisal of Rashdall. Clements criticises Rashdall for holding idealistic philosophical views which unduly determined his

---


\(^6^8\) Ibid. p. 460.


\(^7^0\) Rashdall, ‘The Holy Trinity,’ Lecture II (1894) in *Doctrine and Development*, p. 21.
theology. K. Clements claims that Rashdall envisaged the possibility of dispensing with the historical Jesus, and concentrating rather on the ideals of Christ.71

An account by Alister E. McGrath offers a more critical evaluation of Rashdall's theological presuppositions.72 He regards Rashdall's theological project and his presuppositions as having been unduly influenced by a flawed theological liberalism, stemming from Kant and the Enlightenment. Rashdall's theological method is mistaken, according to A. McGrath, because it is influenced by Enlightenment assumptions of human autonomy and critical reason. A. McGrath's assertions, however, are challenged by Michael Gillespie; modernity is not the Enlightenment.73

Rashdall's promotion of medieval scholasticism is vindicated. M. Gillespie perceives medieval nominalism destroyed scholasticism, and the roots of modernity lie in the the metaphysical struggle between scholasticism and nominalism, which are present today in the struggle of fundamentalism against 'the metaphysical/theological core of modernity'.

A. McGrath notes that Rashdall is most famous in theological circles for his Bampton lectures, The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology (1919), which promoted an interpretation of the theology of the medieval scholastic Abelard. On principle, McGrath opposes liberal theology and argues that Abelard did not in fact teach an exemplarist theory of the atonement. Rashdall's position, according to McGrath, is based on a misreading of Abelard.74

McGrath also criticises Rashdall's ethics because he held an exemplarist view of the moral and soteriological relevance of Jesus Christ, an outlook from which Jesus Christ is seen principally as educating and extending a moral vision for humankind. McGrath envisages this exemplarist stress on Christ as a moral example as being inextricably linked with a deficient view of human nature, that is a theological anthropology which fails to come to terms with the concept of human sin.75

71 Clements quotes the following from Rashdall, 'If conscience tells us that the words of Christ are true, They would be true even if those words were wholly the creation of the Church and none of them were really uttered by the historical Jesus.' This for Clements means, 'In other words, Christianity itself, at its living centre, was an ethic rather than a redemptive religion.' Clements, Lovers of Discord, p. 100.
72 Rashdall for McGrath promoted a doctrine of salvation by merit, promoting a false optimism about humanity. McGrath continues, 'Rashdall's theory of the atonement only makes sense if it is assumed that, once man knows of his true salvation he is able to act on that knowledge, and thus effect his salvation.' McGrath, The Moral Theory of The Atonement: A Historical and Theological Critique, in Scottish Journal of Theology, 38 (1985), pp. 205-220; p. 219.
74 McGrath points to Abelard's so-called doctrine of the atonement only being found in the Exposito in Epistolam ad Romanos. Rather for McGrath Abelard envisaged Christ as a redeemer not just a moral exemplar. McGrath, p. 208.
75 The onset of the First World War for McGrath made Rashdall's belief in human progress untenable. Rashdall merely reproduced the Enlightenment understanding of the death of Christ at a time when world events conspired to stultify such an understanding.' Ibid. p. 208.
Rashdall’s moral philosophy, therefore, is seen by McGrath as an ethic addressed to an idealised humanity, and he claims that Rashdall’s exemplarism locates the moral authority of the narrative of Jesus of Nazareth in its reflection of previously recognised human values, the validity of which is independent of him.76

Rashdall’s commentators perceive his contribution to theology primarily in terms of his relation to the Anglican English modernist movement. Alan Stephenson’s *The Rise and Decline of English Modernism* (1984) interprets Rashdall in relation to the English Modernist movement and he presents Rashdall as ‘the giant of the English Modernist movement’, noting in passing, his collection of sermons contained in the book *Doctrine and Development* (1898) as having expounded a theology characteristic of 20th century English modernism.77 Stephenson criticises some aspects of Rashdall’s theology since the theological language employed by Rashdall could suggest a Christology flawed by adoptionism.78 This outlook perceived Christ as just a person who was adopted by God the Father after the resurrection and raised to divinity. Stephenson acknowledges Rashdall’s influence but does not emphasise his creative synthesis of theology, history and philosophy in his overall theological project.

Recent evaluations of Rashdall’s theological legacy have been undertaken by a number of scholars including Margaret Raynor, Paul Badham and Mark Chapman. Raynor examines Rashdall’s liberal-modernist approach and she deals with a number of relevant theological themes and issues, using hitherto unpublished material relating to Rashdall. Her analysis includes systematic themes of theology, including a positive evaluation of Rashdall’s theology of atonement and the events at the Girton conference, which highlighted theological issues of immortality and resurrection.

Raynor employs a chronological sequence to expound the relevant material, with a time frame starting in 1905 and ending in 1924. She argues against the view that Rashdall’s work can be dismissed as outdated, and she presents him as a major contributor to contemporary debates.79 Raynor concludes by observing that questions raised by Rashdall in theological debate and

---

76 Basic criticisms of Rashdall revolve around his perception of Christian ethics and its relation to salvation. McGrath comments, ‘The astonishingly naive psychology which underlies Rashdall’s soteriology denies salvation to those who are simply not capable of doing the will of God.’ Ibid. p. 219.


discourses are asked today, particularly regarding biblical criticism and the relationship between Christianity and the world religions.80

M. Raynor’s PhD thesis does not discuss Rashdall’s revelatory theology. The structure of her thesis is based on a discussion of the doctrine of the atonement, Rashdall’s Christology, and his views on ecclesiology and immortality. Raynor rightly points to the importance of his Bampton lectures, The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology, recognising the importance of Rashdall’s emphasis on the Abelardian theology of atonement which moved away from retributive theories of atonement to more subjective ones.81 Raynor places Rashdall firmly in the Anglican modernist tradition and does not analyse his Christology and trinitarian theology in great depth, but rightly points to the importance of the 1921 Girton conference as the highlight of his public career.

Rashdall’s theological achievement and legacy was distorted by his Girton conference contribution; in other words, his work was viewed only in the light of the Girton conference which projected a negative, reductionist image of his theology. This emphasised his Christology rather than his revelatory theology, and minimised his contribution to philosophy, ethics and historical studies. M. Raynor points out that questions raised by Rashdall are still asked today by contemporary theologians and she gives examples: K. Ward, A Vision to Pursue (1991), J. Hick, The Metaphor of God Incarnate (1993), M. Goulder, A Tale of Two Missions (1994) and finally, P. Badham, The Contemporary Challenge of Modernist Theology (1998).

But M. Raynor does not mention the colloquy, published in The Myth of God Incarnate (1977) which suggests Rashdall’s great influence on subsequent theology. She also does not go into any great detail or depth about the relation of theology to philosophy in Rashdall’s thought, and the significance of ethics for his revelatory theology. She does, however, recognise the importance of Rashdall’s theological achievement especially his espousing of the centrality of biblical scholarship for contemporary theology.

Paul Badham situates theological modernism in relation to other important 20th century theological movements including neo-orthodoxy, represented by Karl Barth, and radical theology, represented by Don Cupitt.82 Developing lines of thought suggested by modernist theology, including the view of theism as the representation of a moral ideal, P. Badham examines specific modernist

80 Ibid.
81 Raynor, p. 66.
outlooks on the divinity of Christ, on life after death, and the relation of modernism towards the world religions, and notes how Rashdall had written about and discussed those questions. 83

The liberal theological approach of Rashdall is defended by Mark Chapman who perceives Rashdall as representing a 'classical' liberalism, still a viable option for theology, and one that has not been fully superseded by neo-orthodoxy or post-modern theology. 84

Alan Sell considers the contribution of Rashdall to late 19th century and early 20th century philosophical thought, emphasising the significance of idealism for Rashdall's theological project. 85

Jan Olaf Bengtsson also assesses Rashdall as a philosopher, pointing out the contribution of Rashdall to a volume of essays in 1902 in which Rashdall presented in outline the philosophical positions to which he would remain faithful during his career. 86 Bengtsson points out that the philosophy of Rashdall is derived not only from Thomas H. Green's version of idealism, but also from the classical idealism of George Berkeley (1685-1753). 87

John Macquarrie mentions Hastings Rashdall was influenced by personal idealism which impacted on his theology. 88 Macquarrie says of Rashdall, he was 'an exceptionally able theologian who wrote with distinction on a wide range of subjects'. 89 Macquarrie assesses Rashdall in the following terms: 'In Rashdall the 'liberal' theology inspired by neo-Idealism reaches perhaps its finest expression.' 90

It is important to note how Rashdall's significance is related to the broader issue of the enduring legacy of liberal theology. The importance of Rashdall's theology is bound up with the fate of liberal theology itself, and subjected to searching criticism by a range of authors including Nicholas Lash and Stephen Sykes. 91 Nicholas Lash perceives many interpretations of religious thought fail to take into account social, economic and political factors influencing theology and

---

83 P. Badham points to Rashdall's judgment God is present in Christ. Ibid. p. 85.
84 Definitions of liberalism are elusive and encompass various methodologies. Mark Chapman, 'The Past, Present and Future of Liberal Theology,' in The Future of Liberal Theology, pp. 3-17; p. 3.
89 Ibid. p. 53.
90 Ibid. p. 55
91 Stephen Sykes notes the historical disciplines influence theological reflection, particularly church history. Stephen Sykes, 'Theology through History,' in Ford, The Modern Theologians vol 2, pp. 2-29; p. 22.
philosophy. A more positive evaluation of the value of theological liberalism is given by James Barr (1924-2006) who points out that forms of liberal theology have always been present in the Christian Church, with deep roots in the whole of the Christian tradition, and is even present within the Bible itself.

1.4 Reading Rashdall

The published writings of Hastings Rashdall made a notable contribution to several branches of study. Principally, these were philosophy, history and theology, and the inter-relationships between these disciplines. Rashdall came to public attention with the publication of a Stanhope essay (1879) which was a historical reconstruction of the life and work of the Bohemian reformer and proto-reformer John Huss (c1369-1415). This work is typical of Rashdall's later historical writings in that it is informed by theological issues and concerns.

He investigated the medieval origins of the Protestant Reformation, finding them in contemporary dissenting movements influenced by John Wycliffe (c1330-1384). Rashdall wrote an appreciation of this Oxford medieval reformer, concentrating in particular on his doctrine of dominion, which justified lay control of the church. It challenged contemporary notions of magisterial authority by calling for lay involvement in church authority structures.

Rashdall became a noted historian of Oxford University and wrote histories of both Hertford College and New College. He investigated the origins of Oxford University and highlighted the importance of the medieval Catholic religious Orders in the life of the university; this is illustrated in his article on the Dominicans at Oxford. He contributed to The English Historical Review (1896) and to the growth of historical methodology in general.

During 1895, Rashdall produced an influential study on medieval history: The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages which was recognised immediately as a work of outstanding historical significance and reprinted a number of times. As late as 1936, it was reprinted with a number of

---

critical evaluations of Rashdall's achievement by key medieval historians including Maurice Powicke (1879-1963) and Alfred B. Emden (1888-1979). This edition provides an introduction to Rashdall's standing as a historical scholar, highlighting in particular, his familiarity with a wider European context. It was again re-issued in 1987.

Rashdall did not observe rigid boundaries between history and theology, and he used his knowledge of medieval history to enhance his philosophical and theological interests. His studies in medieval Scholasticism informed his constructive theological proposals and explorations, especially his study of the early scholastics Anselm and Abelard, and of the later theologians Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus (c1265-1308).

These thinkers influenced his emerging theological methodology, particularly their insistence on the potential harmony between faith and reason. Rashdall did not exhibit the contemporary popular distaste for Scholasticism, and was prepared to recognise its strengths as well as its weaknesses.

Rashdall's historical writings are to be situated in a context where the subject was developing into a methodologically distinct discipline. He examined the historiography of the ancient Greek historian Herodotos (c485-425 BC) who was 'the so-called Father of History' and was deeply influential for historians in the 19th century. Rashdall was a noted Latin scholar and produced an appreciation of the 13th century Franciscan Roger Bacon (c1220-1292). A further important essay on historical methodology by Rashdall relates to the discussions of Aristotelian principles of causality and their relationship to historical empiricism, as well as considering notions

---


100 Keith Jenkins discusses post-modern history, which departs from schemes of grand meta-narratives of history, which Rashdall would be a representative of. Keith Jenkins, 'Why bother with History,' in Keith Jenkins, At the Limits of History: Essays on Theory and Practice (Oxford: Routledge, 2009), pp. 54-63; p. 56.

101 McGrath comments, 'Scholasticism is probably one of the most despised intellectual movements in human history.' McGrath, Christian Theology: An Introduction 3rd edn. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), p. 36.


103 Arthur Marwick comments on changes to the discipline of history by the 19th century, when it became more research based, and more concerned with new techniques, not just the collection of facts. Rashdall exemplifies this approach in his historical research. Marwick, The New Nature of History: Knowledge, Evidence, Language (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 79-80.


of causation, evidence and change.\textsuperscript{106} A series of posthumous essays: *Principles and Precepts* (1927), *Ideas and Ideals* (1928), and *God and Man* (1930), provide further evidence of Rashdall's abilities as a historical theologian, combined with his awareness of past history, to illustrate and comment on contemporary theological and philosophical issues.\textsuperscript{107}

The essays range widely, concerning for example, the relatively obscure scholastic Nicholas De Ulricuria (1229-1369) whose philosophy and outlook is perceived by Rashdall to anticipate that of the 18th century sceptical and empiricist thinker, David Hume (1711-1776). These posthumous works provide a detailed snap-shot and summary, in article form, of all the major concerns and preoccupations of Rashdall and the evolution of his thought; they offer a doorway to more advanced and detailed works. Other figures studied by Rashdall include the medieval Robert Pullen (c1080-1146), the 17th century Anglican Cambridge Platonist theologian William Chillingworth (1602-1644), as well as the 19th century churchmen Henry P. Liddon (1829-1890), Frederick Temple (1821-1902) and B. F. Westcott. Rashdall was critically informed on both the history and evolution of doctrine and this influenced his contemporary theological thinking. His capacity to analyse theological concerns and issues is evidenced in his articles on Joseph Butler (1692-1752), the theologian F. D. Maurice, and the patristic theologian Athanasius (c296-373).

1.5 Rashdall the Philosopher

The philosophical writings of Rashdall can be divided into three major areas of concern. Firstly, ethics: Rashdall expounded an ethical theory known as idealistic utilitarianism. Then, in the field of philosophy, he was engaged in discussing contemporary philosophical concerns, particularly his own philosophy of idealism.\textsuperscript{108} Finally, in philosophical theology, his work focused on theism and its relationship to doctrine. As in the case of his writings on history and theology, the boundaries between these areas noted above were similarly blurred.

Rashdall outlined his ethical position in a discussion of the utilitarianism of Henry Sidgwick (1838-1900).\textsuperscript{109} Sidgwick had asserted that individual clergymen should assent to all the Articles of religion or else resign. Rashdall rejected this contention on moral grounds and his reply, in an


\textsuperscript{108} Rashdall, 'Personality Human and Divine,' in Henry Sturt (ed.), *Personal Idealism*, pp. 369-393.

Rashdall produced a well-received book of ethical theory which appeared as *The Theory of Good and Evil* (2 vols, 1907). Here, in the context of outlining his philosophy of idealistic utilitarianism, he contrasted his position with current schools of ethical thought, including hedonism and egoism. Criticising the agnosticism of John Stuart Mill's (1806-1873) philosophical utilitarianism, Rashdall outlined a criterion for ethics that would resist a purely materialistic or naturalistic outlook.

Rashdall discussed Kantian ethical theory and criticised the Kantian theory of a categorical imperative, drawing on the objections of Francis Herbert Bradley (1846-1924) and the maxims of Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832). Rashdall evaluated economic theories using the ethical concepts of justice and benevolence, appealing to the French philosopher Charles Bernard Renouvier's (1815-1903) notion of justice, as well as the retributive theory of Kant. Rashdall summarised the development of his ethical position in his *Ethics* (1913). Here he emphasised the importance of a moral criterion, by which he meant how we make judgements of morals, and moral consciousness, understood as an innate reasoning faculty, highlighting a distinction between the right, the good and the pleasant.

Rashdall subsequently discussed the philosophical grounds for human morality, and asked whether it relies on a moral reason or moral sense, outlined in his book, *Is Conscience an Emotion?* (1914). Political circumstances and events forced Rashdall to discuss ethical questions and dilemmas posed by the 1914-1918 European conflict; this material included an essay on the morality of war, a condemnation of conscientious objection, and a theory of the just War.

Rashdall considered ethics in relation to Christian theology in his *Conscience and Christ* (1916). Here, he discussed the New Testament ethics of Christ and defended this position, whilst noting the contemporary recovery of the eschatological context present in the teaching of Jesus Christ. Rashdall addressed criticisms of Christ's ethics; particularly those made by Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), and defended the claim that the ethics of Christ represented the highest

---

12 Ibid.
14 Ibid. The moral criterion, pp. 45-77. Also, *The moral consciousness*, pp. 30-44.
moral ideal. Thus theology and ethics were united and his theology became influenced by ethical concerns.

Rashdall's philosophical presuppositions influenced both his theology and his theological method, and vice versa. One of his philosophical preoccupations involved the discussion of the concept of personality, which he defined in terms of consciousness and thinking, and not just in terms of feeling and permanence. During 1902, two of his publications provided an outline of his general philosophical outlook, one which would remain constant throughout his career. This will be found, for example, in articles: 'Personality; Human and Divine', and in Contentio Veritatis where Rashdall is concerned with the ultimate basis of theism and with outlining his case for philosophical idealism and the existence of a universal Mind. An emphasis on the divine Will was an abiding characteristic of Rashdall's philosophical theology, thus situating his contribution in the Franciscan/Augustinian tradition, rather than that of the Dominican/Thomist tradition.

Rashdall addressed a major issue in the philosophy of religion, namely theodicy, in his short work The Problem of Evil (1912). His posthumously published collections of essays contain further articles relating to philosophical issues and their relation to ethics and theology. Rashdall's choice of topics and philosophical issues show how his broad philosophical and theological interests raised issues of concern for contemporary philosophical theology, including creation, the knowledge of God, free-will, determinism and the immortality of the soul. He addressed a number of other concerns including the omnipotence and infinity of God.

1.6 Rashdall the Theologian

Rashdall wrote several influential works and articles relating specifically to theological issues. A series of sermons delivered between 1889 and 1898, and published as Doctrine and Development, provides an invaluable summary of his theological preoccupations at that time. His self-consciously liberal methodology which would later be referred to as an example of modernism is found here, and many of his later publications are often expositions of themes and doctrinal motifs from this early collection of sermons.

From the beginning of the 20th century, Rashdall engaged with prominent theological issues and concerns of his time, including the notion of revelation. Rashdall was associated with the Broad Church, Anglican liberal tradition whose views on miracles were often controversial. In 1902,

118 Rashdall, The Problem of Evil ( Manchester: Deansgate, 1912 )
Rashdall outlined an interpretation of miracles in which he united the natural with the supernatural orders. This perception of miracles downplays the distinctive nature of the Biblical miracles and instead emphasises the ethical teaching of Christ. This approach is also followed up in his article Miracles (1903). Rashdall wrote several historical theological sketches of past and present theologians who had influenced his method and his attitude towards current theological issues. In his studies of 19th century churchmen, he comments on the concerns of present day theology, as for example in his review of The Life of Liddon.

He evaluated the impact of contemporary German theology on British theology in an article assessing the significance and influence of liberal Protestantism, associated with Albrecht Ritschl, called Ritschlianism. The same article had an appreciation of the popular work by Adolf Harnack, and it assessed the so-called liberal Protestant approach towards Christology and New Testament studies. During 1906, Rashdall discussed the impact and significance of Reginald John Campbell's (1867-1956) 'New Theology', and sharply criticised its pantheistic tendencies. During 1908, he contributed to a series of essays offering a positive evaluation of the history, origins and theology of Anglican liberalism. A more pessimistic account, however, of the prospects of Anglican liberalism appeared in 1911. He continued to write articles and reviews in the field of historical theology throughout his career.

Rashdall was concerned with Christology throughout his life. In 1903, he outlined a Christology that was in effect a 'degree Christology', presenting Christ as the highest exemplar of humanity who had gradually developed his divine potential. His most significant contribution to christological debate came at the Girton conference in 1921 where he expounded a revitalised Logos Christology. His paper criticised Charles Gore's approach, in which Christology and trinitarian reflection were deeply enmeshed. Gore, for Rashdall, minimised the humanity of Jesus Christ and

121 Rashdall, Miracles (St Paul's Association. Order 4, 1903), pp. 1-23.
123 Rashdall, 'Ritschlianism,' pp. 19-43.
124 Rashdall, 'The New Theology, review of Mr Campbell's New Theology,' in Hibbert Journal, V (1906-1907), pp. 921-928. Also, Reginald John Campbell, The New Theology (New York: Macmillan Company, 1907) Rashdall perceptively points out, 'It is the virtually the new science of historical criticism that has created the phase of theological opinion which is usually understood by the word Liberalism at the present day.' New historical methodology influenced theological reflection. Rashdall, 'Clerical Liberalism,' in H Hadley (ed.), Anglican Liberalism by 12 Churchmen (London: Williams and Norgate, 1908), pp. 7-134; p. 83.
125 Rashdall, 'Is Liberal Theology a Failure,' in Modern Churchman, 1 (1911-1912), pp. 23-25.
126 Rashdall, 'In What Sense Was Christ the Son of God,' in Christian World Pulpit (1st July, 1903), pp. 5-7.
127 Rashdall, 'Christ as Logos and Son of God,' in Modern Churchman, XI (1921-1922), pp. 278-286.
furthermore did not adequately explain the personal nature of the Deity or the persons of the Trinity.  

Rashdall published a final collection of sermons in the aftermath of the Girton conference controversy in *Jesus Human and Divine* (1922). Here he explained and clarified further how he understood the divinity of Christ. Consistent with his earlier published writings, he presented Christ as the highest revelation of God. The collection contains a critique of Bishop Frank Weston (1871-1924) since Rashdall believed that Weston, like Gore, emphasised the divinity of Christ to the detriment of his humanity.  

The doctrine of atonement featured in Rashdall’s later theology, from about 1915 onwards. As noted above, Rashdall’s neo-Abelardian doctrine of the atonement has its roots in his *Doctrine and Development*. During 1902 Rashdall presented a critique of current theological perspectives on atonement; it noted that atonement was a prominent feature of theological discussion which figured more amongst Non-Conformist and Evangelical theologians of the time.  

Rashdall produced his classic exposition of the theology of atonement from a distinctively liberal-modernist viewpoint in his Bampton lectures, *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology* (1919). These lectures addressed the doctrine of atonement, but placed this doctrine in the wider history and development of Christian doctrine. Rashdall traced the historical evolution of the doctrine of atonement, beginning with New Testament models of the atonement, examining the Synoptic Gospels, then moving on to pre-Pauline and Pauline perspectives.  

He examined patristic, Latin and medieval scholastic views of the atonement, including the writings of Origen (c185-c254), Clement of Alexandria (c150-215) and Augustine. But for Rashdall, the medieval scholastic Abelard made the most significant contribution to Christian theology of atonement, by his exemplarist theology of atonement.  

He investigated the contributions of Luther (1483-1546) and the Protestant Reformation towards atonement. However, contemporary views of atonement were not examined in great detail, apart from a theology of atonement expounded by the Birmingham Non-Conformist Robert

---

William Dale (1829-1895). Rashdall's Bampton lectures exhibit his acquaintance with the German History of Religions school in, for example, his discussion of the relation between Christianity and the mystery religions, philosophy and history.

1.7 Church Affairs, Ecclesiology and Resurrection

Rashdall commented on contemporary Late Edwardian issues concerning ecclesiastical affairs when he returned to the controversy over subscription. He promoted the idea of comprehensiveness in Anglicanism and favoured toleration between its theological parties, the Evangelical or low, Anglo-Catholic or High, and the Broad or latitudinarian. This position was characteristic of Rashdall's Broad Church heritage. He analysed a Royal Commission of Ecclesiastical Discipline report on religious affairs in 1906-1907, and criticised the growing influence of ritualism.

One focus of debate and dissent between those of liberal-modernist and Anglo-Catholic outlook concerned the significance and value of the Creeds. Rashdall did not consider the Creeds as fundamental to Christian belief, and he outlined his position on this issue in 1909. This drew criticism and Rashdall replied to his critics, reaffirming his view that the Creeds were not established for all time, and could be modified. He also discussed the relevance of the Athanasian Creed for Anglican doctrine, noting its trinitarianism and its damnatory clauses of which he was critical. He clashed with Gore on the issue of creetal authority, and was provoked into writing a modernist interpretation of the Creeds for his contemporaries.

Rashdall outlined his views on ecclesiology in a collection of lectures published in 1904 as Christus in Ecclesia. Here we find a liberal or Broad Church perspective on issues of church order and polity, including Rashdall's discussion of the eucharist, baptism and the priesthood. Rashdall noted the significance of the Oxford movement for religious life in England and he wrote sympathetically about its influence. A concern of the Oxford movement was its concentration on apostolic...
succession and Rashdall commended the Oxford movement for its emphasis on the social dimension and role of the church.

Practical issues relating to prayer, penitence and the origins of Sunday were also addressed by Rashdall, who also examined more theoretical theological concerns including revelation and the Old and New Testaments. We also find Rashdall discussing Church and State relations and the role of Christian missions.

Rashdall interpreted episcopal ministry and apostolic succession from the vantage-point of contemporary New Testament scholarship. The validity of the Church as an ideal is affirmed. Another theological issue, on which Rashdall contributed significantly, concerned the theology of resurrection. Rashdall outlined the judgement, common to many liberal-modernists that Christ's resurrection is to be seen primarily as spiritual rather than purely physical. Again, in common with liberal theologians of all denominations, he did not hold that God would punish sinners with eternal damnation. However, he did not advocate universalism, according to which salvation would be extended indiscriminately to all humanity.

1.8 Posthumously Published Essays

A collection of Rashdall's essays, edited by the leading liberal-modernist H. D. A. Major, Principles and Precepts, was published in 1927. These essays show the range and depth of Rashdall's theological interests. For example, Rashdall compared the ethics of Aristotle (384-322 BC) with those of Paul (10-65/7) and Christ; he speculates on what would have happened to the Christian ideal if Christ had not been born; and he compares the liberal Protestant Adolf Harnack with the Catholic modernist, Alfred Firmin Loisy (1857-1940).

He painted sympathetic portraits of constructive theologians, including F. D. Maurice and B. F. Westcott. Other essays exhibit an interest in comparative religion, with informed consideration given to the religious alternatives to Christianity. He examined issues of Biblical criticism, in particular the relevance of the opinions of the Gnostic Marcion (c100-c165) towards the Old and New Testaments.

A second posthumous collection of essays was published in 1928 as Ideas and Ideals, which included essays on the validity of religious experience and re-iterated criticisms of undue

142 Rashdall, 'Episcopacy and the Apostolic Succession,' in Modern Churchman, IV (1914), pp. 74-78.
143 Rashdall, 'What is the Church,' in Modern Churchman, XIII (1923-1924), pp. 21-29.
144 Rashdall, 'The Resurrection and Immortality,' Lecture XI (1887) in Doctrine and Development, pp. 177-189.
145 Rashdall, 'On Christ's Teaching about Future Reward and Punishment,' in Modern Churchman, IV (1914), pp. 18-30.
epistemological reliance on religious experience. Rashdall's views on religious experience diverged from those of other modernists, and from that of the American pragmatist, William James (1842-1910). This consideration of the religious experience is followed by a number of ethical essays relating to the rights of the state, individuals and the church.

Subsequent essays included an assessment of the significance of Roman Catholic modernism concerning John Henry Newman (1801-1890) and George Tyrrell (1861-1909). The collection includes an evaluation of scholastic theology and a discussion of the significance of the doctrine of atonement. There are also pieces on philosophical issues relating to theism, the alleged immanence of God, and the metaphysics of the philosopher Francis Herbert Bradley (1846-1924).

A third and final collection of articles appeared posthumously in 1930 as God and Man, and contained Rashdall's reflections on doctrinal and historical theology, particularly in relation to trinitarian and christological problems. These essays addressed the Christology of Athanasius; the evolution of trinitarian theology from Athanasius to Aquinas; the moral argument for personal immortality; and justice, equality and the theory of reward.

1.9 Other Writings

Rashdall was not apolitical in his views and his writings illustrate his awareness of, and interest in, social issues which he set out in his Peace and Social Reform (1899). During 1909, he discussed and evaluated the major political ideas of his time and he also set forth his attitude to socialism in his Christianity and Socialism. Rashdall also discussed contemporary educational issues, particularly in relation to the universities.

Rashdall's concern for pastoral issues is evident throughout his career and also in his published writings. It is particularly noticeable in his concern with clerical formation and ordinand supervision. He set out his principles for ordinand supervision in a 1917 article and also contributed to a collection of essays, The Training of the Clergy (1916-1917). He discussed contemporary theological issues that concerned relations between the Churches, as well as issues of comparative religion, and a justification of missionary work. Rashdall commented on relations

---

146 Rashdall commented on the significance of religious experience although Rashdall related religious experience to conscience and reason.

147 These essays illustrate the range and depth of Rashdall's historical, theological and philosophical interests. But they are not technical expositions of themes and issues but are aimed at a popular audience.


150 Rashdall, 'Re-union and the Lambeth Proposals,' in Modern Churchman, X (1920-1921), pp. 518-524.
between psychology and Christian theology in 1912, and he examined H. G. Wells’ (1866-1946) theology of atheism in 1917.¹⁵¹

1.10 Conclusion to Chapter One

Rashdall held a theology of revelation, basic to his theological project, which enabled him as a theologian conditioned by the onset of modernity, to justify his revelatory theology. The introductory chapter included a reader’s guide to Rashdall and methodological remarks, and noted the importance of revelational theology, and outlined some of its main characteristics.

A key to his revelational theology is illustrated in his work *Doctrine and Development*; all the basic themes of Rashdall’s revelatory theology are found here. Essentially, revelational theology entails the self-disclosure of God in Christ, and how this manifests itself in various ways.

Appraisals of Rashdall by M. Raynor, P. Badham and M. Chapman all agree his questions relating to theology are still asked today, including the relation of revelation to the world religions. Rashdall’s theological legacy has been seen by A. Stephenson to primarily promote and sustain the English Anglican modernist movement.

Other secondary literature on Rashdall includes a valuable biography by Percy Matheson and a critique of Rashdall’s Abelardian theology of the atonement by Gustav Aulèn. More contemporary evaluations of Rashdall’s theology by McGrath and Clements are critical. He is charged by both as being unduly influenced by a flawed theological liberalism and too dependent on philosophical idealism.

Rashdall published a study on medieval history, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages* (1895). In this, Rashdall analysed medieval intellectual history which contributed to his retrieval of the importance of medieval Scholasticism, which in turn influenced his revelational theology. He contributed to the growth of history as an academic discipline and his collection of short articles, including *Principles and Precepts*, showed Rashdall’s range and skill as a historical theologian. Rashdall produced numerous articles commentating on the theological, historical and philosophical issues of his time. He commented on, amongst other issues, episcopacy, resurrection and immortality. Rashdall’s ethical studies, including his *The Theory of Good and Evil* (1907), outlined his ethics which determined the form and content of his revelational theology. His philosophical theology had a direct relevance for his revelatory theology, particularly his espousal of metaphysics and his soteriology.

As a theologian, Rashdall's methodology was influenced by Broad Church Anglican theology. His *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology* (1919) impacted on his revelational theology and brought his Abelardian doctrine of the atonement to a wider audience. An evaluation of Rashdall's corpus of writings leads to the conclusion that his historical, philosophical and theological interests all contribute to his revelational theology. The essays published after his death exhibit Rashdall's range as a historical theologian which also influenced his theological methodology. Rashdall made a significant contribution to several branches of study, namely philosophy, history and theology, and these impacted on his revelational theology.

Rashdall has left an enduring legacy with his three classics in history, philosophy and theology, which influenced his revelational theology, as well as a wealth of articles which merit serious consideration and study in their own right.
Chapter Two: Changing Perspectives on Revelation

2.1.1 Introduction: Definitions of Revelation

Chapter Two aims to investigate the following areas in relation to Rashdall’s theology of revelation. First of all, to define commonly-held perceptions of revelation and to establish the background to his theology of revelation; this involves evaluating established 19th century observations of revelation.

It will then outline Rashdall’s original theology of revelation and his debt to the Lux Mundi school, noting the contribution Rashdall made to liberal Anglican theologies of revelation in 1899. The chapter summarises Rashdall’s principles of revelation and his move away from propositional outlooks on revelation, noting the changes taking place in late-Victorian theologies of revelation, before examining Rashdall’s innovative approach toward theologies of revelation. From Rashdall’s outlook, theologies of revelation had particular significance for the interpretation of miracles.

Rashdall’s theology of revelation demonstrates that his perceptions of revelation were framed by inherited outlooks on the subject. Conceptions of revelation in the 18th century had tended to envisage revelation as the communication of God, through history and to a particular group, of a certain number of truths necessary to attain true knowledge of God and salvation. The 18th century Enlightenment challenged this, stressing rather the importance of human autonomy and natural reason, and downplaying the role of both ecclesiastical authority and supernatural revelation.

By the latter 19th century, belief in Biblical inerrancy was being challenged and this in turn affected doctrines of revelation. Biblical criticism influenced revelation, and the publication of Essays and Reviews in 1860 constituted a landmark for the changing view of revelation in Victorian England. Baden Powell (1796-1860) contributed an essay on the ’Evidences of Christianity,’ asserting that divine intervention does not abrogate natural laws.

Benjamin Jowett’s essay caused controversy because of his clear insistence that scriptural interpretation defers to secular literary norms. Jowett, a Broad Churchman, helped to mould contemporary theological opinion by questioning Biblical verbal inspiration, along with the right to interpret the Bible ’like any other book.’

\[^{152}\] Benjamin Jowett relates Biblical hermeneutics in regard to secular literature commenting, ’yet in what may be called the externals of interpretation, That is to say, The meaning of words, The connection of sentences, the settlement of the text, The evidence of facts, The same rules apply to the Old and New Testaments as to other books.’ Jowett, ’On The Interpretation of Scripture,’ in Essays and Reviews (London: John W Parkes and Son, West Strand, 1860), pp. 330-433; p. 337.
B. Jowett meant the Bible should be treated as a book in a neutral way, using the same literary norms and canons of criticism that are applied to secular literature, involving text centred meanings of words and sentence construction. More radically, the Old and New Testaments in relation to scriptural hermeneutics were to be treated in the same fashion. Both stand now on the same level in the application of biblical criticism. Critics of this approach would envisage it as promoting a secularisation of Scriptural hermeneutics, and this approach also had ramifications for theories of revelation established on the basis of Biblical authority.

Generally, before 1860 the scriptures were judged as both infallible and inerrant. Hugh D. MacDonald, a theologian who commented on the 19th century history of theories of revelation, maintained the great change for theories of revelation came with the application of historical methodology to the Bible and the introduction of the so-called higher criticism to the Bible itself. Biblical literary sources and textual traditions were subsequently investigated using new scientific and textual methods.\textsuperscript{153}

Another influential analysis of theories of revelation, made by John Baillie (1886-1960), asserts early 19th century theologies of revelation underwent severe change. By the end of the century, revelation was then understood not as a transmission of supernatural knowledge but rather in the sense of a self-disclosure of God. This interpretation of the 19th century Roman Catholic outlook on revelation is now disputed because it is a caricature. Medieval scholastic outlooks on revelation were often interpreted in terms of a later 19th and 20th century neo-Thomism.

The meaning of revelation outlined by Baillie suggests that propositional perspectives on revelation were inherited from medieval Scholasticism, particularly from Thomas Aquinas. This movement perceived revelation as a deposit of sacred truth.

Later 20th century reviewers of Aquinas understand Aquinas exhibited a more nuanced view of revelation in which divine love is central to his theology; his prophetic revelation was 'the intelligible light that empowers the mind to judge according to the divine truth'.\textsuperscript{154} G. Daly points out Aquinas employs imagery of divine light as a prerequisite to faith. Aquinas' model of revelation involves a divine illumination as both teacher and pupil.\textsuperscript{155}

\textsuperscript{153} MacDonald, \textit{Theories of Revelation}, pp. 40-41.
\textsuperscript{155} Ibid. p. 26.
Studies of medieval theologies of revelation establish medieval theologies were not simply Thomist, associated with the Dominican Aquinas; an alternative tradition of theologies of revelation existed, including Bonaventura (c1221-1274). There were two main traditions, the Dominican and Augustinian. The medieval Augustinian outlook of revelation has affinities with Rashdall's revelatory theology, particularly where revelation represented illumination of the intellect.

To conclude these introductory remarks: differing perceptions of theologies of revelation emerged during the 19th century, particularly in Britain; revelation was no longer simply represented as the reception of propositional truth-claims, even though the 19th century neo-Thomist movement advanced this approach. John Baillie's overstated criticism of the medieval legacy, and whilst being partially correct, it has been challenged in recent studies of Aquinas by Fergus Kerr and Julia Kristina, among others. J. Baillie simplifies medieval views of revelation; they were neither uniform nor monolithic.

2.1.2 The Lux Mundi School

Significant influences on later 19th century theologies of revelation were the Anglo-Catholic Anglican theologians associated with the publication of a collection of essays named *Lux Mundi* (1889). Contributors to this volume included Charles Gore and other successors of the Oxford movement, notably John Illingworth (1848-1915), Aubrey Moore (1848-1890), and Robert Campbell Moberly (1845-1903). This section aims to show the *Lux Mundi* school exhibited a significant influence on Hastings Rashdall.

*Lux Mundi*’s publication inaugurated a new era in Anglican theology. Rashdall shared similar influences to the *Lux Mundi* school; these Anglo-Catholic theologians aimed to reconcile Christian revelation to the massive changes experienced by Victorian society. Rashdall’s revelational theology was indebted to the *Lux Mundi* school, particularly with its patristic, evolutionary and historical approach to ideas of revelation. An original and distinctive feature of the 19th century mentality was a growing awareness of the historical sense. The theory of evolution influenced theologies of revelation. Evolution is accepted as the work of the divine Logos, affirming the Logos works in creation. Illingworth spoke of Christ as the indwelling Logos pervading the universe as its source and life. Again, similar to Rashdall, he speaks of ‘the revelation of the Divine character’.

---

156 Ibid. p. 25.
159 MacDonald, *Theories of Revelation*, pp. 40-41.
160 John Richardson Illingworth, ‘The Incarnation in Relation to Development,’ in Charles Gore (ed.),
Significantly, the *Lux Mundi* school envisaged contemporary thought illuminating revelation rather than being against it; the school thus represented 'a synthesis of High Churchmanship and critical thought'. However, Baillie commenting on *Lux Mundi*, criticises Gore and later 19th century Anglo-Catholic theologians for holding the view that belief is assent to external propositions. Faith consists of holding the right beliefs. Unlike the earlier Tractarians, the *Lux Mundi* school did not envisage contemporary criticism and philosophy as being incompatible with divine revelation. In many ways, the school exhibited the same apologetical concern and engagement with contemporary thought as later Anglican modernists.

Rashdall's revelatory theology, particularly in his *Doctrine and Development*, connects the Logos with creation. Christology and creation are harmonised and Rashdall goes further, concentrating on the biblical terminology found in *The Gospel of John*, stressing 'Creation itself is in a sense a revelation of God, an embodiment of His thought'. Rashdall elaborates this approach by asserting everything is made through the agency of the reason or Word of God. He expounded a Logos theology despite his ecclesiological differences with the *Lux Mundi* school. The principle of an incarnate Logos was a primary feature of his theology of revelation.

The later 19th century turn towards stressing the immanence of God in creation has its precursor in the retrieval of Logos theology recovered by the *Lux Mundi* school. A. Moore concentrated on Christianity's stress on the divine immanence asserting 'It has to bring forth out of its treasury things new and old, the old almost forgotten truth of the immanence of the Word'. This emphasis for Moore was found in patristic theologians, particularly Athanasius and his work, *De Incarnatione Verbi*. Athanasius envisaged the Incarnation as the culmination of self-revelation of the divine Logos, immanent in the religious history of humanity. Moore perceived Christianity in Athanasius' times maintained 'The Christian doctrine of God'. Greek philosophy was moulded by Christian thought rather than contaminated by it.

---


165 Ibid., *Charles Gore*, p. 3.


Perhaps the most influential essay of the collection was Gore's essay 'The Holy Spirit and Inspiration,' especially its discussion of the relation between theories of inspiration and the Old Testament. Gore, resembling Rashdall, envisaged the Bible as recording the proclamation and not representing the revelation itself. Gore modified current perceptions of revelation. His exposition of revelation has marked similarities to Rashdall, particularly with Gore's emphasis on revelation as continuous and progressive.

Furthermore, the 1889 Lux Mundi essays illustrate the influence of T. H. Green who had taught Rashdall; Green was an idealist philosopher who stressed the divine immanence within creation. He had been influenced by both Hegel and Kant, and he envisaged the world as the realisation of a spiritual principle. A. M. Ramsey assessed the influence of the Lux Mundi school noting it placed an emphasis on the truth of the revelation of God through Christ. The place and significance of revelation was central. Ramsey compared the outlook of the Lux Mundi school with the earlier Tractarians: in relation to divine revelation he noted, whereas the Tractarians believed contemporary criticism and philosophy could not be harmonised with the authoritative given revelation, the Lux Mundi theologians assumed their essential compatibility. On these grounds, the writers were innovators. Furthermore, Ramsey's evaluation of Gore points to more similarities between Rashdall, Gore and the Lux Mundi school. Gore asserted the primacy of 'the moral judgement'. He stated the aims of the Lux Mundi school in his preface to the essays in the following terms:

Our purpose was to succour a distressed faith by endeavouring to bring the Christian Creed into its right relation to the modern growth of knowledge, scientific, historical, and critical; and to the modern problems of politics and ethics.

This 1890 statement by Gore aimed to harmonise Christian theology with the growth of modern scientific, historical and critical knowledge. This goal of reconciliation was characteristic of later 20th century liberal and modernist Anglicanism. Rashdall would have agreed with this programme and further with the assumption, rather than being changed by the new knowledge, it can assimilate and transform it in a Christian way. This approach transformed attitudes to

170 Ibid. p. xxxix.
172 Ibid.
173 Ramsey, Gore, p. 3.
revelation. Rashdall’s 1890’s sermons found in his *Doctrine and Development* illustrate this approach in relation to theologies of revelation as shown in the next section.

The publication of *Lux Mundi* by a group of Anglo-Catholic clergymen exerted a significant influence on later 19th century theologies of revelation. New directions for the theology of revelation were opened by the essays. John Illingworth connected evolution with the Incarnation and, influenced by B. F. Westcott, outlined a Logos theology perceiving Christ as Consummator of creation. Westcott envisaged Biblical inspiration as combining human language and history interacting with a divine prompt.

The *Lux Mundi* school has been criticised by J. Baillie for envisaging revelation simply as an assent to doctrinal propositions. But Gore’s essay on the inspiration of scripture emphasises the role of the Holy Spirit. Gore stressed the centrality of religious experience, perceiving the New Testament as embodying incarnational religion. It must be clarified however, C. Gore and the Anglo-Catholic theologians did not envisage revelation simply in terms of a system of guaranteed doctrines or beliefs. The Gore of *Lux Mundi* stated revelation lay in the person of Jesus Christ as the revealer of revelation. But later Gore, as Bishop of Birmingham, confirmed Baillie’s interpretation of Anglo-Catholic belief involved the enunciation of doctrine and dogma, when he suspended a clergyman, Charles Beeby, for not subscribing to the Anglican articles. By the turn of the 20th century, the attitudes of the *Lux Mundi* school had become dominant in Anglican theology.

### 2.1.3 Rashdall’s 1899 Exposition of Revelational Theology

Rashdall produced a definitive summary of his theological position and revelational theology in 1899, relating his doctrine of revelation to his overall theological project. Theology and revelation, for Rashdall, were linked by a ‘progress of that living thought by which alone can the real meaning of Christianity be brought home to successive ages’.

---

180 Rashdall, *Diversity in Unity: A Sermon for the Times* (London: The Churchman’s Union, 1899)
181 Ibid. p. 5.

49
Here, Rashdall asserts theology must continually keep up with the spirit of the age, in other words its *zeitgeist*. When theology becomes stagnant, the transmission and accommodation of Christianity to a certain age suffers. Rashdall explains further: 'A theology which really expresses the mind of an age, is always giving up old beliefs and adapting itself to new ones'.

Liberal-modernist theologians are often criticised as changing Christianity to suit the prevailing atmosphere and so destroy its content. However, Rashdall asserts, 'And yet through all these changes we can trace the working of one and the self-same spirit'. So Christianity is not fundamentally changed by its environment, as a basic identity and spirit remain throughout the ages. Rashdall held an open-ended perception of revelation, i.e. it was not closed or finished. He notes an on-going role for revelation, asserting 'We cannot presume to anticipate or to set limits to His 'evelations to the Churches of the future'. Here Rashdall shows his ecumenical outlook which asserted revelation is imparted to other churches.

Rashdall's summary here enshrines the vast changes in perceptions and doctrines of revelation which occurred, principally in the latter half of the 19th century. Revelation now operated outside of the Old and New Testaments, especially in the development of doctrine. Revelation is present in creation, operating throughout history and is not confined to the Bible alone. Rashdall notes theories of revelation, rather named Inspiration, were not now tied to 'mechanical theories of inspiration', where all of Scripture had been believed to be literally dictated by the Holy Spirit, and its human composition virtually ignored. Literalist interpretations of scripture are excluded, in which Biblical texts were seen as inerrant and infallible. Old Testament miracles were downplayed and contemporary Biblical criticism was now acceptable. Rashdall continued his summary of changing perceptions of revelation in relation to other doctrines as follows:

At least as regards the Old Testament to disown an arbitrary and forensic theory of the Atonement, to profess that 'wider hope' for which Maurice suffered so much these are opinions which no longer stamp a man as a Broad Churchman.

Rashdall also realised the new changes in perceptions of revelation had been pioneered by the Broad Churchmen who included F. D. Maurice and B. Jowett. Their outlook had been controversial in their time, but was now accepted as normative. Rashdall notes changes in theologies of atonement which had categorically emphasised the Atonement as effecting redemption by a sacrifice rather than by a moral influence. The theology of F. D. Maurice's 'wider

---

182 Ibid. p. 6.
183 Ibid. p. 6-7.
184 Ibid. p. 11.
hope' is referred to. Maurice's theological position caused a heated controversy in Victorian Britain. He condemned the doctrine of eternal punishment which led on to discussions of universalism. This doctrine asserted that all humanity would be eventually saved, and had been espoused by the patristic theologians, Origen and Gregory of Nyssa (c331-395).

Rashdall's revelational theology can be defined in the following way: firstly, he aimed to widen the conception of revelation 'beyond the limits of the Old and New Testaments'. Revelation is present throughout creation, and is not confined to the Bible alone. Literalist interpretations of scripture are excluded, particularly so-called 'mechanical' theories of biblical inspiration, in which Biblical texts were seen as inerrant and infallible.

For Rashdall, the essence of the Christian message entailed acceptance of the following: 'The character of Jesus Christ is itself surely the great revelation of God'. Theologically, revelation occupies centre stage for Rashdall who stresses:

That God is revealed after a unique manner in Christ, is and must be the central truth of any Christianity that can aspire to be regarded as in any sense an absolute, a permanent, or a final religion.

Rashdall also noted the acceptance of most of the changing outlooks on revelation by the High Church movement. Theology and revelation now operate as partners in the continuing deconstruction and reconstruction of theology. Rashdall outlines a working definition of theology:

Theology arises out of the attempts to set the facts of the moral and religious consciousness and their due relation to the facts of science and of history. It is the attempt to build up a theory of the universe from the religious point of view. Christian Theology is the result of thought or reflection upon the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, or what at any given time that life and that teaching were understood to be.

Here, theology relates or correlates the facts of moral and religious consciousness in relation to facts of science and history. Rashdall stresses the theological importance of the historical Jesus, his teaching and life, rather than stressing the risen Christ. This is a defining characteristic of his theological project.

A statement of principles outlining the aims and objectives of Anglican liberalism was made by The Churchman's Union For The Advancement of Liberal Religious Thought. Rashdall had become

185 Rashdall, Doctrine and Development, p. 75.
186 Ibid. pp. 111-112.
187 Ibid. pp. vii-viii
President of this organisation, and the statement shows both the importance of revelation for liberal Anglican theology and the turn towards 'theological liberalism' by Anglican clergyman at the turn of the 20th century, who had previously been known by the label of Broad Churchmen. 188

Issues concerning revelation became a concern for Anglican liberals, with sections one and two of the statement relating to the concept of revelation. The statement maintained that revelation is not a static, immutable body of knowledge; rather revelation is ongoing and advancing throughout history. The Spirit of God is held to be active in imparting revelation.

Furthermore, the statement claimed that The Church of England had the right to revise doctrines in the light of this understanding of revelation. 189 So the theological and doctrinal tradition of the Church of England could be open to revision and modification, in the light of new developments and changes in society. A characteristic of the liberal Churchmen was their stress on 'comprehensiveness' in the Church of England, a view which emphasised mutual toleration and sympathy between the different parties, Low, Broad and High within the church.

Finally, Rashdall perceived the concept of revelation meant the same as inspiration, and he is perceptive in realising that ideas of revelation had changed and needed widening and deepening. Rashdall's outlook on revelation was conditioned by his liberal theology. For him, his late-Victorian position on revelation presupposed an awareness of the inadequacy of older theories due to the emergence of modern theories of history, evolution and literary criticism. Late-Victorian and early-Edwardian Anglican liberal theology was not reductionist or destructive towards Christian theology; rather Rashdall envisaged a process of development, transformation and surrender of long-held practices and beliefs, resulting in a new synthesis of theology. 190

In addition, the liberal outlook tends to interpret the truths of Christianity for the present situation. Carried out in line with the ever present self-revelation of God to the world, revelation legitimised and justified liberal theology. This reconstruction of theology involved a continuing revelation by the Spirit, along with critical thinking and enquiry. 191 Rashdall did not develop his views on revelation in isolation. This leads on to considerations of later Victorian outlooks on revelation and their impact on Rashdall.

188 Stephen Sykes perceives theologians, 'do not readily fall into a group identifiable by shared theological convictions.' They transcend party labels with their theologies more diverse and accommodating than often supposed. Sykes, 'Theology through History,' in Ford, The Modern Theologians, p. 27.


190 Rashdall, Doctrine and Development, p. 51-2.

191 Ibid. p. 52.
2.1.4 Late-Victorian Views of Revelation: Influences on Rashdall

Rashdall did not develop his views on revelation in isolation. Gore's views on revelation have affinities with those of Rashdall, despite their other theological differences. Gore represented a major influence on late-Victorian theologies of revelation, stressing the centrality of the Incarnation; for Gore, incarnational religion is revealed by God, 'within human experience'. Gore's emphasis on the importance of experience shows an affinity with both Anglican and Roman Catholic modernism.

Gore's influential 1891 Bampton lectures, *The Incarnation of the Son of God*, further outlined his theology of revelation delineated in the *Lux Mundi* essays. Gore, again like Rashdall, emphasises the centrality of the ethical dimension of Christianity as paramount. Revelation is compatible with reason, conscience and morality. The differences between Gore and Rashdall concerning apostolic succession and the Virgin Birth mask how much they had in common with each other. Revelation for both of them is not constituted simply by doctrinal propositions; rather the basis of Christianity is based not on a system, but on a person, Jesus Christ.

Gore comments on the effect of the development of Biblical criticism on the doctrine of inspiration saying:

The supernatural action of the Holy Ghost does not destroy the natural human faculties or override natural processes of literary development.

A radical dichotomy between the action of the Holy Spirit and natural human activity and faculties, including literary development, is not now asserted. Gore, along with Rashdall, redefines revelation in terms of a disclosure made through Jesus Christ and he harmonises so-called natural and supernatural religion, both of which utilise concepts of progressive development in Christianity and speak of a process taking place in nature through the agency of Christ. Debates concerning revelation in later Victorian England recognised the importance of a supernatural/natural division for theologies of revelation. Both Rashdall and Gore's solution to the problem was to recognise a harmony and a unity between the two spheres.

An outlook where the natural was complemented by the supernatural conflicted with, for example, later 19th century neo-Thomism, with its two-floor theory of the natural and supernatural. These Anglican debates anticipated discussions about natural and supernatural theology undertaken


by 20th century French Roman Catholic theologians including Henri De Lubac (1896-1991). This approach, rather than stressing the transcendence of God towards creation and humanity, perceived God as immanent or present within creation and for some theologians, as immanent in humanity as 'the inner light'.

By the turn of the 20th century, revelation now takes place through Jesus Christ and through the experience of the religious consciousness. Inspiration represents the spirit present in the Biblical narratives, allied with its spiritual power. Methods of Biblical interpretation changed and, in the process, transformed concepts of revelation. C. Emmet observed that these changes were due to the application of new theological methodology. The new method started with the facts of experience, past or present, drawing conclusions from them, rather than from a priori ideas. Scientific methodology was applied to theology, and the nature of God's revelation now was to be ascertained by an impartial examination of scripture. A change in the second half of the 19th century had taken place towards an 'immanentist tendency'.

By the first decade of the 20th century, articles on inspiration by C. Gore and C. Webb show the changing consensus among theologians regarding the nature and significance of revelation. The true medium of revelation is now located not just in a book, but through a man, Jesus Christ; revelation is located in experiencing of the religious consciousness. The significance of the Old Testament's mark of inspiration lies in the spiritual power it holds over its readers. A mark of the inspiration of the Old Testament is instead of being wholly an inspired oracle, it rather gains influence over its readers by its spiritual depths.

Finally, during the early part of the 20th century, the earlier Broad Church section of Anglicanism became associated with theological liberalism, subsequently known as modernism. Rashdall associated with the Broad Church and an organisation of liberals later called The Modern Churchmen. Anglican modernism was the product of an essentially English Anglican situation and environment, and must not be confused with Roman Catholic Modernism, a movement condemned in 1907 by Pope Pius X (1835-1914) in the decree Lamentabili and by the encyclical Pascendi Domenici Gregis. Established Anglican modernists held distinctive theologies of revelation,

---

195 Emmet, Conscience, Creeds and Critics, p. 94.
196 Ibid.
197 A growing interest took place in mysticism for example, William Ralph Inge, Christian Mysticism: Considered in Eight Lectures Delivered Before The University of Oxford (London: Methuen and Co, 1899).
198 Rashdall maintains doctrine has changed or evolved: 'That assumption of an unvarying and universally accepted body of truth cannot outlive serious study. What is now considered orthodox Christian doctrine is the result of a slow evolution; and we cannot suppose that the evolution has definitely stopped in the Fourth or the Sixteenth or the Nineteenth century.' Doctrinal orthodoxy varies from age to age. Rashdall, 'Modernism,' May 27 1918, reprinted in Ideas and Ideals, pp. 94-116; p. 109.
notably involving revelation as ongoing and progressive, along with the action of the Holy Spirit who imparts new revelational understandings.

2.1.5 The Significance of Miracles for Theologies of Revelation

A theological issue discussed by Victorian theologians was the relationship of miracles to revelation. Miracles and evidential proofs of Christianity traditionally went together, witnessed by the miracles recorded in the New Testament. In 1902, Rashdall discussed the relationship between miracles and the supernatural in the Gospels, interpreted from the perspective of his revelational theology. Because of his Broad Church heritage, Rashdall espoused a late-19th century 'scientific' perception of miracles, and presupposed a uniformity of nature with fixed, immutable physical laws, which could not be changed or violated.199 Miracles were thus questionable because these given laws governing nature could not be violated or interrupted.

Rashdall aimed to justify his theology of miracles, setting it in relation to his theology of revelation, and this involved criticism of evidential views of revelation. One of the most influential exponents of the evidential approach to revelation had been the theologian William Paley (1743-1805).200 For Paley, revelation had to be proved and verified by external evidence, particularly miracles.

Associated with evidential theology is the practice of natural theology, which proposes the existence of two spheres of theology, the natural and the revealed. The revealed sphere concerns the truths of Christianity, while natural theology assumes that the existence of God can be proved by an appeal to nature. This approach, characteristic of the 18th century, was superseded during the latter part of the 19th century. The 1865 Bampton Lectures of James Bowling Mozley (1813-1878) concerning miracles, represented the last influential exposition of evidential views. The evidential approach aimed to prove the existence of God by showing evidence of the divine nature working in creation.

Rashdall discussed the importance of miracles for revelation using his skills as a historian and adopting the historical-critical method, clearly influenced by the philosopher Francis Herbert Bradley who had examined the credibility of the Biblical narratives and their miraculous element.201

200 William Paley, Natural Theology, or Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of Deity (London: Taylor and Wilks, 1802).
It was noted that the Deity works in a uniform way through nature and that this assumption is the logical basis of inference, from 'the particular to the universal upon which all scientific reasoning and all estimation of historical evidence depend.'

Rashdall laid down historiographical criteria as a historian to establish whether a certain New Testament miracle was genuine. He laid down these principles:

Abnormal events occurring in historical documents must be accepted or rejected according to the answer which we give to two questions. 1. What amount of direct historical testimony, duly sifted by critical methods can be produced in their favour? 2. How much analogy do they exhibit to other recorded phenomena for which we have sufficient evidence?

Rashdall asserts the New Testament should be treated as a historical document, not an inerrant text. The miracles recorded in the New Testament should now be assessed using critical methods and by the use of analogy, related to other recorded phenomena, to ascertain their veracity.

So, historical testimony and analogy to other occurrences are vital; although while asserting the primacy of evidence, Rashdall was not a rigid empiricist. For him, rejecting a historical event due to the present state of science would be untenable. He commented:

To make our acceptance or rejection of each event depend solely upon the testimony producible for that isolated occurrence, after the fashion of the older evidential writers, would be to give up the presuppositions upon which all historical criticism reposes.

Here, Rashdall promotes a critical approach to the texts upon which the testimonies of the events of miracles rest. But he did not accept the historical-critical method without criticism. It had limitations, since for Rashdall bare, observed fact is impossible. Testimonies of the same event often differ, and even the most reliable witness does not always confine him or herself to what actually happened. Accounts of occurrences are based on inferences from past experience, and these inferences assume the uniformity of nature.

Rashdall rejected the evidential tradition associated with William Paley, but he can be disputed on this point. Edward H. Carr (1892-1982), a 20th century historian, disputed what we

203 Ibid.
204 Ibid.
mean by an historical fact, while David Hume's (1711-1776) much earlier scepticism questioned the certainty of cause and effect and the uniformity of nature.²⁰⁵ Rashdall commends the approach to the historical criticism of miracles taken by William Sanday (1843-1920); in evaluating New Testament documents, discrimination should take place between the historical worth of different documents.²⁰⁶

Rashdall endorses Sanday's opinion, that miracles do not entail 'breaches' of natural law.²⁰⁷ But a distinction is drawn by Rashdall between causation in natural science and human historical causation. Even though envisaging nature as a mechanically uniform sequence of physical events, Rashdall declared that nature could be changed by acts of human will, on account of the reality of psychological causation.²⁰⁸

Rashdall advocates a novel alternative to the evidential theory of revelation which asserted divine revelation had to be verified and confirmed by miracles, recorded in the New Testament. The message of Christ must be believed now on moral and spiritual grounds. The message constitutes its own testimony. Rashdall does not dispute Jesus Christ performed miracles but he re-interprets the significance of those miracles, believing they point to highlighting the character of Christ and his unique personality. The revelation of God through Christ is verified by moral and spiritual evidence, not just by physical miracles. The impression Christ made on his society and on individuals is more important than miracles.

Rashdall concedes miracles are still a fundamental consistent of Christ's life and teachings but they cannot be separated from his mission and life. Rashdall interpreted several miracles recorded in the New Testament, for example the healing of disease, as having been effected by spiritual means. Rashdall, influenced by the opinion of Andrew Fairbairn (1838-1912), envisages the miracles of Jesus exhibiting qualities relating to his nature; his miracles illustrate Christ's ethical qualities.²⁰⁹ The moral attributes of Jesus appear in his acts. However, Rashdall admits the healing of disease by spiritual means can be in accordance with analogy, and claims that 'the record of these healings is so interwoven with what is most characteristic in His life and teaching that it defies elimination'.²¹⁰

²⁰⁷ Ibid.
²⁰⁸ Ibid.
²⁰⁹ Ibid.
²¹⁰ Rashdall, The Miracles, p. 3.
Rashdall’s revelational theology did not appeal to symbolism unlike other, Roman Catholic modernists, including Alfred Firmin Loisy and George Tyrrell. Rather than proving Christianity by specific miracles, the real miracle according to Rashdall is the person of Christ, the impression that he made, and the church’s sense of his unique position as the full and final revealer of God. For Rashdall, Christ must be believed in on moral and spiritual grounds; the revelation of God, made in the person of Christ, constitutes its own evidence.

So to conclude, Rashdall connected his revelational theology to a consideration of miracles. Rashdall held a late Victorian perception of nature, where the natural laws of nature could not be changed or interfered with. In addition, he went against evidential perceptions of revelation where revelation had to be proved by miracles. Rashdall examined the New Testament miracles by historical-critical criteria, although he noticed deficiencies of the empirical method. He interpreted miracles as illustrating the unique character of Christ; the revelation of God through Christ was primary.

Rashdall advocates a novel alternative to the evidential theory of revelation which asserted divine revelation had to be verified and confirmed by miracles, recorded in the New Testament. The message of Christ must be believed now on moral and spiritual grounds. The message constitutes its own testimony. Rashdall does not dispute Jesus Christ performed miracles but he re-interprets the significance of those miracles, believing they point to highlighting the character of Christ and his unique personality. The revelation of God through Christ is verified by moral and spiritual evidence, not just by physical miracles. The impression Christ made on his society and on individuals is more important than miracles.

2.1.6 Faith, Revelation and Atheism

Rashdall’s exposition of the meaning of miracles for theologies of revelation faces severe criticism, particularly from the perspective of a modern rationalist sensibility. He can be accused of using a circular self-authenticating argument by asserting the unique revelation of God in Christ comprises its own evidence. Rashdall maintains miracles as of secondary importance compared to the primary confirmation of the work of Christ: ‘The unique revelation of God made in the Person of Christ must be its own evidence. Spiritual things must be spiritually discerned’.  

Today’s contemporary critics of theism, who include Richard Dawkins, perceive theology as a mystification and falsification, an illusion inhibiting the real exercise of intellect and true reason. Theology is thus the enemy of reason, based on an illusion, the existence of God. Faith is thus both

211 Ibid. p. 4.
obscurantist and irrational. Religion is harmful, a virus of the mind.\textsuperscript{212} Richard Dawkins’ assertion will be discussed as to why religion, so subsequently theology, is anti-rational; Rashdall’s defence of the harmony of faith and reason will then be outlined noting his position is still a viable option for today.

Rashdall was well aware of the difficulties posed to faith by reason, questions similar to those posed today by Dawkins. Rashdall was a professional philosopher; his solution to atheistic criticisms of his position would be to assert that faith is rational and theology is a rational discipline.

Theology and Christianity have often been perceived as against philosophy and rational reflection.\textsuperscript{213} R. Dawkins ignores the existence in religion and Christianity of a philosophical theology, as faith seeking understanding. Instead, he would emphasise the anti-rational element in Christianity.\textsuperscript{214} However, it must be said an anti-philosophical tradition does exist in Christianity. This anti-rational, anti-philosophical tradition is exemplified by the patristic writer Tertullian (c160-c220) who put forward the presupposition that philosophy has nothing to do with Christianity. In particular, his assertion faith has nothing to do with reason, exemplified by his quote, 'I believe because it is absurd'.\textsuperscript{215} But this is not the only tradition.\textsuperscript{216}

Rashdall’s discussion of medieval intellectual history found in his \textit{The Universities of Europe in The Middle Ages} sheds valuable light on the relation between faith and reason found in his theology and philosophy. Rashdall related both faith and reason together. He justifies the place of faith and reason in theology with his appreciation of Thomas Aquinas, the medieval scholastics and their contribution to the theological enterprise. Belief for them is rational and moreover, a harmony exists between faith and reason, they are not inimical to each other.

\textsuperscript{213} McGrath, \textit{Christian Theology}, p. 178.
Rashdall summarises the significance of Thomas Aquinas on this question by remarking:

The greatest idea that we owe to St Thomas is his magnificent conception of Theology as a science in which the results of all other sciences, the highest generalisations in all departments of thought, are summed up and harmoniously combined in a great theory about the ultimate meaning of the world about the relations between God, the world and humanity.\(^{217}\)

This means theology is built on constructive principles with a reasoned perception of reality which is both well thought out and coherent. Faith is rational, and particularly for the scholastics, reconciliation exists between faith and reason; there is not a conflict or a disruption between the two. They are not at variance with each other. Faith is not irrational, or can do without reason. Moreover, it is rational itself to believe.

When discussing the impact of the later medieval scholastic William of Occam (c1285-c1349) on medieval thought, Rashdall exhibited his awareness of modern philosophy and its criticisms of received tradition. Occam's philosophy is perceived by Rashdall as a form of philosophy, very similar to the philosophy found from the 18th century onwards. It is similar to 'the modern non-metaphysical man of science'.\(^{218}\) Occam represents the so-called common-sense tradition. His philosophy for Rashdall is one of centuries later, although Occam is severely criticised by Rashdall because of his rigid separation between faith and reason, theology and philosophy.\(^{219}\) Occam was a philosophical sceptic but in theology he was Franciscan. This division for Rashdall entailed a radical separation of faith from reason, compartmentalising the two spheres.

Occam's outlook departed radically from the earlier scholastic theologians, from Anselm as well as Aquinas, and the prevalence of Occam's outlook in later medieval scholasticism led to the eclipse and demise of medieval scholasticism itself. It must be said, critics of medieval scholasticism saw it conceding too much to reason and Rashdall accepts this when he maintained of scholasticism:

Scholasticism was after all a noble attempt to vindicate the rights of reason in religion.\(^{220}\)

On the other hand, a one-sided reliance on reason alone amongst the scholastics has been criticised. During the early history of scholasticism, Abelard was accused by Bernard of Clairvaux of exulting reason at the expense of faith in his exposition of theology.

\(^{217}\) Rashdall, 'Thomas Aquinas,' in *God and Man*, pp. 189-202; p. 198.

\(^{218}\) Rashdall, *Universities of Europe in The Middle Ages*, p. 263.

\(^{219}\) Ibid. p. 263.

Elements of Thomas Aquinas' writings are for Rashdall, however, still valuable. For him, Aquinas grappled with intellectual difficulties in the same way as intellectual difficulties face us now.\textsuperscript{221} Rashdall speaks of 'the Christianisation of the new knowledge, and the intellectual reconstruction of the old Faith'.\textsuperscript{222} A process which took place in the Middle Ages which was analogous to the situation at the end of the 19th century when Christianity faced an influx of new knowledge, for example the theory of evolution and the growth of new sciences.

Finally, for Aquinas, faith offers insights given from revelation to which reason cannot attain. But still reason is involved in the discernment of revelation, theology is a \textit{scientia}, and it can analyse and explicate revelation by the use of rational methods. Philosophy and theology are partners in building up and establishing a harmonious structure of theology and Christianity.\textsuperscript{223}

However it must be stressed, for Rashdall, theology is ultimately based on revelation. It is not irrational, even though natural theology is a valid enterprise and faith does not exist on its own. Rashdall uses the concept of 'perpetual inspiration', where inspiration has not stopped, the work of the Holy Spirit is still continuing. Rashdall was not too rational and did not rely exclusively on reason.

2.7 Conclusions to Chapter Two

As established during the 19th century, received views of revelation changed, particularly the assumption that revelation is the communication of a supernatural body of knowledge, made up of doctrinal, propositional truths. Several theologians, and notably John Baillie, have claimed that propositional views of revelation were inherited from medieval Scholasticism.\textsuperscript{224} But, as established, the picture of medieval scholasticism presupposed by this interpretation is a simplification. This point is important, because medieval Augustinian views of revelation had affinities with Rashdall's views on revelation and their assumption that revelation represented an illumination of the intellect.\textsuperscript{225}

For Rashdall, revelation is embodied in Jesus Christ as the revealer of God, changing from views which emphasised revelation as embodying only ideas of propositional truth; his analysis of revelation is conditioned by his liberal theology. Revelation is now proposed as the self-disclosure of God rather than the acquisition of supernatural knowledge. Opinions of revelation had changed

\textsuperscript{221} Rashdall, 'Thomas Aquinas,' in \textit{God and Man}, p. 199.
\textsuperscript{222} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{223} McGrath, \textit{Christian Theology}, p. 179.
\textsuperscript{224} Baillie, \textit{The Idea of Revelation}, p. 4.
from medieval views of revelation, which saw revelation in terms of a communication of a body of knowledge, consisting of propositional divine truths. Received ideas of revelation were challenged by the 18th century Enlightenment when discussions of revelation had concerned the relation between revealed and natural knowledge.²²⁶

During the 19th century views of Biblical inerrancy and the certainty that miracles legitimated Christianity, gave way to other views of revelation. The theology of Rashdall exhibited this process and his perceptions of revelation were influenced by the 1860 Essays and Reviews, particularly the contribution of Benjamin Jowett, along with the 1889 Lux Mundi essays. As the 19th century passed, theories of revelation were influenced by theories that attempted to account for historical change.

There was a move away from notions of revelation that entailed a literal interpretation of scripture and Rashdall inherited these views and exemplified the reaction against them. Concepts of revelation were becoming increasingly central to theological debate, particularly as Biblical inerrancy fell from theological prominence. The re-interpretation of Anglo-Catholic Anglican theology presented by the Lux Mundi school influenced Rashdall’s revelational theology.

These essays opened up new directions in revelational theology. An influential essay by Gore stressed the relation between inspiration and the Old Testament.²²⁷ Later Victorian theologies of revelation were particularly influenced by Gore, and his views on revelation exhibited similarities to Rashdall’s, particularly with their stress on incarnational, Logos theology, and their emphasis on a progressive, unfolding revelation.

Rashdall produced a definitive summary of his theological position in 1899, when he set out his doctrine of revelation in relation to his overall theological project.²²⁸ This outlook envisaged its role as interpreting the truths of Christianity for the present situation. Furthermore, it was consistent with its presupposition of a continuous self-revelation of God to the world. Revelation thus exercised a role in legitimising and justifying liberal theology. Rashdall perceived the Victorian era to have experienced a huge change in theological outlook. This in turn influenced and transformed Victorian theologies of revelation.

²²⁶ While discussing Kant and Hegel, Paul Avis maintains, ‘the two greatest philosophical influences on modern Protestant theology mediate between the Enlightenment and Romanticism.’ Avis asserts of Schleiermacher, ‘This revelation communicated by God, is not propositional, but experiential, for doctrines are deduced from communal experience.’ Avis, P., ‘Divine Revelation in Modern Protestant Theology,’ in Divine Revelation, pp. 5-66; p. 46-48.
²²⁸ Rashdall, Diversity in Unity, p. 6.
By the turn of the 20th century, theologies of revelation were being transformed and, increasingly, theologies of revelation were being related to theologies of salvation. Revelation is now the self-disclosure of God not just the communication of supernatural knowledge; the doctrine of inspiration changing from identifying revelation with scripture. Another modification related to the erosion of the differences between natural and supernatural religion, with revelation being now both natural and supernatural. Rashdall's revelational theology can thus be justified against the criticisms of atheism in the sense it has a place for the harmony between faith and reason.
Chapter Three: Case Studies in Rashdall's Revelatory Theology: Ethics, Development of Doctrine, World Religions

While collecting and analysing the original source material on Rashdall, three areas of significant concern and innovation emerged. This chapter will investigate three case studies, relating to these areas which are:

1. Ethics
2. Development of doctrine
3. Revelation in relation to the world religions

Rashdall, it will be maintained, contributed significantly to Victorian and 20th century theologies of revelation, especially by relating revelation to ethics. While investigating the role of ethics, the following themes are explored: the significance and role of conscience and reason in the apprehension of revelation; this leads to a distinctive feature of Rashdall's theology of revelation, namely its relationship to religious experience; and finally, how Rashdall's notion of revelation relates to other issues of philosophical theology.

The chapter will prove a significant component of Rashdall's theology of revelation involves relating revelation to theories of doctrinal development. It will be shown that J. H. Newman influenced Rashdall's theory of development. This theory of doctrinal development was controversial, but his advocating of a continuing revelation is relevant today and remains a point of discussion in current theologies of revelation. The chapter will also highlight Rashdall's view of revelation as a progressive development throughout history.

While investigating source material, an important aspect of Rashdall's theology of revelation became clear, namely the relation between Christian revelation and the world religions. Here, Rashdall's Victorian world view and assumptions about typologies of religion emerge. By looking at the relationship between Christianity and the other world religions, this leads on to the specific issue of relations between Christianity and Judaism; this aspect is explored using correspondence held in the Bodleian and New College Libraries, Oxford between Rashdall and the Jewish scholar Claude Montefiore.
3.1 The Importance of Ethics for Rashdall’s Theology of Revelation

Rashdall’s theology of revelation made a distinctive contribution to theories of revelation, by fusing ethical theory with theology. Christianity, for Rashdall, embodies a ‘revelation of ethics’. It will be argued that Rashdall contributed significantly to Victorian and 20th century theologies of revelation due to his perception of how and why revelational theology involved ethics.

Rashdall wrote an influential two volume exposition of ethical philosophy, The Theory of Good and Evil (1907), elaborating his ethical theories in great detail. A succinct summary of Rashdall’s ethical position is found in his Ethics (1912). This is situated in relation to Rashdall’s theology of revelation, which he outlines in his Conscience and Christ (1916). While discussing theodicy, Rashdall conjoins ethics and revelation saying:

We must therefore suppose that the course of the world is directed towards the realisation of a good of which our moral ideal is a revelation-inadequate and imperfect, no doubt, but not essentially misleading.

Rashdall further outlines a moral criterion for judging whether acts were right or wrong, named idealistic utilitarianism. This examines the whole of human life asking which courses of action would promote the common good. For him, ethical theory is concerned with conduct and the meaning of duty entails a categorical imperative.

Rashdall defines ethics as a science dealing with the nature of morality and concerned with both conduct and the meaning of duty. Rashdall asserts:

Now the Science of Ethics is concerned - at least primarily with conduct; and so far our primary concern is with the meaning of the right or of what we commonly call duty.

Therefore ethics primarily, for Rashdall, involves conduct and the doing of ‘duty’, defined as the doing of what is reasonable. The question of a ‘moral criterion’ is raised relating to how

---

229 Rashdall, Doctrine and Development, p. 112.
231 Rashdall extols the supremacy of conscience, saying, ‘We can accept the revelation only because, and in so far as, it appeals to the moral consciousness as true: it is because it does make such an appeal to us that we believe it to be a revelation.’ Revelation is thus allied to the moral consciousness, an internal awareness which confirms revelatory theology. Rashdall, Conscience and Christ, p. 29.
232 Rashdall, Ethics, p. 86.
233 Ibid. p. 71.
234 Ibid. p. 12.
235 Ibid. p. 6.
particular acts can be declared right or wrong. Rashdall’s solution to this problem is to stress that we discover what is right or wrong by ‘intuition’, by an intuitive judgement, an innate faculty. But Rashdall holds the ethical theory of Intuitionalism is mistaken to assess the right or wrong of a certain act, or rule of conduct, in terms of judging isolated acts and ignoring their consequence for wider society or human happiness. This outlook brings Rashdall towards a utilitarian outlook.

Rashdall promoted his own interpretation of utilitarianism, a distinctive form associated particularly with him, idealistic utilitarianism. This ethical theory examines the whole of human life asking which courses of action would promote the common good.

Other ethical systems of utilitarianism were associated with Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), and promoted the view that those acts are right that facilitate the greatest good for both the individual and society. Utilitarian views could be teleological, regarding actions as right or wrong only in regard to the good produced for a certain end.

But for Rashdall, the promotion of other people’s good was essential to morality, rather than an ethical stance concerned only with attaining individual perfection. Moral decisions entail consequences for communities; ethical outlooks are not held in isolation from wider communal concerns. On these grounds, Rashdall held a social conception of ethics. Often, ethical studies had no relation to theology or philosophy. Rashdall asserts that a rational theology must be based on ethics and that conscience is primary; here Rashdall followed Kant. Rashdall puts forward the idea of an objective moral law, similar to the natural laws of the Universe. He maintains:

Our ultimate judgements are therefore to be compared rather with the axioms of mathematics or the physical laws of nature than with mere emotions.

Significantly, Rashdall seeks to prove the validity of our moral ideals by putting forward the existence of an objective moral law which validates right or wrong actions, whatever the individual conceives of them. Rashdall discussed in his Ethics different conceptions of the formation of moral judgements. He criticised the perception of moral judgements as just expressions of feeling where knowledge is exclusively derived from sense experience and strongly disagreed with this

---

236 Ibid. p. 6.
237 Rashdall, Ethics, p. 45.
238 Ibid. p. 71.
239 Ibid. p. 46.
240 Ibid.
241 Ibid. p. 49.
242 Ibid. p. 83.
Rather, for Rashdall, moral judgements arise from our intellect and are based on reason. Our moral faculty is known as reason or in a Kantian sense, practical reason.

This conception of ethics is situated in relation to Rashdall’s theology of revelation, which he outlines in his *Doctrine and Development* (1898) and *Conscience and Christ* (1916). His early relating of ethics to revelation in an 1894 sermon 'Revelation by character', established the centrality of ethics for revelatory theology. Rashdall envisaged a basic analogy existed between God and humanity commenting:

> Whatever is the nature of God, which must necessarily be the ideal of human life and character.

Crucially for Rashdall, the nature of God is mirrored in the highest ideals of humanity. But Christology is central because of Christ’s position as a mediator between God and humanity. Furthermore:

> In revealing the Divine Nature, Christ was necessarily revealing human duty: in setting forth the true ideal of human life, Christ was necessarily revealing the eternal nature of God.

The concept of duty is introduced and the Christian ideal involves the internalisation of morality. Perhaps Rashdall could be accused of assessing Christ’s ethics in terms reminiscent of Kant, importing into Christ’s teachings the importance of the Kantian conception of doing one’s duty: The Categorical Imperative. Finally, Rashdall places duty and ethics in relation to revelation commenting:

> God and Duty alike can be adequately revealed in one way only by a character, a life, a personality.

The revelation of character made by God is embodied in a concrete personality and in a life. Rashdall’s *Conscience and Christ* (1916) further elaborated Christ’s ideals relating to ethics. These include universal love, the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of humanity, which are central to the Christian moral ideal; in making this claim in this manner, it is evident that Rashdall’s

---

244 Rashdall, *Ethics*, p. 31.
245 Ibid. p. 31.
246 Rashdall, *Conscience and Christ*, p. 29.
248 Ibid.
249 Ibid. p. 127.
conceptuality was influenced by A. Harnack. He expounded the essence of the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth as involving the coming of the Kingdom of God. The ethics of Jesus stressed the infinite value of the human soul and a higher righteousness conceived of as following the commandment of love.

Rashdall, moreover, believed that the historical Jesus had taught those truths and had expounded them for the first time. Jesus Christ's significance thus lay in his function as a teacher of religious and ethical truth. The Incarnation appealed to the whole person, not just to reason, but to conscience also. By 1916, Rashdall was relating both the role and meaning of soteriology to revelation. Salvation was to be explained in ethical terms, which Rashdall re-interpreted and de-mythologised. Salvation occurs in the appropriation of ethical ideals. Christ expressed the highest moral reason, which is present to a degree in all human beings but the highest manifestation of reason is the incarnate Logos. So, for Rashdall, any coherent doctrine of Christ is based on the appeal his teaching makes toward the conscience of humanity. Christ's ethical ideals relate to an ongoing teaching of conscience.

In conclusion, Rashdall's revelational theology was distinctive, with its blending of ethics and ethical theory with theology; he conceived moral ideals as ultimately revealed by God. Following from this, Rashdall outlined a theory of idealistic utilitarianism. Rashdall's Conscience and Christ correlated Christ's teaching to ethics. Ethics related to salvation and Christ's ethical ideas connected to conscience and the progressive evolving revelation of God.

3.1.1. Reason with Conscience in Revelation

The next section highlights how the role of conscience is an essential component in Rashdall's revelational theology. Joseph Butler, who influenced Rashdall, was an exponent of the authority of conscience and upheld an ethical theory, intuitionalism, in which moral principles were held to be innate to the human mind. Butler emphasised the role of conscience in theological reflection, and accepted that conscience expressed the will of God.

---

251 Ibid., p. 284.
253 Ibid.
254 Rashdall, 'Bishop Butler,' in Modern Churchman, XVI ( March 1927), pp. 678-694; p. 686.

68
In common with Butler, Rashdall extols the role of conscience which he sees as being crucial for forming ethical judgements.255 Butler condemned 'enthusiasm' in religion, meaning charismatic, experiential religion associated with the Wesleyan Methodist revival, and he clashed with John Wesley (1703-1791) on precisely this issue. Rashdall would later have considerable sympathy for Butler's position.256

Rashdall perceived that much of Butler's apologetic was now outdated, but he held that parts of Butler's thought possessed real value, particularly his *Analogy*.257 Butler was an advocate of natural theology and believed that human beings could discover, by their own reasoning, a number of Christian truths, including the existence and goodness of God, and the validity of the moral law.258

For Butler, verification of conscience took place due to a primal revelation that had been given to the human race. Rashdall never mentioned the concept of a primal revelation but other 19th century theologians, including John Henry Newman, were advocates.259 Revelation's truth is only confirmed by Rashdall by the appeal made to the moral consciousness.260 Newman's controversy with William Ewart Gladstone (1809-1898) is significant; Rashdall noted that since conscience is primary for Newman, conscience came before submission to authority.261 Christ is the supreme revealer of God, and for Rashdall this is confirmed by the moral consciousness. The human intellect contains a spark of the Divine, and Rashdall perceives the intellect as being illuminated by the Divine. Rashdall agrees with Andrew Fairbairn's Augustinian view of revelation, where the human intellect is illuminated by, though not identical with, the Divine.262 He elaborates:

*If man was created in the image of God, if the human intellect is (as Christian and non-Christians alike have delighted to call it) a spark of the divine, there can be no unassisted human intellect, no merely natural reason.*263

---

255 Ibid.
256 Ibid.
258 Rashdall, 'Bishop Butler', in *Modern Churchman*, p. 687.
259 Newman envisaged a continuity between revealed and natural religion saying, 'no greater satisfaction to the Christian than that which arises from his perceiving that the Revealed system is rooted deep in the natural course of things.' James David Ernest and Gerard Tracy (ed.), *John Henry Newman*, *Oxford University Sermons: Fifteen Sermons Preached before The University of Oxford between 1826 and 1843* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 33.
261 Ibid. p. 31.
263 Rashdall, *Christus in Ecclesia*, p. 238.
Revelation is thus allied to the moral consciousness, an internal awareness which confirms revelatory theology. Ethics involves a series of value judgements. The idea of a value judgement is explained in the following terms:

And the Ritschlians rightly insist that it is by conscience, or as they express it, "value-judgements", that we recognise the supreme importance of Christ and his ideal.

Through the working of value judgements established by conscience the importance of both Christ and his ideals are recognised. But revelational theologies encounter problems when faced with appropriating and receiving revelation in relation to conscience. A dilemma exists if conscience is primary; how does it relate to authority, Bible, church and doctrines of ethics? Rashdall's writings concentrated on the individual but he corrected this prominence when he discussed the theology of the Roman Catholic modernist George Tyrrell.

Rashdall quotes G. Tyrrell as mentioning the right relationship between the great authorities of 'Conscience, Christ, the Church', stressing the importance of holding a collective experience 'gathered round and organised into one society under Christ, the Incarnation of Conscience'. This is not isolated in its reception of revelation, but connects to Christ and church. So Rashdall means conscience is informed by revelation, noting the tradition where conscience represents the voice of God. However, Rashdall is not an absolute rationalist for, as he pointed out:

Nobody but an Atheist ought to talk about the un-assisted human intellect; no one who acquiesces in the old doctrine that conscience is the voice of God ought either on the one hand to deny the existence of Revelation, or on the other to speak of Revelation as if it was confined to the Bible.

In conclusion, Rashdall asserts that revelation is multi-faceted and is characterised as a divine gift, which occurs in both conscience and Bible. He states:

Here, then in the discovery of new spiritual truth we encounter that higher and exceptional degree of spiritual and ethical insight which in a special and pre- eminent sense we ought to regard as Revelation or Inspiration.

---

264 Rashdall, 'Ritschlanism', pp. 19-43; p. 35.
265 Ibid. p. 35.
266 Rashdall, Conscience and Christ, p. 167, Notc.
267 Ibid.
268 Rashdall, Philosophy and Religion, p. 141.
269 Ibid. p. 142.
Revelation, therefore, entails the discovery of spiritual truths and, for Rashdall, revelation is inspiration; it involves discovery and insight. Rashdall’s theological ethics are influenced by the Ritschlian school, particularly with its stress on the appeal of Christ to the moral and religious consciousness of humanity, and its view that ethics involves a series of value judgements. Rashdall sketched out the role of the individual when encountering revelation, highlighting the role of conscience, Christ and church, in line with Tyrrell’s views.

3.1.2 Religious Experience in relation to Ethics

An aspect of Rashdall’s theology which makes it distinct from other Anglican modernists, such as H. D. A. Major, W. R. Inge and Percy Gardner (1846-1937), relates to the importance of religious experience for Christian theology and life.

European 19th century Protestant theology was influenced by the turn towards religious experience, characterised by the theology of Friedrich Schleiermacher, who maintained theology and doctrine grew out of religious experience. The early 20th century also witnessed philosophers, psychologists and theologians emphasising the importance of experience. C. Emmet perceived theological modernism, as having been influenced by pragmatism which stressed religious experience. The publication of William James’ classic work, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902) continues this trend. Rashdall’s attitude to religious experience is outlined in a 1903 review of William James’ *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902) where he said:

Prof James preoccupation with the marvellous and the abnormal almost inevitably conducts him to, if indeed it is not inspired by, a determination to find the essence of religion in feeling and emotion, and to belittle its rational or affective side.

Rashdall appraised this work, outlining his perception on the place of religious experience in Christian theology, and was critical of William James’ theory of religious experience. According to Rashdall, James bases religion on ‘abnormal’, minority experiences. He had revived a philosophical perspective encouraging scepticism and philosophical doubt. Religion is thus based on feeling and

---


271 Emmet relates the Creeds to experience, meaning, ‘Creeds have a very real place in religion: they witness to the continuity of religious experience, To the identity of the inner faith in God, Christ and the Spirit, which lies behind the changing analyses and explanations of that faith worked out by theology.’ Emmet, *Conscience*, p. 78.


274 Ibid. p. 245.

275 Ibid. p. 249.
emotion, rather than on rationality and intellect. The message of Christ, according to Rashdall, not only appeals to reason but to conscience, feeling and experience. Still, Rashdall is not a complete rationalist; questions of morality require a holistic approach towards the human subject, including a combination of his or her aesthetic and emotional side.

Rather than envisaging mental activities as distinct from each other, a unity of consciousness exists while space is left for revelation, lying in the moral consciousness of humanity. Here, a true revelation or disclosure of the rational Divine Will takes place. Rashdall disagreed with Percy Gardner's view of religious experience, having found Gardner's argument for the existence of God from religious experience, unconvincing.

For Rashdall, religious experience could be explained away on psychological grounds without assuming the existence of an objective reality which corresponds to it. Immanuel Kant's philosophical outlook influenced Rashdall; this is particularly evident in Rashdall's insistence on revelation as the recovering of truths accessible to human reason. An important distinction is drawn between a revelation given through the moral law and one given through a specific dispensation at one point in time.

Unlike other Anglican modernists, Rashdall did not put a central stress on the notion of religious experience. As we have observed, 19th century Protestant theology, particularly under the influence of F. Schleiermacher, turned towards experience. This emphasis continued with William James' study of mystical experience. Rashdall discussed Kantian ethics in his *Theory of Good and Evil*. For Rashdall, the significance of Kant's work is the establishment of 'a metaphysical basis for ethics'. While agreeing with Kant's work on ethics, he would have disagreed with Kant's criticisms of natural theology, and his disparagement of theological metaphysics. However, the question can be posed, did Rashdall deal adequately with the impact of the new science of psychology on ethical theory?

It is a characteristic of Rashdall, that he disparaged religious experience. This outlook was controversial as many of his contemporaries, who included Tyrrell and von Hügel (1852-1925), all valued religious experience. Both the validity and legitimacy of mystical experience has a valued

---

276 Ibid. p. 247.
Rahner's outlook on religious experience counters Rashdall's presupposition that mystical experience is only for the religious elite when he made a statement of inclusivism. Rahner said:

\[\text{every human being is really and truly exposed to the influence of divine, supernatural grace which offers an interior union with God.}^{282}\]

Mystical experience, like grace, is open to all. An inner relation exists between nature and grace involving a natural knowledge of God leading on to the self revelation of God. Rahner further remarked:

\[\text{For beyond space and time there exists a saving will of God which is universally effective and which directs man everywhere to his supernatural goal, i.e. the direct possession of God.}^{283}\]

Characteristic themes of Rahner emerge here; his theology of revelation is placed in conjunction with the universal saving will of God whose offer of salvation is open to all humanity. Furthermore, he defines the supernatural goal of humanity as full companionship with God.

But Rashdall also held a particular concept of religious experience; he included conscience as being involved in religious experience and declared, 'there is no more solid foundation for religious belief than the immediate consciousness of duty'.\(^{284}\) Arguments for theism include the notion that the universe is ultimately rational. Although Rashdall asserts knowledge of God is inferential, he still puts forward the centrality of revelation.\(^{285}\) Knowledge, including spiritual insight, has been implanted by God in the human mind.\(^{286}\) Rashdall maintains his belief in God rests on the arguments found in both theistic philosophers and philosophical theologians.

Here, Rashdall is perhaps unduly rationalistic although he follows in the traditions of Joseph Butler, and John H. Newman.\(^{287}\) Furthermore, Rashdall advances the position that no immediate, direct intuition of God exists; knowledge is by inference.\(^{288}\) Rashdall commented on the growing

\(^{282}\) Rahner, 'Christianity and The Non-Christian Religions', in Hick J, Christianity and Other Religions, pp. 52-79; p. 63.


\(^{284}\) Rashdall, 'The Validity of Religious Experience,' in Ideas and Ideals, pp. 7-21; p. 17.

\(^{285}\) Ibid.

\(^{286}\) Ibid. p. 18.

\(^{287}\) Ibid. p. 16.

\(^{288}\) Ibid. p. 13.
The importance of religious experience as seen as 'a psychological phenomenon'.\textsuperscript{289} The new science of psychology had an impact, yet Rashdall asserted subjective emotion alone cannot prove religion.\textsuperscript{290}

However, Rashdall points out experience cannot be viewed on its own; it must be interpreted and corrected by theology which provides a framework to interpret our religious or mystical experience. Christian theology provides an interpretational framework by which experience can be evaluated.\textsuperscript{291}

Finally, Rashdall's theory of experience is delineated in his *The Theory of Good and Evil*. In this, he gives an explanation of experience in the following terms: he sees it in terms of empiricism, i.e. actual sensible experience, but he goes on to say there is no harm in perceiving moral judgements as derived from experience. If this is taken into account, the word experience includes our intellectual as well as our other psychical activities.\textsuperscript{292}

3.1.3 Philosophical Theological Issues Relating to Revelation

Discussions of late 19th century philosophy tend to note the influence of Hegelian thought on British philosophy, particularly on F. H. Bradley and Bernard Bosanquet (1848-1923).\textsuperscript{293} Rashdall's philosophical position of personal idealism influenced both his theology and his position on revelation. His idealist presuppositions led him to take, as the starting point in philosophy, the human subject not the immanent Spirit or Absolute of the absolute idealists.\textsuperscript{294} Rashdall was a professional philosopher so philosophical issues concerned him and his revelational theology.

Two major schools of thought existed in late-19th century British philosophy, stemming from the philosophy of Georg Wilhelm Hegel: personal idealism and absolute idealism.\textsuperscript{295} Rashdall was a personal idealist.\textsuperscript{296} A split between the two groups came about, concerning questions of whether individual minds could be included in the Divine Mind. Rashdall refuted the absolute idealist view on the grounds of the problem of evil.\textsuperscript{297} For Rashdall, in other words, all knowledge entails revelation.

\textsuperscript{289} Ibid. p. 7.
\textsuperscript{290} Ibid. p. 9.
\textsuperscript{291} McGrath, *Christian Theology*, p. 191.
\textsuperscript{294} Ibid. pp. 43-44.
\textsuperscript{295} Ibid. pp. 22-39.
\textsuperscript{296} Ibid. pp. 43-44.
Rashdall was influenced by Hegel, especially concerning the importance of philosophy for theology. Neither wanted to separate theology from philosophy. Hegel spoke of the relation between religion and philosophy in the following terms:

It is thinking that enjoys the truth and purifies the subjective consciousness. Thus religion and philosophy cohere in one.  

Rashdall would concur, asserting a relation between thought and truth is found in the consciousness. Hegel believed that consciousness holds an immediate knowledge of God and so, for Hegel, revelation is involved with reason because 'reason is the locus of spirit in which God reveals himself to human beings'. For Rashdall, philosophy was not irrelevant to theological questions or concerns. As in other areas of his thought, rigid boundaries did not exist between philosophy and theology. Rashdall also agreed with Kant that reason did not simply draw inferences, but rather apprehended \textit{a priori} truths which proved our knowledge. Rashdall explains further:

Kant's \textit{The Critique of Pure Reason} (1787) demonstrates that in all our knowledge there is an element which is not derived from experience; all knowledge implies "forms of perception and understanding," which are \textit{a priori}, part of the constitution of the mind itself, not supplied to it from without.

Rashdall interprets Kant's critique of reason as justifying his approach to ethical reflection because Kant's epistemology assumes our knowledge is not simply acquired by sense experience alone; it has to be analysed and processed by the Mind of which it is a part, rather than separate from it. This notion leads to a confirmation of the existence of innate principles and moral ideals. Rashdall connects this approach to revelation by saying ethical judgements illuminating the divine character were 'divinely implanted'. But Kant did not believe in revelation in the sense understood by 18th and 19th century theologians. Instead he stressed the notion of the existence of universal truths which could be ascertained by all; 'God has indeed revealed his will through the moral law.' Furthermore, the authenticity of such revelation can be verified by human reason.  

\begin{itemize}
\item[^298] Hegel elaborates, 'it is thinking that enjoys the truth and purifies the subjective consciousness. Thus religion and philosophy co-incide in one.' Peter C Hodgson (ed.), Georg W Hegel, \textit{Lectures on The Philosophy of Religion}. One vol edn. The Lectures of 1827 ( Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 79.
\item[^299] Ibid.
\item[^300] Rashdall, \textit{The Theory of Good and Evil}, vol 1, p. 108.
\item[^301] Rashdall, \textit{Philosophy and Religion}, p. 141.
\item[^303] Despland, \textit{Kant on History and Religion}, p. 222.
\end{itemize}
Rashdall assumed that moral judgements were as much divine revelation as the judgements of natural science, but he also held that the ideals of Christ were crucial in informing ethics and morality. During 1912, whilst discussing issues relating to theodicy, he presented moral ideas as revelations of the Divine.\(^304\) While discussing theodicy, Rashdall conjoins ethics and revelation saying:

We must therefore suppose that the course of the world is directed towards the realisation of a good of which our moral ideal is a revelation-inadequate and imperfect, no doubt, but not essentially misleading.\(^305\)

Rashdall linked ethical theory with revelation. Ethical studies had often stood on their own, with no relation to theology or philosophy.\(^306\) Yet Rashdall viewed a rational theology as being necessarily based on ethics.\(^307\) He assumes that conscience is to be equated with reason.\(^308\) In 1907 Rashdall produced a summary of ethical philosophy, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, in which he expounded his theory that intellectual truths existed outside of experience, and were as objective and axiomatic as mathematical laws.

So Rashdall operated with an ethical theory of idealistic utilitarianism, according to which ethical theory is concerned with conduct, an obligation or duty entailing a categorical imperative. Influential ethical ideals taught by Christianity included the teaching of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of humanity. An essential element of Rashdall’s whole theological project emerged in relation to his ethical outlook. Salvation involved revelation, which was perceived in ethical terms; the absolute, unique ideals of Christ saving humanity.

A turning point in British philosophy took place in 1903 when George Edward Moore (1873-1958) published his influential article *‘Refutation of Idealism’*.\(^309\) From this time onwards, the influence of philosophical idealism began to decline. Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) criticised idealism, including its view that moral judgements were innate and originated in our rational

\(^305\) Rashdall, *Ethics*, p. 86.
\(^306\) Ibid. p. 83.
\(^307\) Ibid. p. 93.
\(^308\) Ibid.
nature. But despite Rashdall's philosophical standpoint being undermined, his fusion of ethical theory, philosophy and theology into a revelational theology still has enduring significance.

3.2 Revelation in relation to Theories of Doctrinal Development

This section examines Rashdall's theory of doctrinal development as it relates to his doctrine of revelation. It aims to show that Rashdall's view of development is essential to his theology of revelation. J. H. Newman's influence is prominent, especially his theory of doctrinal development. His emphasis on the reality and validity of doctrinal development marked him out from other liberal Protestant theologians, particularly from Adolf Harnack. It will be argued Rashdall held a more conservative doctrine of development in contrast to other Anglican modernists, including H. D. A. Major. Rashdall's theory of an ongoing revelation represents a significant part of his theology of revelation.

Rashdall legitimised the role of development in the history of Christian doctrine and, as a historian; he was aware of the reality and importance of historical change in the shaping and moulding of Christian theology and understanding. He envisaged a supreme revelation taking place through the historical Christ. For Rashdall, therefore, there is continuity between the germ of the Christian religion preached by Jesus Christ and which is found in the New Testament, and the later developed teaching of the Christian church. Rashdall compensated for this gap by employing the concept of development; this was essential for Rashdall to explain the full phenomenon of Christianity. The doctrine of development is a crucial component of his revelational theology as this case study will show.

3.2.1 Development of Doctrine

Rashdall perceived doctrines of development gave a historical explanation for changes in doctrine over the centuries. John H. Newman exercised a great influence on both Anglican and Roman Catholic theology; he converted to Catholicism in the 1840's. Newman aimed to explain how and why Christian doctrine had changed over the centuries. His historical precedents were criticised by William Palmer (1803-1885) and James Bowling Mozley. Until the 19th century a doctrine of

---

311 Rashdall, Conscience and Christ, pp. 195-256.
313 Rashdall, Doctrine and Development, pp. x-xi.
314 Ibid. p. viii.
315 Ibid. p. ix.
development was not admitted in Catholic theology. As Rashdall perceived it, a historical sense did not exist. A Catholic doctrine of development was elaborated separately from Newman by Southern German Catholic theologians including Johann Adam Möhler (1796-1838) and Johann Sebastian Drey (1777-1853). For this group, Historical theology took precedence over Systematic and Dogmatic theology.

Owen Chadwick asserts J. H. Newman's theory is dependent on the contention that a definition by the church is equivalent to revelation. So, if revelation ended at the death of the last apostle, Newman's theory is out. J. B. Mozley asserted Newman meant revelation denoted disclosure and criticises Newman's theory of development and his concept of revelation. Mozley further asserted Newman advocated a theory or a hypothesis of development which did not fit in with the facts. W. Palmer criticised Newman's theory of development on the supposition it was based on narrow grounds and not on the received tradition of the church. The doctrine of J. H. Newman's development was too original, both in its general theory and its details.

Frank M. Turner (1944-2010) perceived Newman's theory of development as challenging early Victorian evangelical religion and as such, it was subversive. F.Turner criticised Newman's Essay on the supposition it downplayed the role of providence in history.

Still, Rashdall commented on Newman's Essay noting the growing significance of theories of development throughout the 19th century and explaining:

The idea of development which has so profoundly impressed modern ideas about the Universe in general was not really borrowed by the Philosophers and the Historians from the physiological laboratory. It would be truer, if anything, to say that the Biologists learned it from the students of human life and history.

---

319 Ibid. p. 90.
320 Ibid. p. 226.
322 Ibid. p. 235.
Rashdall continues:

The idea of development, and whatever is true in the idea of a social organism, were better understood by Hegel than by Mr. Herbert Spencer; and it is curious to note that Newman's theological application or misapplication of the idea to theological dogma dates from ten years before the publication of the "Origin of Species". 325

Charles Darwin's (1809-1882) On the Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection was published in 1859. Newman envisaged Christian revelation as a living idea, but the original idea had to be interpreted and reflected on, before it could be turned into propositions. Rashdall perceived doctrines of development gave a historical explanation for changes in doctrine over the centuries.

Newman applied ideas of development to concepts of revelation; Christian revelation was thus an inexhaustible living, concrete idea. 326 Newman's Oxford University Sermons (1843) contained central themes that would be developed in his later works, including his Essay on the Development of Christian doctrine (1845). 327 He had envisaged that Christianity possessed a revealed content, which was supernatural in origin; Newman's doctrine of development is connected with his concept of the idea. 328 For Newman, the appropriation of revelation by the mind of the church involved the following:

Revelation sets before it certain supernatural facts, and actions, and principles; these make a certain impression or image upon it, and this impression spontaneously, or even necessarily, becomes the subject of reflection on the part of the mind itself, which proceeds to investigate it, and and to draw it forth in successive and distinct sentences. 329

Newman applied this model to revelation in 1843. In his view, revelation's original grasp involved the impression of the idea, thereafter explicit reason works on impressions, turning them into propositions. 330 Newman’s model borrows vocabulary from earlier British empiricists, especially from John Locke (1632-1704), who provided the metaphor of a seal 'impressing' a design on wax.

---

325 Ibid.
326 Newman, Oxford University Sermons, p. 216.
328 Ibid. p. 302.
329 Newman, Oxford University Sermons, p. 216.

79
Original impressions are held implicitly by the mind, i.e. by mainly non-propositional, spontaneous interpretation.  

For Newman, theological dogmas are propositions derived from the impression made by revelation. But alongside this stress on reason, Newman has an experiential view of Christ as formed in us, dwelling in the heart, the Holy Spirit making us His temple. Here Newman represents a common tradition present in English thought, along with a particular conception of religious language.

Newman, F. D. Maurice and Henry L. Mansel (1820-1871) formed part of a common philosophical tradition, along with a shared determining influence in Joseph Butler. Newman’s conception of reason was discussed by A. Fairbairn, who traced the origin of Newman’s scepticism of reason to an 18th century English view of reason.

Finally, we note how Aidan Nichols discussed Newman’s Essay on Development (1845), perceiving the encounter between radical exegesis, historiography and traditional orthodoxy as the key ingredients of the crisis of Roman Catholic modernism. Critics of the appropriation of Newman’s doctrine of development include Nicholas Lash, who asserted that Newman did not have a theory of development as was often too readily presupposed by 20th century theology. Development is rather a theory offered to explain the development of doctrine throughout Christian history. It was a theory, a hypothesis, put forward as an alternative to immutability, where doctrine remains unchanged throughout history rather than the perception that church doctrine was a corruption from the New Testament revelation.

Rashdall was influenced in his theory of doctrinal development by Newman. Rashdall perceived doctrines of development gave a historical explanation for changes in doctrine over the centuries. Newman envisaged Christian revelation as a living idea, but the original idea had to be

---


332 Newman, Oxford University Sermons, p. 216.

333 Ibid. p. 32.


336 Nichols, From Newman to Congar, pp. 84-85.


338 Ibid. p. 88.
interpreted and reflected on, to be turned into propositions. Critics of Newman's doctrine of development, including N. Lash, emphasise Newman's idea of doctrinal development is a hypothetical supposition.

3.2.2 Criticisms of Rashdall's Doctrine of Development

Rashdall justified his theory of doctrinal development by his theory of continuing revelation. Anglican modernist theologians in the 20th century including Rashdall, were charged, particularly by Frederick J Foakes-Jackson (1855-1941), of having created a new religion, introducing innovations and ignoring the tradition of the church. K. Clements perceives Foakes-Jackson as charging the modernists as creating new doctrines which were not warranted by the New Testament, ignoring a general view that revelation was closed and fixed, and could not be changed after the death of the last apostle.339

Rashdall perceived the apostolic revelation as final and unsurpassed but, countering critics of his revelational theology, he carefully said that revelation cannot be added to, but it can be continually appropriated, and applied to the changing needs and circumstances of humanity.340 Rashdall stated that the present Christian revelation is imperfect, and needs to be completed and perfected by a continuous revelation of the Spirit. His theory of continuing revelation involved a progression of Christianity, and he appealed to Biblical terminology from St John's Gospel, to justify his assertions.341 Thus Rashdall envisages a process of development, expounded by Christ, and first found in The Fourth Gospel.342

Rashdall although influenced by Newman's essay on development, discussed Tyrrell's concept of revelation. Rashdall found Tyrrell was critical of doctrines of development, distinguishing sharply between revelation and theology. The language of prophecy was translated as theology into the conceptual language of scientific thought.343 This, despite Tyrrell's earlier belief that Newman's doctrine of development occupied a middle ground, or via media, between the extremes of

339 Clements, Lovers of Discord, pp. 93-95.
340 Rashdall's later views on development of doctrine are found in lecture 5 in Rashdall, Conscience and Christ, pp. 195-226.
342 Rashdall, Doctrine and Development, pp. 103-104.
'theological intransigence' and 'scientific absolutism', 'between the Scylla of the old theology and the Charybdis of the new'.

Rashdall notes Tyrrell's later writings exhibit a change in his doctrine of development. Tyrrell perceived theology transformed pure New Testament revelation into revealed theology, an attitude which influenced his doctrine of revelation. For him, the pure revelation found in the New Testament was transmuted into revealed theology. Revelation for Tyrrell subsequently became too intellectualised and the sources of prophetic inspiration sterilised. Tyrrell further explained the faith does not change and the classical time of Christian inspiration ended with the death of the last apostle. Apostolic revelation involved a prophetic vision, not a doctrine, but a 'fact, event, manifestation'.

Finally F. von Hügel, observed Tyrrell, held to an eschatological conception of Christ's teachings, similar to Albert Schweitzer.

In conclusion, Rashdall justified his theory of doctrinal development by his insistence on a continuing revelation by the Holy Spirit. This emphasis countered the charges that modernist theologians were adding new doctrines to Christianity. He discussed Tyrrell's criticisms of doctrinal development; although Tyrrell perceived New Testament apostolic revelation as final, it could not be surpassed.

Rashdall expounded his perception of development in his *Doctrine and Development*. Development is the sign of Christian uniqueness and the deposit of faith is not a set of rigid unchanging formulae; it had within a germ of growth to become more diverse.

Rashdall is against fundamentalist interpretations of Christian doctrine: information concerning Christ's nature is not found in the words of Christ himself; and the church of the 4th Century held insights into Christology not held by the apostles Paul or John.

Therefore, the inspiration of development is not limited to the 1st century or 4th. The Reformation brought back the Christ of history, but the Christ of faith held by Christendom is

---

345 Ibid., p. 212.
346 Ibid. p. 213.
347 Ibid. p. 212.
348 Ibid. p. 324.
changing and varied. An influential text of the later modernist theologians is quoted by Rashdall: 2 Cor. 3.5-6, 'Where the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.'

But the central truth of Christianity consists in the unique revelation of God in Christ, who inaugurated 'a revelation in ethics', and Christ's teachings have an inner organic unity. Rashdall noted that theories of doctrinal development depended on underlying theories of revelation. When theories of development are criticised Rashdall counters:

The defects of the development may be corrected not by going back, but by going on by a new and larger interpretation of the old formula.

Rashdall notes ancient doctrines can be inadequate because they rely on outdated theories of the Universe, but their basic truth remains by a new interpretation which discloses a higher meaning. Rashdall also stated that the present Christian revelation is imperfect, and needs to be completed and perfected by a continuous revelation of the Spirit.

3.2.3 Revelation in the Theology of Continuing Revelation

Anglican modernist views on revelation varied; for instance, H. D. Major envisaged a continuing revelation, which did not end with the New Testament. Rather, Christ's revelation is harmonised with his moral and spiritual ideals, unveiling their implications and applications to our experience. But Major goes further than Rashdall and, anticipating Teilhard de Chardin's (1881-1955) notion of Christ as the Omega point of creation, Major radicalises modernist theologies of revelation by claiming that the real Christ is revealed only in the future and in a more complete way than by the Jesus of history. Major assesses Rashdall's theology of development, noting its emphasis on the Holy Spirit and divine inspiration, which provides the impulse of this religious evolution through its various stages.

Another aspect from which Anglican modernist perceptions of revelation differed from received views on revelation is the view that revelation is a present reality. According to a number of modernist writers, revelation did not stop with the conclusion of the New Testament; it has, in accordance with Christ's promise of the gift of the Spirit, been continuously operating ever since.

351 Rashdall, Doctrine and Development, pp. 92-3.
352 Ibid. p. 110.
353 Ibid. p. ix.
354 Major, English Modernism, p. 120.
355 Ibid.
356 Ibid.
357 Ibid. pp. 120-121.
This view had critics. Gore appealed to Paul’s injunction against preaching a ‘new gospel,’ and Gore’s was an influential view.\(^{358}\)

Many modernists taught that revelation in Christ will always be found to be in harmony with the moral and spiritual ideals taught, unveiling their implications and applications to the world’s expanding experience. For instance, the revelation contained in the Bible is not adequate of itself for this age. As Rashdall pointed out:

> Let us try to take seriously the doctrine that the Holy Spirit is teaching something and something new to the church of our own generation. Hear what the Spirit says unto the Churches.\(^ {359}\)

This notion of revelation therefore involves a process that involves constant renewal and revival, and an active rather than a static ‘deposit’ view of revelation. Rashdall points out that revelation needed to be continually appropriated and applied to the changing needs and circumstances of humanity.\(^ {360}\)

### 3.2.4 Conclusions

To conclude, an idea of doctrinal development is essential to the theological method of Rashdall and this sets him apart from other liberal Protestant theologians, including A. Harnack, a noted ecclesiastical historian. The latter observed patristic Christian theologians were unduly influenced by a Greek philosophical religion which did not express the Gospel adequately. He said of doctrine:

> Dogma in its conception and development is a work of the Greek spirit on the soil of the Gospel.\(^ {361}\)

No legitimate developments of doctrine took place; rather Christian theology had been contaminated by pagan Greek thought. However, for Rashdall, post-apostolic theology was not a Hellenised corruption of the Gospel. He was clearly influenced by Newman’s doctrine of development and appealed to the notion of development in order to explain the complex presence and tenacity of historical Christianity.

Rather than a rupture or a corruption taking place between the New Testament eras and later developments, Rashdall emphasised a basic continuity and harmony. J. H. Newman’s doctrine

---


of development explained the post-apostolic phenomenon of Christianity. Post-apostolic theology was not a corruption of the Gospel.

Finally, Rashdall's theory of development was not exclusively conceptual but allowed for the action of the Holy Spirit in the reception of revelation. Christianity cannot be based on the ipsissima verba of Christ himself which modern criticism makes harder to establish with certainty. There is development at work in the Gospels, even in the Synoptic Gospels. If Christianity had not developed it would have remained, and perished, as a sect within Judaism. Rashdall maintained Christ is the culmination of one development and the beginning of another. By understanding the significance of the church for Christian life, the historic Christ is important but so is the continuing work of the Holy Spirit.

3.3 Christian Revelation and the World Religions

3.3.1 Revelation in Rashdall's Typology of Religions

Questions and problems relating to revelation led to Rashdall's discussion of the relation between Christianity and the world religions, particularly in his lectures published as Conscience and Christ (1916). Here, Christ's mind and character are seen to represent the highest revelation of God and this revelation is part of the world's religious history.362

Rashdall justifies his establishment of the truth of the Christian religion in his Philosophy and Religion (1910), on the grounds that Christianity alone offered an ethical ideal that relates to a universal conscience, thus offering a theism that commended itself to reason.363

The value and veracity of Christianity thus lies in the unique value of Christ and his teachings. Revelation involves an appreciation of the ethical teaching of Christ. But an essential characteristic of Rashdall's outlook and typology of religion involves the notion of a progressive revelation having taken place throughout history, which culminates in Christianity.

Rashdall links revelation with a typology or hierarchy of religions, and employs a pyramid model, made up of so-called 'lower and higher' religions.364 His theory assumed the existence of so-called 'lower religions', examples of which were African tribal religions, while towards the top of the pyramid were the more diverse, complex 'higher religions', including Indian religions, continuing upwards towards Judaism, Islam and, at the apex, Christianity.

Here, unfortunately, Rashdall was influenced by Victorian racial assumptions about the innate superiority of Western European culture, religion and society, when compared to non-European or non-British cultures and religions. Rashdall exhibited a high view of the mission and purpose of Christianity. He said:

To put it at its lowest, Christianity is one of the forces which make for civilisation; and in particular it may be said to be historically one of the most powerful agents for extending the civilisation and culture of a higher civilisation upon a lower plane of civilisation.\(^{365}\)

Rashdall explains a characteristic of the higher religions, for him, is their universal nature. Adherents of a religion belonged to a community, not just a state. The higher religions were distinguished from the lower ones by the fact they are ethical rather than ethnic religions.\(^{366}\) Rashdall conceded that there were degrees of truth present in the historical religions but he tended to perceive earlier forms of religion as basically national religions.\(^{367}\)

Rashdall maintained Christianity is 'the one wholly true religion', because it is 'the most progressive of religions'.\(^{368}\) But Rashdall uses unfortunate language about the so-called 'lower' religions and their followers, particularly 'the rude African heathen'.\(^{369}\) Rashdall espouses a hierarchy of the human race with the 'higher races' being the Western Europeans, the 'lower ones' were the Asian and African races. He talks about the rapid spread of Western science and culture among 'uncivilised peoples'.\(^{370}\) Western civilisation, for Victorians in general, represented the apex and culmination of world history. Rashdall espoused an absolutist outlook in relation to Christianity and the world religions.\(^{371}\)

A key part of Rashdall's revelational theology concerns the place of Jesus Christ in relation to the world religions. This is a question that has generated several schools of debate and several interpretative models, including the following: an exclusivism approach which stresses that no salvation exists outside Christianity; an inclusivism approach, where Christ's salvation extends to individuals who belong to other religions of the world; and finally a pluralist approach in which all


\(^{367}\) Ibid.

\(^{368}\) Rashdall, 'Alternatives to Christianity,' in *Principles and Precepts*, pp. 183-190; p. 185.

\(^{369}\) Ibid. p. 186.

\(^{370}\) Ibid. p. 189.

\(^{371}\) Ibid. p. 183.
the world religions are regarded as valid paths of salvation, where God's grace is operative in them all. 372

Rashdall's approach to the world religions does have an element of an inclusivist approach. This outlook emerges when Rashdall discusses other world religions, particularly Buddhism. Contrary to his hierarchical viewpoint, Rashdall is impressed by Buddhism, this so-called reform movement of Hinduism. To him, it was universalistic, open to all races and nationalities, and abolished caste. Moreover:

It is highly ethical, and its Ethics are of an elevated and exacting order. It rests on a philosophy which is at all events highly metaphysical and highly intellectual. 373

Rashdall, as a university philosopher, would find Buddhism with its intricate metaphysical and ethical theories appealing. He praises Buddhism showing a great sympathy for this world religion saying:

It is not too much to say that here we have the one ancient historical religion of the East that could conceivably be regarded by the civilized European as a possible alternative to Christianity for himself. 374

Given Rashdall's cultural and social context it is a remarkable statement. He praises Buddhist teaching regarding benevolence, humanity and its respect for animals, saying:

The Christian may well see in these teachings an outpouring of the Spirit of God second only to that which he recognizes in the Highest Judaism and the Christianity in which it culminated. 375

But although Rashdall acknowledges the worth in these religions, this position does not alter his belief in the innate superiority of Christianity. He is critical of Buddhist monasticism and its idea of nirvana, which he interprets as a desire to escape reality itself. 376 It is too ascetic and world renouncing. He was, however, open to the thought:

If that is so, it is a possibility that a religious community which did not formally adopt the name of Christian might come to teach the Ethics and the Theism of the Christian Church. 377

---

373 Rashdall, Conscience and Christ, p. 264.
374 Ibid. p. 265.
375 Ibid. pp. 265-266.
376 Ibid. p. 267.
377 Ibid. p. 275.
This outlook, of an anonymous Christianity existing outside the church, predates Rahner's theory of an anonymous Christian. The previous passage could lead to the conclusion that the ideals of Christ existed apart from their setting within Christianity. But Rashdall qualified this by asserting the ideals of Christ had to be embodied in a concrete human person, that of the historical Jesus Christ who, for Rashdall, founded 'the final or absolute Religion, the culminating product of all religious evolution'.^378 Through a process of progressive evolution Christianity embodied the final religion. He concludes:

In the teaching, the mind, the Personality of Christ that the Highest and complete Revelation of God has been made.^379

Karl Rahner proposed people outside the church are 'anonymous Christians', in other words are Christians without an explicit recognition of Christianity. This is due to God's universal will to offer salvation to all humanity, but also due to the mysterious working of his grace. K. Rahner is putting a stress on the priority of grace in God's will.^380

Rashdall's inclusivism, like Rahner's anonymous Christianity, is very dated. Rahner puts forward a perception that it is God's grace which can work outside the boundaries of Christianity to effect salvation, a grace which is outside the empirical church. Gavin D'Costa criticises Rahner's approach, noting in many theologians there is an overlap between the categories of pluralism, exclusivism, and inclusivism.^381 Rashdall overlaps as well and Rahner's stress on the sovereignty of God could be construed as a form of exclusivism, since all grace mediated through the world religions comes ultimately through God. While having some elements of inclusivism, Rashdall promotes exclusivism in his stress of the centrality of the Christian revelation for salvation.

There is more to Rahner's inclusivism approach then a concentration on non-Christians as Christians without knowing it. Although this approach is now dated, surely it is a valid attempt to justify the Christian revelation in the light of a multi-cultural, multi-faith age. Rashdall is critical of the pluralist approach to evaluating the world religions. This approach assumes that all religions are valid in their approach to religion. Basically all religions reflect God, and are effective means of salvation.

^378 Ibid. p. 279.
^380 Rahner, 'Christianity and The Non-Christian Religions,' in Hick J, Christianity and Other Religions, pp. 52-79; p. 78-79..
Rashdall notes:

The best missionaries of the present day fully and gladly recognise that the Spirit of God has spoken to men through many religions beside the Jewish and the Christian.\(^{382}\)

Rashdall recognizes the Spirit of God operates outside the Christian and Judaic revelation. However, he is emphatically not a pluralist as he perceives all religions to have a metaphysic, meaning a general theory relating to the Universe. Furthermore:

> It is as absurd to talk about all religions being equally true as to talk about all philosophies, or all systems of Astronomy, being equally true.\(^{383}\)

By this passage Rashdall does not assert an absolute similarity and identity between the different religions. Instead, Rashdall asserts the religious experience of an adherent of a religion is framed by their theology and theory of the Universe.\(^{384}\)

Rashdall perceives the differences between the so-called ‘higher and lower religions’ exist as the ‘higher religions’ are ‘in the full sense of the term ethical religions’.\(^{385}\) In other words, the practice and conduct of morality determine the religions worth and value. Rashdall asserts the following:

> Unless a religion at least professes to identify the Will of the Supernatural being or beings whom it worships with the morally good, we need not seriously discuss its claims to be considered on ethical grounds an optional alternative to Christianity.\(^{386}\)

Here, Rashdall lays down ultimate criteria to establish the veracity of a religion. It needs to identify morality with the supreme Being or Beings. Its truth rests on its ethical claims rather than relying on ceremony and worship alone, which Rashdall perceives as characteristic of the so-called ‘lower religions’. Christ embodies the complete final revelation of God and revelation is central to legitimate this claim. Rashdall perceives the personality of Christ as the highest revelation of God which validates the absolute claims of Christianity.

By 1918 Rashdall noted the growth of the study of comparative religion, which examined the history, origins and psychology of these religions on a scientific basis. Here, Rashdall admits God works outside Christianity, an argument reminiscent of John Hick’s (1922-2012) later justification for

\(^{382}\) Rashdall, *Conscience and Christ*, p. 255.

\(^{383}\) Ibid. pp. 255-256.

\(^{384}\) Ibid. p. 256.

\(^{385}\) Ibid. p. 257.

\(^{386}\) Rashdall, *Conscience and Christ*, p. 258.
religious pluralism. Although Rashdall concurred with Augustinian views of revelation, he was sharply critical of the attitude of the Augustinian tradition regarding the world religions. Augustine of Hippo taught that salvation was not given outside of Christianity, a view outlined in his *The City of God*. Rashdall further asserts:

> If God is what Christianity alleges Him to be, it would be difficult to believe that he had revealed nothing of His nature and His will except to one small tribe in ancient times and to the believers in a religion which is not now the religion of a fourth of mankind.

Due to demography, Christianity cannot hope to convert all humanity which begs the question of how does salvation apply to non-Christians, and the inclusivism route seemed a consistent one when considering Rashdall’s position.

### 3.3.2 Conclusions

In conclusion, Rashdall’s position is a synthesis of both exclusivism and inclusivism, having elements of both. He holds exclusivism in maintaining the supremacy of the revelation of God made through Christ, and in viewing the capacity of Christianity to absorb outside elements, as the mark of a universal religion. Still, individuals in other religions can be influenced by Jesus Christ but these religions are defective, according to Rashdall, and they stand apart from the communities that transmitted the teachings of Jesus Christ. Rashdall’s position of the innate superiority of Christianity is open to serious criticism as a form of religious and cultural imperialism.

But despite his negative predisposition to certain world religions he allows that the other historical religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam, all contain measures of revelation. Rashdall also held a positive view of the pre-Christian and pagan religions: for him, ancient Greek philosophy taught theistic doctrines anticipating the teachings of Jesus Christ. Christianity transformed the esoteric teachings of the Greek philosophers into a religion for the masses, and showed a progressive development from earlier stages. Rashdall compared Christian ethics to other religious systems; truths were revealed through other religions, but this did not change the priority he accorded to the revelation of truth through Christ.

---

391 Ibid. p. 255.
392 Ibid. p. 253.
393 Ibid. p. 284.
Discussions of revelation in Christianity inevitably led to consideration of relations between Christianity and its parent religion, Judaism. Influenced by the *Lux Mundi* essays, and using an evolutionary model of development, Rashdall perceived the history of the religion of Israel as illustrating a process of progression from a religion towards a higher form of religion. Rashdall’s ‘scientific’ view of the origin and progression of religions was thus harmonised with the notion that religions exhibit a progressive divine revelation. But he put forward a problematically supersessional model of Christianity’s relationship with Judaism, in which Judaism was simply transcended and completed by Christianity, and this outlook was criticised by the Jewish scholar Claude Montefiore.

The Old Testament represented a record of the religious history of the Jewish people and, for Rashdall, revelation is found in its religious and ethical ideas. The composition of the books found in the Old Testament was more gradual and complicated than had once been thought, and by Rashdall’s day it was widely acknowledged that many biblical books are compilations drawn from earlier works with different editors. Rashdall claimed that the strength of the Old Testament’s inspiration was to be measured by the divine truth it contained. The Old Testament books were thus seen as a record of a revelation, rather than as revelation itself.

Rashdall’s correspondence with Montefiore is significant. He relied on the scholarship of the liberal Jewish scholar Montefiore to establish the originality of the teaching of Jesus in relation to the ethics of Judaism, especially in his work on the synoptic Gospels. Montefiore undertook to study the New Testament from the perspectives of the Talmud and Mishnah, and noted how the ideals of Jesus were similar to the demands of the prophets for justice, and love towards neighbour and God. As a result of this cooperation, Rashdall was prepared to modify his position significantly, and held that Judaism was not abolished or perfected by Christianity, but has offered its own distinctive witness throughout history.

---

Rashdall was prepared to accept that Jesus was a Jewish prophet, pointing out:

It is because the teaching of the Jewish prophet of two thousand years ago still appeals to us as the highest religious teaching which we know, that we regard it as a unique, and in a sense final, revelation of God, and Christ himself as the unique revealer.\textsuperscript{398}

Still, Montefiore agreed with Rashdall that Jesus Christ broke down barriers of law and nationality, and thus started a movement which led to the translation of Judaism into the Gentile world.\textsuperscript{399} Teachings found in the New Testament, particularly in the Gospels, supplement and take forward basic Old Testament teachings. These teachings include the Old Testament demand for a righteous nation, along with the New Testament's emphasis on the individual soul.\textsuperscript{400} Montefiore perceived Jesus as continuing in the prophetic traditions of Amos (835-765BC), Isaiah (8thC BC), Jeremiah (7thC BC) and Ezekiel (early 6thC BC); the teaching of Jesus represented a revival of prophetic Judaism.\textsuperscript{401}

Rashdall promoted historical-critical study of the New Testament. Questions of faith and doubt could be overcome, he believed, by an ongoing perspective of revelation and a liberal conception of biblical inspiration. For Rashdall, the science of geology did not disprove the Book of Genesis; and conceptions of evolution, progress and gradual development could be applied to the history of revelation in a way similar to secular history.

Additionally, Montefiore confirmed Rashdall's emphasis on the importance of Jesus Christ as a teacher. Rashdall became more aware of the Jewishness of Jesus, a theme taken up by 21st century theologians, including Geza Vermes and Edward P. Sanders.

But criticisms come to the forefront regarding inevitable progress in history, especially in the second decade of the 20th century. Rashdall wrote an article extolling the reality of progress against the strictures of William Inge. Rashdall envisaged a theory of history involving the advance from a lower stage of evolution to a higher stage.\textsuperscript{402} He held an evolutionary model of history, envisaging it as progressive, similar to his outlook on revelation. He did not perceive development is not always progressive and a downside exists.

\textsuperscript{399} Montefiore, 'The Significance of Jesus for His Own Age,' in \textit{Hibbert Journal}, X (1911-12), pp. 776-779; p. 776.
\textsuperscript{400} Montefiore, \textit{The Synoptic Gospels}, p. cii.
\textsuperscript{401} Ibid. p.c.
\textsuperscript{402} Rashdall, 'The Idea of Progress,' in \textit{Ideas and Ideals}, pp. 78-93; p. 93.

92
3.5 Conclusions

While investigating the revelatory theology of Rashdall, three areas of concern became apparent: ethics, development of doctrine and the relation of revelation to the world religions.

A characteristic of Rashdall's theology of revelation concerned a connection between theology and ethics, and this is discussed in the first case study. His theology of revelation relates to his overall theological project by an emphasis on ethics. Rashdall gave an explanation of ethical progressive religion in his *Doctrine and Development*. He perceived revelation as rooted in the work of Christ which is ethical. Revelation takes place through character. He explains Christ reveals to us the moral ideal disclosed through a human character.\(^{403}\)

Revelation for Rashdall entails 'a progressive revelation of ethics'. The divine wisdom of God has become incarnate in one historical personality. This personal view of the nature of God makes way for the idea of personal revelation. His theory of idealistic utilitarianism was outlined in his *The Theory of Good and Evil*. Rashdall related Christian ethics to revelation in his *Conscience and Christ*; ethics were placed in relation to soteriology and the ethical ideals of Christ were emphasised.

The role of conscience is essential to Rashdall's revelational theology. Following Joseph Butler, Rashdall envisaged conscience as the expression of God's will. For Rashdall, Christ reveals God, which is verified by the moral consciousness. Rashdall envisaged revelation as being confirmed by reason, but held that reason on its own cannot attain the truths of revelation. The revelation of God in Christ was made manifest through Christ's message and life.

Rashdall departed from other Anglican modernists and the trend in late 19th century theology by downplaying the role of religious experience in revelation. He criticised William James' perception of religious experience as involving elitist exceptional experiences. Following Kant, Rashdall insisted revelation entailed the recovery of truths accessible to human reason. But Rashdall can be criticised as ignoring the tradition of Christian mysticism and the theology of K. Rahner, who held there was a prominent place for mystical experience in the Christian life.

While discussing the validity of religious experience, Rashdall stressed the primacy of conscience. But his views could be criticized for ignoring the importance of psychology, and for failing to take into account the growing influence of Freudianism; also, his philosophical idealism was becoming outdated. Yet his ethical and theological position has remained a respectable and viable option.

\(^{403}\) Rashdall, *Doctrine and Development*, pp. 119-120.
The second case study concerned a distinctive feature of Rashdall's revelational theology, his emphasis on doctrinal development. Rashdall, influenced by Newman, legitimised the role of doctrinal development in the history of Christian doctrine and revelation. Critics of doctrinal development, including N. Lash, envisaged the theory of doctrinal development as a theory. Rashdall justified his theory of development by an emphasis on continuing revelation.

Rashdall's conception of doctrinal development was conservative in relation to other Anglican modernists, including Major, who envisaged the real Christ was to be revealed in the future. However, all agreed revelation did not end with the New Testament; it was active and progressive, and not static or a deposit. This perception of revelation has a continuing relevance for today. The doctrine of doctrinal development is essential to the theological method of Rashdall.

When investigating Rashdall's revelational theology the importance of the relation between revelation and the world religions emerged, particularly the relation between Christianity and Judaism; the correspondence between Rashdall and the Jewish scholar Claude Montefiore shed light on this issue.

This third case study found discussions of revelation led Rashdall on to investigate the relationship between Christianity and the world religions. He envisaged Christianity as a product of a continuous, progressive revelation. He held to a pyramid theory of religions with so-called 'lower' religions at the base, and with Christianity at the apex. The 'higher' religions were distinguished from the 'lower' ones by their ethical character. Theologians, when considering the relation between Christianity and the world religions, use three main interpretive models, namely exclusivist, inclusivist and pluralist. Rashdall exhibits a mixture of approaches: he is exclusivist though allows for limited inclusivism; he is not a pluralist but reacted sharply against the traditionally Augustinian negative perceptions of world religions.

A revelation of ethics has occurred, first given to the so-called 'lower' religions, for example African tribal religions, then on towards the so-called 'higher' religions, for example Hinduism and Buddhism. The pagan higher ethics of Aristotle and Plato (429-347BC) pre-date the Old Testament, but the culmination of ethical progressive religion took place in the New Testament with the teaching and life of Christ. The ethical teaching of Christ justified the claim of Christianity to be the one, true, absolute, final religion. Rashdall held a fulfilment model of Christianity where God reveals himself to all humanity but maintains a supreme unique revelation of himself in Jesus of

---

Nazareth. The central truth of Christianity concerns the revelation of God in Christ. This led on to considerations of the relation between Christianity and Judaism. The primary focus of Christianity for Rashdall lay in the appeal the teaching of Christ makes to the conscience of humanity.

Rashdall applied evolutionary concepts to the development of religions. He envisaged the Old Testament as a record of the religious development of the Jewish people. Initially, he held that Judaism culminated in Christianity, i.e. a supersessional, fulfilment model, in which Christianity completed and transformed Judaism. Here, Rashdall engaged with the scholarship of the liberal Jewish scholar Claude Montefiore to stress the Jewish background of the New Testament. 20th century scholarship has challenged a range of assumptions behind the claim that Christianity completed and transformed Judaism. There are resonances in the questions that emerged in late-20th century New Testament studies, for example in the works of Edward P. Sanders and Geza Vermes, of the issues raised by the dialogue between Rashdall and Montefiore.

---

405 Ibid. p. 181.
Chapter Four: Applications of Rashdall's Revelational Theology

4.1 Introduction

Chapter Four will apply Rashdall's theology of revelation in relation to specific theological issues, including atonement, Christology and Trinity. It will be shown how Rashdall’s revelational theology plays a determining role in both their form and content. The next section shows how medieval theologies of the atonement influenced Rashdall. In particular, Rashdall recovered a medieval view of the atonement associated with the scholastic theologian Abelard, which contrasts with that of Anselm.\textsuperscript{408} Rashdall made this theory widely known through his 1915 Bampton lectures, published as \textit{The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology} (1919), in which he related revelation to doctrines of atonement.

4.2.1 Rashdall's Early Doctrine of Atonement: Anselm and Abelard

First of all, we examine the background to Rashdall's theology of the atonement, especially his earliest exposition of a theology of atonement which is found in his 1898 \textit{Doctrine and Development}; an important collection of sermons that outlines his theology in several areas between 1892-98.\textsuperscript{409}

Rashdall's studies in medieval history led him to the writings of the influential medieval theologian Abelard, and particularly to his doctrine of atonement. Rashdall discovered Abelard's theology of the atonement in a translation of his \textit{Opera} by Cousin (1859). Abelard had related atonement to revelation and, citing Abelard, Rashdall envisages redemption being accomplished by God's love working through the passion of Christ.\textsuperscript{410}

In essence, for Rashdall, Abelard's doctrine of atonement is one in which the death of Christ reveals the love of God.\textsuperscript{411} This theory is exemplarist, for as Rashdall explains,

> the character of God revealed in Christ that he speaks, of the love of Christ for humanity in life and in death, of the demand which that revelation makes for answering love of the example of Christ.\textsuperscript{412}

This theory essentially emphasises the atonement of Christ as involving and being effected by a voluntary self-sacrifice done out of love for humanity. The death of Christ is an example.

\textsuperscript{408} For a recent biography of Abelard consult M.T Clanchy, \textit{Abelard: A Medieval life} (Cambridge MA: Blackwell, 1999)
\textsuperscript{410} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{411} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{412} Ibid. p. 142.
Atonement is not just an objective event, Christ's death reveals the love of the Father; the atonement is a revelation of the love of God. Rashdall outlines three main features of Abelard's doctrine: salvation is not achieved by suffering or sacrifice, there is no idea present of vicarious punishment; Christ's redeeming work is not limited to his crucifixion, his whole life is involved, which is also God's revelation; and finally, concerning justification, Christ's work produces a real effect, not just a 'legal fiction'.

By justification, or where humanity is made righteous by God, Rashdall means the moral influence exercised on the believer which takes place when the self-sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross is contemplated. Rashdall explains justification in the following terms:

Let us then try to emphasise the fact that the essence of the Pauline doctrine of Justification lies in its assertion of the supreme moral influence of the self-sacrificing life and death of Jesus Christ, and of that knowledge of the Father to which His recorded acts and words bear witness.

Justification involves a re-interpretation of the Pauline doctrine to assert its essence and real meaning. It is conceived as a moral influence inspired by the self-sacrifice, life and death of Jesus Christ. The death of Jesus Christ on the cross is an example of self-sacrificing love towards humanity, which people recognise as a moral good and inspires them to do good. The influence is spiritual. Abelard's stress on the love of God is congenial to Rashdall; atonement thus becomes 'a real instrument of moral improvement.' Characteristically, Rashdall emphasises its ethical significance.

4.2.2 The Ransom Theory of Atonement

Rashdall explains Abelard had contributed to theologies of the atonement in the Middle Ages by rejecting the then current 'Ransom' theory of the atonement. This theory essentially emphasises the atonement of Christ as involving and being effected by a voluntary self-sacrifice done out of love for humanity. The death of Christ is an example.

Rashdall clarifies discussions of the atonement found in the early medieval period pointing out that many later theologies of the atonement were indebted to them. Rashdall states that no
single authoritative doctrine of the atonement exists; no one single interpretation of the atonement is present which is valid for all time. Rashdall informs us:

A due appreciation of the historical origin and subsequent variations of the doctrine is the essential pre-requisite of any attempt to interpret or re-interpret it in terms of modern thought.

Theological theories of the atonement therefore must take into account the historical doctrinal evolution and variations of the theology of the atonement. Rashdall notes persuasively that often more contemporary theories of the atonement are simply reproductions of earlier theories of the atonement.

Rashdall studies the advent of fundamental changes to the Western Christian doctrine of atonement which took place during the early medieval era. These changes were exemplified by the two theologians Abelard and Anselm. Rashdall noted at the time of the early medieval scholastic Abelard a seismic shift took place in theologies of atonement, when the older theory of the atonement, the so-called Ransom theory, was replaced. Newer theories of atonement totally superseded the earlier one.

The Ransom theory was characteristic of Latin and Patristic theories of the atonement and was rejected for various reasons by both Abelard, and also by an alternative theory of the atonement outlined by Anselm. Rashdall clarifies the issues and points out why the older Ransom theory of the atonement then favoured by Bernard of Clairvaux was superseded by both Abelard and Anselm's theories. Pope Gregory the Great (c540-604) is cited by Rashdall as a representative of the older Ransom theory of the atonement. The theory proposed by Gregory was based on a theological anthropology which held humanity was guilty of sinning against God and this guilt was inherited so deserved condemnation. Because of humanity's acquired guilt by sinning against God, Gregory the Great argued the Devil had acquired legitimate rights over humanity. Furthermore, humanity could only be released from bondage to the Devil by the paying of a ransom.

Gregory the Great elaborated this theory further. For Gregory, Jesus Christ redeemed the ransom by his sacrifice on the cross. But this sacrifice involved a drama; the Devil believed by causing Christ's death his sovereignty over humanity would be complete. So Jesus Christ actually

418 Ibid.
419 Ibid. p. 17.
deceived the Devil but Gregory envisaged Christ tricked the Devil, as Christ was sinless and innocent. Gregory explained:

The humanity of Christ was the bait which the Devil, like a greedy fish, eagerly swallowed and so became impaled upon the hook of His Divinity.\(^\text{421}\)

Here the sacrifice of Christ involved the deception of the Devil and was affected in terms of a metaphor of Christ who offered himself as bait for the Devil; Gregory used imagery of Christ being a hook to bait the Devil.\(^\text{422}\)

The earlier patristic theologian Irenaeus (c130-c200) had elaborated a theory of the atonement which envisaged that because of the sins of humanity, both innate and inherited from the fall of humanity, the human race offended God and as a result was enslaved to the Devil. Humanity could only be saved from condemnation, and remit its debt and bondage to Satan, by the payment of a ransom to the Devil. But this ransom could only be repaid by the death of an innocent person as a sacrifice. This person could only be the Son of God Jesus Christ.

Rashdall noted how influential the Ransom theory had been in the early medieval West, but pointed out how this popular and significant theory was subsequently abandoned due to the influence of the medieval scholastics Anselm and Abelard. This constituted, for Rashdall, a revolution in Christian theologies of the atonement.\(^\text{423}\) Rashdall's *Doctrine and Development* also evaluated alternative medieval theologies of atonement, particularly Anselm's more influential theory, which was contrasted with that of Abelard.\(^\text{424}\)

Anselm subsequently replaced the notion of humanity owing a debt to the Devil, to the repayment of a debt to the impersonal Justice of God. But Rashdall is severely critical of Anselm in relation to his theology of atonement, preferring Abelard. Abelard's theory is confirmed: Christ's death involves loving sacrifice because 'no theory of substitution can be supported from the metaphor of the text'.\(^\text{425}\)

Following Harnack, Rashdall elaborated the historical development of the Ransom theory of atonement.\(^\text{426}\) He explains Irenaeus, a patristic theologian, had advocated a theology of salvation

\(^{421}\) Ibid.
\(^{422}\) Ibid.
\(^{423}\) Ibid. p. 158.
\(^{425}\) Ibid., *Doctrine and Development*, pp. 128-129.
\(^{426}\) Ibid. p. 131.
which presupposed that humanity was enslaved to Satan, and therefore ransom had to be paid. Christ's death on the cross paid the ransom and released humanity.

But in Rashdall's words, it was not just against 'the revolting idea of an angry and revengeful Father propitiated by a loving and merciful Son' that he reacted. When stated positively, Rashdall presupposed that the inner meaning of the doctrine is soteriological; Christ's death produces a new spiritual birth for humanity. Rashdall examined the Biblical text to which Ransom theories appealed, pointing out that there is no mention of a ransom paid to Satan in Matthew 20.28. He comments:

The history of the interpretation of this text is indeed a melancholy example of the theological tendency to make systems out of metaphors.

Anselm modified the ransom theory: a debt had to be paid, not to Satan, but to God's justice. Only by the incarnation of a 'God-man' could recompense be made. Rashdall refers to Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo* and explains Anselm's assertion that both atonement and incarnation had to take place, so that the Son took the place of lost humanity. Only a 'God-Man' could atone for human sin. Furthermore, 'It would not be seem the honour or the justice of God that he should forgive man's sin without demanding this satisfaction.'

Rashdall notes Anselm did grant that Christ gave his life as an example. But Rashdall is severely critical of Anselm since Anselm's outlook implied problematical concepts of original sin, and a no less problematical transaction between God and humanity by stressing an objective, substitutionary atonement. Despite Rashdall's criticisms, Anselm's theology has been immensely influential in Christian theology in general, as well as exercising an abiding aesthetic value. Anselm's theological method remains influential, particularly his stress on the importance of participation in faith for a more accurately informed understanding.


---

427 Ibid.
428 Ibid. p. 130.
429 Ibid.
430 Ibid. p. 135.
431 Rashdall notes Anselm's theory influenced both Wycliffe and the Reformers. Ibid.
Justification and Reconciliation (1872), in which Christ's death is a demonstration of the love of God.\textsuperscript{434} Ritschl notes Abelard's importance for Protestant theology, remarking on how Friedrich Schleiermacher's doctrine of redemption followed Abelard.\textsuperscript{435} Rashdall, by reviving the Abelardian doctrine of the atonement, represented a European Protestant tradition associated with Schleiermacher.\textsuperscript{436}

4.2.3 The Importance of Sacrifice and the Influence of F. D. Maurice and B. F. Westcott

A distinguishing feature of Rashdall's 	extit{Doctrine and Development} established a relation between sacrifice and atonement, having examined Maurice's and Westcott's contributions to doctrines of atonement. Rashdall highlighted a theology of atonement found in the New Testament 	extit{Epistle to the Hebrews}, particularly in its language concerning the sacrificial nature of the death of Christ.\textsuperscript{437}

Rashdall re-interprets the sacrifice of Christ emphasizing its revelation of love and communion. The significance of 	extit{The Epistle to the Hebrews} lies in promoting Christ's atonement in terms of obedience to the will of God.\textsuperscript{438} For Rashdall, 	extit{The Epistle to The Hebrews} illuminates the core belief that 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.'\textsuperscript{439} The crux of the message concerns the establishment of a New Covenant, no longer based on a ritual oblation for Christ. For him it was not the physical death, but the perfect obedience of Christ which gave that sacrifice its atoning value.\textsuperscript{440}

This contrasts sharply with the perspective offered by the post-Anselmian orthodoxy in both Protestant and Catholic theology, in which an innocent Jesus Christ is punished as a substitute for, or a representative of, guilty humanity.\textsuperscript{441} For Rashdall, the author of 	extit{The Epistle to The Hebrews} spiritualised cruder versions of sacrifice.\textsuperscript{442} Influenced by F. D. Maurice's treatment of atonement, Rashdall affirmed the stress on the centrality of love as the basis of atonement, meaning that:

The endurance of that wrath or punishment by Christ came from His acknowledging that it proceeded from love.\textsuperscript{443}

\textsuperscript{434} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{435} Ibid. p. 451-3.
\textsuperscript{437} Rashdall, 'The Idea of Sacrifice,' Lecture X (1898) in 	extit{Doctrine and Development}, pp. 164-176; p. 165.
\textsuperscript{438} Ibid. pp. 166-7.
\textsuperscript{439} Ibid. p. 169.
\textsuperscript{440} Ibid. p. 167.
\textsuperscript{441} Ibid. pp. 134-135.
\textsuperscript{442} Ibid. pp. 165-166.
\textsuperscript{443} Ibid.
So, the primary motive in effecting the atonement comes from love and not from the endurance of punishment. Maurice had earlier perceived that the idea of propitiation or sacrifice of the Son for sin, created the following consequences:

It brings divine love and human suffering into direct and actual union.\(^{444}\)

Rashdall noted that contemporary theologies of substitution were giving way to representations of atonement as embodying the revelation of God and divine love.\(^{445}\) In conclusion, following Westcott, Rashdall accepts that the sacrifice of Christ established a new communication between God and humankind.\(^{446}\) Christ's life is 'the supreme self-revelation of God to man.'\(^{447}\) Sacrifice is now seen as communion or expiation.\(^{448}\) Rashdall discussed the importance of Christ's crucifixion in terms of sacrifice. The concept of sacrifice has been transformed. Rashdall declared,

The spiritual sacrifice of the heart and will is what the new covenant requires in the place of ritual oblation.\(^{449}\)

Both Maurice and Westcott influenced later 19th century theologies of atonement; both saw that the atonement represented reconciliation, an at-one-ment. Especially for Maurice, the atonement represented a 'revelation of the love of God'.\(^{450}\)

Later 20th century expositions of atonement, particularly \textit{Sacrifice and Redemption: Durham Essays in Theology} (1991) are concerned with issues raised by Rashdall, including the importance of sacrifice and the contribution of the \textit{Epistle To The Hebrews} to the doctrine of the atonement.\(^{451}\) It will now be argued that Rashdall made a landmark contribution to 20th century theologies of atonement by the relation of atonement to revelation in his 1915 Bampton lectures, \textit{The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology}, published in 1919.

\(^{444}\) Ibid. p. 109.
\(^{445}\) Rashdall, \textit{Doctrine and Development}, p. 140.
\(^{446}\) Ibid. p. 168.
\(^{447}\) Ibid.
\(^{448}\) Ibid.
\(^{449}\) Ibid. p. 169.
\(^{450}\) Ibid. p. 171.
4.2.4 Revelational Theology of Atonement in The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology

Rashdall’s prestigious Bampton lectures expanded his doctrine of atonement and discussed the doctrine in terms of its history and development. Essentially, the lectures expanded his earlier treatment of atonement expounded in his *Doctrine and Development*. Aspects of his doctrine of the atonement remain unchanged, and his analysis examines the viewpoints of a number of representative writers; significantly, the survey ends with Martin Luther and John Calvin (1509-1564), and not with the modern era. \(^4\) Rashdall aimed to discover the origins of doctrines of atonement.

Rashdall expounded the full significance of atonement, relating this doctrine to the unique incarnation of the Logos in Jesus Christ. Tied to atonement doctrines is Rashdall’s perception that the revelation of God in Christ is to be understood as an analogy of a gradual revelation of God. God is revealed in all human beings, but has made a supreme, unique self revelation in one person, Jesus of Nazareth.

The real meaning of the doctrine of the atonement is related by Rashdall to questions of salvation.\(^1\) Rashdall outlines the work of Christ in terms of a revelation of love, with the work of Christ now seen primarily in terms of revelation, rather than as a retroactive atonement. God’s love towards humanity entails sorrow at human suffering and pain.\(^2\) God suffers with humanity; the sufferings of Christ represent sympathy with the sufferings of humanity.

Rashdall examines Abelard’s doctrine of atonement, interpreting it as a turning away from substitutionary or expiatory explanations of atonement.\(^3\) He quotes approvingly from Abelard concerning the death of Christ, noting that for Abelard, 'it was a revelation of the love of God, intending to call forth answering love in man'.\(^4\)

The efficacy of the death of Christ is explained by the subjective influence it exercises on the mind of the person. Rashdall finds this basic idea in the writings of Paul and in the Johannine writings. Here, Christ’s death involves a revelation of the love of God and entails the interpretation that the ‘self-revelation of God in Christ is due to God’s loving purpose to redeem mankind’.\(^5\) Furthermore, ‘Human love and self-sacrifice represent a revelation of God’.\(^6\)

---


\(^2\) Ibid. p. xii.

\(^3\) Ibid. p. 453.

\(^4\) Ibid. p. 358.

\(^5\) Ibid. p. 360.

\(^6\) Ibid. p. 446.

\(^7\) Ibid. p. 453.
For Rashdall, Abelard's theory has a contemporary relevance: 'the death of Christ on the Cross was an essential part of the Incarnation'.\footnote{Ibid. p. 362.} The essence of Rashdall's position on atonement is set forth in the following terms:

The only atoning influence that can be recognised in the death of Christ is one which operates by actually helping to produce that repentance and moral regeneration upon which alone according to the Master's express teaching forgiveness depends.\footnote{Ibid. p. 48.}

So far, atonement has been presented in terms of its exemplary nature, with its significance lying in effecting a moral regeneration amongst believers.

A subsequent lecture by Rashdall, given in 1917, provides a short, succinct summary of his atonement theology, in which he clarifies a number of major issues. Differences exist between the fact of atonement and its interpretation.\footnote{Ibid. p. 142.} Rashdall conceives the classical expression of expiatory suffering to be found in the Old Testament, in The Second Isaiah's prophecies concerning a suffering servant. Here, Christ's death is not perceived in terms of a punishment, sacrifice or expiation for sin.\footnote{Ibid. p. 145.}

Rashdall appeals once again to the writings of Abelard, to emphasize how the Incarnation allows God to illuminate the world by his wisdom. The passion of Christ thus illustrates our redemption by the love of God.\footnote{Ibid. p. 145.} Rashdall reached several conclusions regarding the doctrine of atonement: Christ did not teach that his anticipated death was an atonement for sin, rather God forgave sins on the condition of true repentance; moreover, traditional language relating to the saving effects of the death of Christ are based on Old Testament prophecy.\footnote{Ibid. p. 147.}

Even so, the significance of the atonement lies in its ethical dimension, and questions of atonement lead on to theodicy, and the problem of evil. Abelard and his followers had, for Rashdall, returned to the more primitive and ethical teachings of the earlier Fathers and had thereby offered a view fully compatible with 'reason and conscience.'\footnote{Ibid. p. 147.} The reality of atonement lies in the spiritual influence of Christ on the believer. Rashdall's great achievement in his theology of the atonement is the integration of atonement, redemption and revelation in one synthesis. Finally, it will be argued in the next section that Rashdall's theology of the atonement offers relevance for today.
4.2.5 Rashdall and J. Moltmann on The Suffering God: Comparisons and Contrasts

Western theological thought was greatly affected by the First World War and the suffering which stemmed from the conflict, and related it to theodicy. During the First World War, Rashdall spoke of a God who suffered through humanity because of the Incarnation. Rashdall discussed the impact of the First World War in terms of explaining the problem of evil. Contemporary political events, especially the First World War, influenced Rashdall's revelatory theology. The Christian conception of God is of a mysterious creative and redeeming love, moved by the sufferings of creation; this leads to questions of theodicy and, for Rashdall, the basis of theodicy entails that, in some way, evil is acknowledged as potentially a means to bring about good.

Rashdall was innovative in exploring the theme of a suffering God which challenged the widespread perception of a God who is indifferent to the pain and suffering of humanity. Rashdall's theology of a suffering God has relevance for today, particularly because his thought has themes which later emerged in the theology of the German theologian Jürgen Moltmann. In The Idea of Atonement, Rashdall stated the following:

You cannot logically regard the atonement as a revelation of the love of God unless you are prepared to say that He who hung upon the Cross was really a suffering God.

Rashdall discusses further questions concerning the suffering of God and sums up his doctrine of the atonement in the following fashion:

The love which Christ showed by dying reveals the love of God because the whole Self-revelation of God in Christ is due to God's loving purpose to redeem Mankind, and because the love shown in the human life and character of Christ is the highest revelation of the divine character.

All the themes of Rashdall's theology of the atonement in relation to revelation are present here. The atonement was effected by the love of God through Christ, as part of God's redemptive

---

466 McGrath, Christian Theology, p. 276.
467 Rashdall expands this concept of a suffering God further into a theodicy of estrangement, reconciliation and redemption. Rashdall, The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology, pp. 450-453.
470 Ibid.
scheme for humanity. Rashdall advances the idea of a God who is both involved with creation and recognises the suffering of humanity.\(^{471}\) The eternal God cannot die on the cross, but for Rashdall:

A God who could contemplate such a world as ours without suffering would not be a loving God, nor would He be in the least like Christ.\(^{472}\)

Rashdall further discusses the implications for Christian theology of the assertion that in the person of Christ, God actually suffered on the cross. Rashdall does not assert the Trinity or God the Father suffered on the cross, this would be patripassianism, rather for Rashdall, the divine nature in Christ suffered with the human.\(^{473}\) Rashdall maintains that the view of God as an 'unmoved mover', who was unchangeable and uninvolved with the world was actually a product of Greek philosophy, particularly influenced by Aristotle rather than Christ or St Paul.\(^{474}\) Rashdall rejects this position in terms similar to Moltmann, as we shall see below.

Here, the existence of suffering and a loving God points to God's involvement in creation. Rashdall's Christology confirms this position, because Christ was 'a supreme manifestation of God in one human being'.\(^{475}\) Rashdall continues:

We may certainly say that the sufferings which love imposed upon Christ represent in a supreme or unique way that sympathy or suffering with humanity which must needs be felt by a God of love.\(^{476}\)

The atonement reveals God's love and points to a suffering God which is linked to issues associated with divine possibility later raised by 20th and 21st century theologians. Due to God's love for Christ and humanity, the deity suffers with humanity. Rashdall attributes a revelatory function to the notion of a suffering God.\(^{477}\) The atonement, for Rashdall, represents the central doctrine of Christianity because:

No kind of death could have revealed the sympathy of God as impressively as a death of suffering, voluntarily submitted to from love of the brethren.\(^{478}\)

The atonement reveals God's sympathy with humankind, a sacrificing love.\(^{479}\)

\(^{471}\) Ibid. p. 452.
\(^{472}\) Ibid. p. 450.
\(^{473}\) Ibid. p. 451.
\(^{474}\) Ibid. p. 452.
\(^{475}\) Ibid. p. 453.
\(^{476}\) Ibid.
\(^{477}\) Ibid. p. 454.
\(^{478}\) Ibid.
Rashdall further outlines his position as follows:

Truth and meaning may be found in the doctrine of an atonement or redemption of the world through Christ, and in a special manner even through his death, even when we have in the fullest and frankest manner given up all expiatory, transactional, or objective theories of redemption.  

Rashdall agrees with patristic Greek theology and with Dr Illingworth of the Lux Mundi school, that 'the Incarnation is the atonement'. The two complement each other. Finally, Rashdall places the significance of the atonement of Christ not in isolation from, but in connection with, Christ's life, teachings and character.

4.2.6 Moltmann and The Suffering God

Jürgen Moltmann is an influential German theologian born in 1926 whose theology was affected by changing European society. His lifetime has witnessed many changes, from the upheavals of the Second World War to the unification of Germany. Moltmann's theology is influenced by many sources including Biblical theology, liberation theology and the engagement with contemporary thought. He is famous for two books, The Crucified God and Theology of Hope.

Jürgen Moltmann's outlook on a suffering God is found in his The Crucified God, as is his Trinitarian theology of the cross. Moltmann also offered a theology of hope in which he challenged perceptions of the impassibility of God. Moltmann explains:

a God who cannot suffer is poorer than any man. For a God who is incapable of suffering is a being who cannot be involved. He is so completely insensitive he cannot be affected or shaken by anything. He cannot weep, for he has no tears. But the one who cannot suffer cannot love either. So he is a loveless being. Aristotle's God cannot love.

Moltmann elaborates further that 'God does not suffer, like his creatures, because his being is incomplete. He loves from the fullness of his being and suffers because of his full and free love.'

---

479 Ibid. p. 454.
480 Ibid. p. 454.
481 Ibid. p. 445.
484 Moltmann, The Crucified God, p. 222.
485 McGrath, Christian Theology, p. 277.
By this statement, Moltmann means that the suffering of God is undertaken out of love. Moltmann perceives that Jesus was abandoned by God on the cross.\footnote{Moltmann, \textit{The Crucified God}, p. 205.}

Moreover, Moltmann’s theology of the cross is trinitarian. The event of the cross can only be explained in terms of the Trinity by Christian theologians.\footnote{Ibid. p. 241.} It is the testimony of the cross which forms the basis of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.\footnote{Ibid. p. 244.} The event of the cross occurs between ‘the Father who abandons’, and ‘the Son who is abandoned’.\footnote{Ibid. p. 246.} For Moltmann, the Spirit proceeds from the interaction of the Father and the Son on the cross.

Furthermore, for Moltmann, ‘God’s being is historical’, and exists in history. The being of God is part of the historical process. The history of the world involves the history of God, although not the God of the Deists who was absent and uninvolved with the world.\footnote{Moltmann explains, ‘The history of God is then to be thought of as the horizon of the world.’ Ibid. p. 219.} God is part of creation and thus shares its history.

God is not in the image of medieval feudalism, an absolute despot ruling the universe. He is involved in creation. Theological questions concerning the suffering of God centre on the passibility or the impassibility of God.\footnote{Moltmann mentions in his footnotes, J. K Mozley, \textit{The Impassibility of God: A Survey of Christian Thought} (Cambridge: CUP, 1926.) Ibid, p. 289.} Language relating to the love and compassion of God was often perceived as figurative. Thomas Aquinas, in particular, declared that God could not experience sorrow or compassion because it would imply weakness in the divine nature.\footnote{Ibid. p. 229. Aquinas also asserted the divine Logos in Christ did not change and was incapable of suffering.’ Ibid. p. 284.}

Patristic writers asserted the impassibility of God. They stressed the impassability of God because they were influenced by philosophical views, particularly Plato and Aristotle who taught to change was not to be perfect. God, in order to be perfect, had to be exempt from change and suffering.\footnote{McGrath, \textit{Christian Theology}, p. 274.} Rashdall points out the Logos doctrine of the patristic church assumed a divine Logos, unchangeable and eternal, inhabited a human body. This approach was characteristic of Monophysitism and Apollinarianism.\footnote{Rashdall, \textit{The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology}, p. 451.}
Difficulties therefore arose with the Incarnation, relating to the crucifixion of Christ. It was asserted by some that Christ suffered in his human nature, not in his divine nature, thus the two-nature doctrine safeguarded the presupposition that God did not experience human suffering. Only his human nature experienced suffering, not his divine nature.\textsuperscript{495}

Rashdall notes how in the evolution of Western theology, it was not considered orthodox to envisage the divine nature as passible or subject to change. Rather, Rashdall points to a trinitarian understanding of this suffering, according to which the Father felt pain with the Son.\textsuperscript{496}

Following the First World War, Western theological thought was affected by the suffering produced by the conflict and related it to theodicy.\textsuperscript{497} A protest atheism arose which challenged any account of a God who is indifferent to pain and suffering, thus offering a moral criticism of theism. Moltmann's theology of a suffering God aimed to counter this tendency. Both the Father and the Son suffer, but they are distinct: the Son suffered on the cross and the Father suffered the loss of the Son through his death on the cross. This leads on to the question of whether God actually died on the cross.

Various 'Death of God' theologies developed from the consequences of Christ dying on the cross, where it was put forward that God actually died on the Cross.\textsuperscript{498} According to Thomas Altizer, a radical kenosis took place where God actually experienced death as a human being and died. Moltmann's reply is that through the cross of Christ, God experienced the reality of death.\textsuperscript{499}

Moltmann's \textit{The Crucified God}, asserts that 'the cross of the risen Christ is understood from the perspective of the theodicy problem and interpreted by the themes of dialectical love, suffering and solidarity.'\textsuperscript{500} His \textit{The Church in the Power of The Spirit} completes this. From the events of the cross and resurrection, the world abandoned by God is renewed in the Holy Spirit, in preparation for the coming of the Kingdom of God.

Moltmann's theological method is outlined in his \textit{Experiences in Theology}, where he presents three major themes. First, theology is a public enterprise committed to engagement with a wider pluralist world. Second, Moltmann gradually begins to relate theology to praxis, action and doxology; however, praxis is not exclusively emphasised.\textsuperscript{501} He establishes a link between revelation

\textsuperscript{495} McGrath, \textit{Christian Theology}, p. 275.
\textsuperscript{497} McGrath, \textit{Christian Theology}, p. 276.
\textsuperscript{498} Ibid. p. 278.
\textsuperscript{499} Ibid. p. 280.
\textsuperscript{500} Richard Bauckham, 'Jürgen Moltmann,' in Ford, \textit{The Modern Theologians}, pp. 147-177; p. 149.
\textsuperscript{501} Ibid. pp. 149-150.
and experience. And finally, Moltmann’s theology is open to dialogue, it is not a closed hermetic system; it does not provide all the answers because of Moltmann’s eschatological orientation, and the future is open. Recognising a position in relation to other standpoints produces a productive relationship.502

4.2.7 Differences between Rashdall and Moltmann

Huge differences exist between the theologians particularly concerning eschatology and their views of the Trinity. Moltmann’s eschatology makes Christianity open to the future. The future Kingdom will be a new reality, a transformation of the present world.503 He criticises Western ideas of progress which perceive progress involves domination, rather than progress taking place through history; ‘a messianic redemption’ of history takes place.504 As well as eschatology, Moltmann stresses the importance of apocalyptic thought; the end-time is present, when ecological and nuclear disasters threaten the present world. Through the cross and resurrection, nature dies but will be reborn in an eschatological future.505

Moltmann’s *The Crucified God* does not attempt to explain the reality of human suffering, rather it presents a God who suffers in solidarity with those who suffer.506 Moltmann places ecclesiology in relation to the church’s participation in the trinitarian relation of God with the world.507

Moltmann’s eschatology differs radically from Rashdall’s. Moltmann asserts a thorough going apocalyptic eschatology; there will be a transformation of creation and a future coming of the Kingdom of God.508 On the other hand, and as noted in Chapter Three, Rashdall emphasised the gradual realisation of the Kingdom of God through the ministry of Jesus rather than the transformation of reality.509 It is a realised eschatology. For Rashdall, ‘the old eschatological or apocalyptic language applied or re-interpreted in a present, a moral or spiritual sense’.510 Rashdall spiritualised and re-interpreted eschatological language, particularly promoting the view the Kingdom of Heaven is already present.511 These views are tied in with Rashdall’s stress on the

---

502 Ibid. p. 150.
503 Ibid. p. 151
504 Ibid. p. 152.
505 Ibid. p. 158.
507 Ibid. p. 154.
508 Ibid. p. 152.
510 Rashdall, *Conscience and Christ*, pp. 54-55.
511 Ibid. p. 54.
inevitability of progress; history was a series of stages and 'the evils of an earlier stage in the time process appear to be most rationally explained as a means to the good realised in the later'.

Moltmann's *The Crucified God* does not attempt to explain the reality of human suffering, rather it entails a God who suffers in solidarity with those who suffer. Criticisms of Moltmann's theism include the charge that he rejected doctrines of divine aseity and impassibility; he dissolved God into history and the world process by which he came to realise himself. Moltmann would maintain God had a dynamic relationship to the world as love. R. Bauckham points out the later Moltmann does not expound tri-theism. The persons of the Trinity relate to themselves as personal subjects, God is not a supreme individual.

However, differences arise between the two theologians in their conceptions of the Trinity. Moltmann diverges from Rashdall in his trinitarian theology of the cross. Moltmann did not stress a monotheistic God, rather he advocated a social doctrine of the Trinity, with the Trinity representing three centres of consciousness. A position named tri-theism.

Moltmann's trinitarian theology of the cross points to a trinitarian scheme of history, with the trinitarian relationships including both God and the world. The dialectic of cross and resurrection leads on to eschatology. Creation and history are included within the divine experience. Christology and pneumatology are related together in a trinitarian framework.

Rashdall would stress the oneness of God but would perceive the cross as involving the Incarnation as well as the Trinity. Patristic writers asserted the impassibility of God, but difficulties arose with the Incarnation, relating to the crucifixion of Christ. It was therefore asserted Christ.

---

514 Moltmann asserted a social doctrine of the Trinity, which emphasises the three persons and their relations with one another. This view has possibilities for trinitarian theology because Western theology often stressed mono-theistic outlooks on God, focussing on the unity of God. But a social interpretation of the Trinity portrays the trinitarian relationship as a relation of equality, freedom and reciprocity. Moreover, 'God's relation to the world is not a dominating lordship, but a loving fellowship.' Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, p. 285.
515 The later Moltmann avoided the charge of tri-theism by his stress on the indwelling of the persons of the Trinity, perichoresis, which is 'a movement of relationship in differentiation,' Bauckham, 'J Moltmann,' in Ford, *The Modern Theologians*, p. 160.
516 Rashdall often used the term tri-theism in his trinitarian theology. For him tri-theism asserted, 'the theory that there are three Gods, three Divine Consciousnesses, three Minds, three Wills which happen to find themselves in agreement.' Rashdall, 'The Trinity and the Modern Mind,' in *Principles and Precepts*, p. 45. God for Rashdall is 'One Mind,' also 'one Consciousness, One Thinker, one Will.' Rashdall, *Doctrine and Development*, p. 45. Rashdall stressed the unity of the Trinity, the Trinity was a unity of 'Power, Wisdom and Love.' Rashdall, *Doctrine and Development*, p. 26.
suffered in his human nature, not in his divine nature; the two-nature doctrine thus safeguarded the presupposition God did not experience human suffering.\textsuperscript{518}

Moltmann's social trinitarianism encourages the concept of the Trinity as a fellowship of love. He stresses God's immanence in the world, a radical panentheism. God transcends the world.\textsuperscript{519} Moltmann, in his \textit{Way of Jesus Christ}, stresses the messianic nature of Christology, looking not only at the past of Jesus but also his future.\textsuperscript{520} Moltmann's Christology is developed in relation to the Spirit, it is a Spirit-Christology, where the life and mission of Jesus are undertaken and empowered by the Spirit. His Christology does not exist in isolation, Jesus Christ is perceived in terms of the Trinity, in relation to the Father and the Spirit. This relationship prevents this Spirit Christology from being a 'degree Christology'.

Moltmann asserts a doctrine of divine passibility or change; God both experiences the world and is affected by it. The distinction between the immanent and economic Trinity is abandoned, as the cross is internal to the relations of the Trinity. Furthermore, Moltmann rejects a descending order of Father, Son and Spirit in the Trinity.\textsuperscript{521} The persons of the Trinity are not subordinate to each other. Moltmann emphasises the unity of the Trinity in his employment of the term perichoresis, the mutual indwelling of the persons of the Trinity, but maintains that traditional monotheism encourages so called 'monarchical' relationships of subjection and domination in the Trinity.\textsuperscript{522}

\textbf{4.2.8 Similarities between Rashdall and Moltmann}

The two theologians have similarities. Both stress the cross of Christ in terms of suffering, rejecting divine impassibility, and both perceive the cross in terms of the Trinity. J. Moltmann's \textit{The Crucified God}, asserts 'the cross of the risen Christ is understood from the perspective of the theodicy problem and interpreted by the themes of dialectical love, suffering and solidarity'.\textsuperscript{523} He would claim that through the cross of Christ, God experienced the reality of death.\textsuperscript{524} For both theologians, God is not the inactive unmoved mover of Aristotle; God can change and is not impassible. Both the Father and the Son suffer, but they are distinct: the Son suffered on the cross and the Father suffered the loss of the Son through his death on the cross.

\textsuperscript{518} McGrath, \textit{Christian Theology}, p. 275.
\textsuperscript{519} Bauckham, 'J Moltmann,' in Ford, \textit{The Modern Theologians}, p. 156.
\textsuperscript{520} Ibid. p. 157.
\textsuperscript{521} Ibid. p. 155.
\textsuperscript{522} Ibid. p. 156.
\textsuperscript{523} Ibid. p. 149.
\textsuperscript{524} Moltmann, \textit{The Crucified God}, p. 234.
Rashdall notes that in the evolution of Western theology it was not considered orthodox to envisage the divine nature as passible or subject to change. The idea of the Father suffering on the cross was considered patripassianism, and both Rashdall and Moltmann advocate the same solution to this problem. They understand the cross in terms of the Trinity. Rashdall points to a trinitarian understanding of this suffering, the Father felt pain with the Son.  

Moltmann develops his pneumatology in his *The Spirit of Life*, in which he argues that the Western theological tradition did not concentrate sufficiently on pneumatology, and insists that God's Spirit indwells and pervades creation. The Spirit is not exclusively associated with revelation, but rather with experience which correlates with the revelation of God through the Word. For Moltmann, the Spirit through the resurrection, leads the crucified Jesus to an eschatological life.

Furthermore, Moltmann stresses the importance of ethics for Christology, which involves 'Christopraxis', which entails following the life, teachings and community of Jesus Christ. Both Moltmann's Christology and soteriology are holistic; they involve the totality of the person.

Moltmann's later Biblical hermeneutics are seen by critics, such as R. Bauckham, to ignore current historical-critical interpretation. But Moltmann has related biblical faith towards the modern world by the use of hermeneutical structures. He has retrieved the theological meaning of terms, including Christology, for contemporary people, relating to new situations and gaining insights. Moltmann has reconceived the traditional notion of God as trinitarian love; reviving a trinitarianism which has changed metaphysical theism, envisaging God as suffering as well as active.

In conclusion, both theologians have similarities but greater divergences. For both of them, a central characteristic was the concentration on a God who suffers in sympathy with humanity. Their perceptions of the Trinity differed: Moltmann has a social view of the Trinity which Rashdall would have seen as tri-theism, but both have related theology and God to history. Rashdall outlined his theology of the cross in response to political events, particularly the First World War, and Moltmann's theology of the cross was a response to events of the 20th century, including the holocaust.

---

527 Ibid. p. 158.
528 Ibid. p. 161.
529 Ibid.
4.2.9 The Reception of Rashdall's Theology of the Atonement

Rashdall's theology of the atonement received a mixed reception, ranging from the hostility of Charles Gore to a positive response from Claude Montefiore. There was also an influential evaluation of Rashdall's *The Idea of the Atonement in Christian Theology* by Hugh Ross Mackintosh (1870-1936) who criticised details of Rashdall's work, in particular Rashdall's criticism of the Mark 10.45 Ransom passage on which subsequent Ransom theories of the atonement were based. Mackintosh noted that many scholars viewed the passage as *ipsissima verba* of Jesus of Nazareth. H. MacKintosh points out of Rashdall's book:

> As an exposure of the theory of substitutive atonement, it admits of no answer. But this leaves the profoundly true and spiritual idea of vicarious suffering all the more dominant as Dr Rashdall is the first to acknowledge.\(^{531}\)

To Mackintosh's mind, Rashdall had ably criticised the theory of substitutive punishment where Christ was punished in the place of humanity. A persistent criticism of Rashdall lies in his depreciation of the role played by religious experience in framing doctrines of the atonement. MacKintosh notes the influence of A. Ritschl's study on Rashdall's positive restatement of a theology of atonement, but correctly notes the divergences between these writers regarding atonement and justification.\(^{532}\) Mackintosh claims that Rashdall's historical survey of the development of the doctrine of the atonement exhibits biases towards the thoughts of the Eastern Fathers and Abelard, and against Augustine, Anselm and Luther.\(^{533}\)

Another judgement of Rashdall’s work came from a future Archbishop of Canterbury, William Temple (1881-1944), who judged Rashdall’s book on atonement to be a great achievement, but one that exhibited a defective theology; he accused Rashdall of missing both the spiritual value and inner meaning of atonement.\(^{534}\) Temple estimates Rashdall primarily as an exponent of modernism, and one who pronounces his exposition of the atonement accordingly.\(^{535}\) Rashdall's work was favourably reviewed in *The Guardian*, while *The Spectator* called it, 'one of the most important theological works that has appeared for more than a generation'.\(^{536}\)

\(^{531}\) Ibid. p. 608.
\(^{532}\) Ibid. p. 609.
\(^{533}\) Ibid. pp. 610-12,
\(^{535}\) Letter to Barnes, January 1930.
\(^{536}\) Matheson, *The Life of Hastings Rashdall*, p. 192.
C. Gore had criticised the idea of the atonement held by Rashdall, although he commended him for highlighting the moral teaching of Christ. Gore concluded that Rashdall’s theology of the atonement was unduly subjective. According to him:

"Everything in the New Testament appears to depend on this initial sacrifice of atonement, reconciliation and propitiation."

But Gore insists New Testament evidence regarding the atonement involves a real sacrifice of Jesus Christ in order to atone for human sin. A new covenant between God and humanity was established by the sacrifice and death of Jesus Christ. Rashdall’s outlook on the atonement is too subjective; the atonement was a real concrete event transforming the eternal relationship between God and humanity. Our redemption involved an event, caused by the love of God working through the passion of Christ. Rashdall’s emphasis on the positive ethical effects of the doctrine of the atonement is commended, especially its concentration on the atonement as evoking a response of love on the part of Christ.

Finally, it can be said C. Gore spoke for a considerable body of opinion in the Anglican Communion on this issue. Having considered the reception of Rashdall’s theology of the atonement, we turn now to an examination of Rashdall’s correspondence to note how his final views crystallised concerning revelation and atonement.

4.2.10 Rashdall’s Mature Position on Revelation and Atonement

Rashdall outlined his later theology of the atonement in a 1920 letter to Charles Lett Feltoe (1857-1926), in which he linked the Incarnation with revelation, pointing out 'The object of the Incarnation was as I understand it to reveal God'. Rashdall did not aim to eliminate sacrificial language concerning Christ altogether, since in his account, revelation made up an essential component of atonement.

For Rashdall, 'The death of Christ completed the revelation of God's love while it was constituted by his life, teaching and character'. This did not involve punishment, but rather revelation; for Rashdall this meant, 'Both the self-sacrificing life and the self-sacrificing death of

---

538 Ibid. p. 589.
539 Ibid. p. 600.
540 Ibid.
542 Ibid.
Christ were a revelation of the Son of God'. Rashdall was thus prepared to grant a redemptive function to Christ, not simply the appropriation of an ethic of redemption.

Finally, Claude Montefiore corresponded with Rashdall on theological concerns and issues, including the atonement. Montefiore commended Rashdall's theology of atonement, presenting Rashdall's *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology* as 'a justification of Judaism particularly with Rashdall's stress on forgiveness, repentance and atonement'.

**4.2.11 Conclusion**

Rashdall's theology of atonement was extremely influential but faced severe criticism throughout the 20th century, particularly from Gustav Aulen. 20th century discussions of the atonement have followed the lines laid down in Aulen's *Christus Victor* (1931). In this study, Aulen recommended going back to earlier patristic views which had linked the atonement with redemption. Other critics include A. M. Ramsey and A. McGrath. Rashdall's Abelardian exemplarist theory of the atonement has also been evaluated by Frances Young.

A. M. Ramsey criticises Rashdall's theology of atonement because it ignores the religious appeal of alternative theories of the atonement. In his view, Rashdall's doctrine of salvation involved earning salvation by simply following the example of Christ. Still, Rashdall made a lasting contribution to Anglican theology by his doctrine of atonement. Despite its flaws, his theory of the atonement has remained influential and has proven to be a bridge between Anglican incarnational theology, and the traditional Evangelical emphasis on the cross and atonement. Anglican theology, as noted in the case of the *Lux Mundi* writers, was primarily incarnational. Rashdall's emphasis on atonement redressed this balance, extending the Incarnation to the atonement.

The ethical dimension of Rashdall's doctrine of the atonement is a central, regulating principle. Christ's death is interpreted as a revelation of the nature and character of God; and the heart of this revelation lies in the self-sacrificing death of Christ. Rashdall's contribution to Anglican and 20th century discussions of the atonement was controversial but still influential.

---


546 Francis Young is critical of Rashdall, she classifies him and his theology of atonement, as follows. 'A liberal Protestant like Rashdall, however, tended to over-emphasize other images of salvation and while recognising the presence of sacrificial imagery, refused to see it as the key to the early Church's understanding of redemption in Christ.' In other words the sacrificial nature of atonement was primary for the early church. Young F, *Sacrifice and the Death of Christ* (London: SPCK, 1975), p. 87.

His Abelardian view of the atonement, with its ethical stress, is a more contemporary view of the atonement, dispensing with the so-called Ransom theories of the atonement. The next section will show, as in the case of the doctrine of atonement, revelational theology is an important component of Rashdall’s christological position.

4.3 Christology

4.3.1 Introduction

This section outlines the significance of Rashdall’s Christology as it relates to his revelational theology. His christological outlook, first elaborated in *Doctrine and Development* (1898), remained definitive and consistent. His christological position was controversial and he also commented on the controversies surrounding two of his contemporaries, Charles Beeby and Reginald J. Campbell. The importance of the historical-critical method for Christology as a key element in Christianity’s traditional understanding of revelation will be evaluated, along with the contemporary significance of the eschatological question and the quest for the ‘historical’ Jesus.

Rashdall made a significant contribution to 20th century Anglican Christology in a paper given at the 1921 Girton conference, in which he re-stated a Logos Christology. His ensuing theological controversy with Gore and his final christological position will also be assessed. His final views on Christology are more controversial, but it will be noted that a theology of revelation remains central to his christological position.

4.3.2 Christologies of Revelation in *Doctrine and Development*

This section investigates Rashdall’s early christological position and in particular, his sonship Christology and the relationship that he discerned between revelation and kenosis. A lecture by Rashdall, *The Unique Son* (1894), delineated a Christology that began with an examination of Bishop John Barber Lightfoot’s (1828-1889) understanding of the adjective ‘only-begotten’ to qualify the Son in 1 John 4.9.\(^{548}\)

Rashdall’s Christology of sonship expresses a theology of revelation: Christ reveals God in a fashion that no other individual does.\(^{549}\) Christ reveals the Father because the Father works through Christ. Moreover, Christ communicates his sonship to all men, and Christ is the revealer of the highest knowledge of God and his ideals.\(^{550}\) For Rashdall, every human soul reveals the Divine but the highest *locus* of the Divine is the unique Christ. The ideal manifested in Christ is imitated by

---

\(^{548}\) Rashdall, 'The Unique Son,' Lecture V (1894) in *Doctrine and Development*, pp. 77-88; p. 77.
\(^{549}\) Ibid. p. 78.
\(^{550}\) Ibid. p. 79.
following a moral ideal.\textsuperscript{551} This sonship Christology implies an ethical revelation, which is disclosed in the character and life of Jesus Christ.\textsuperscript{552}

Rashdall perceives, however, that Christ's revelation was inadequate without a second revelation, namely 'the progressive revelation of the Spirit'.\textsuperscript{553} Rashdall uses scholastic terminology to express his position to link God to humanity as follows:

We can only think of God at all by the analogy of man; we can only think of Him as Reason and Will and goodness, however fully we recognise that these terms are applied to God, as the Schoolmen said \textit{sensu eminentiori}.

Christ reveals God, and humanity can appropriate this revelation because a similarity exists between God and humanity, the \textit{analogia entis}.\textsuperscript{555} Human conscience, reason and will are interpreted as reflecting the character of God in a manner that echoes the scholastic \textit{sensu eminentiori}.

During the 1890's debate relating to christological questions, attention focused on the human knowledge available to the Christ. Discussions of Christ's human consciousness were inevitably controversial and lead, in due course, to a reinterpretation of the \textit{kenosis} or self-emptying of Christ. The theory of \textit{kenosis} was extremely influential from the end of the Victorian age through into 20th century Anglican theology.

Rashdall's \textit{Doctrine and Development} discussed the christological theory of \textit{kenosis} in his \textquote{The Limitations of Knowledge in Christ} (1889). Rashdall began this lecture with an appeal to a key proof text of \textit{kenosis} and kenotic Christology, Philippians 2.5-6. Charles Gore is credited with popularizing this issue, but Rashdall's lecture shows his acquaintance with it. He mentions influential works by Gore including Gore's contribution to \textit{Lux Mundi} (1889), his Bampton lectures of 1891, \textit{The Incarnation of the Son of God} and his \textit{Dissertations on Subjects Connected With The Incarnation} (1895).

Gore was perceived by Rashdall as a conservative as far as the issue of the limitations of Christ's knowledge is concerned. Variations of the kenotic theory already existed, but all envisaged a self-emptying of the Divine at the Incarnation. A popular version envisaged Christ's divine attributes

\textsuperscript{551} Rashdall, 'Revelation by Character,' Lecture VII (1894) in \textit{Doctrine and Development}, pp. 110-127; p. 111.
\textsuperscript{552} Ibid. pp. 111-112.
\textsuperscript{553} Ibid. pp. 123.
\textsuperscript{554} Rashdall, \textit{Doctrine and Development}, p. 80.
\textsuperscript{555} Rashdall applies analogy to God, because 'they are the highest categories we have.' Rashdall, 'Personality in God and Man,' Lecture XVI (1898) in \textit{Doctrine and Development}, pp. 268-288; p. 278.
being neither lost nor surrendered but rather hidden, *krypsis.*\(^{556}\) The concept of *kenosis* is important for Rashdall's revelational theology, because the impartation of revelation involved concealment. *Kenosis* involved hidden revelation, with a self-imposed limitation on the part of deity.

At this time, regarding the human knowledge of Christ, Rashdall envisaged that *kenosis,* a limitation of omnipotence and omniscience, happened at the Incarnation.\(^{557}\) A real surrender of divine power took place, a real emptying of the Divine took place, not a voluntary limitation.\(^{558}\) Rashdall endorsed this kenotic theory in his *Doctrine and Development.* However by 1922, in a discussion of Gore's kenotic theory, Rashdall rejected his earlier theory on psychological grounds because it involved a constriction of consciousness incompatible with Incarnation.\(^{559}\)

Rashdall's conception of the divine *kenosis* is linked to his theology of revelation; the theory entails a revelation concerning a hidden deity, who is nevertheless the revealer.\(^{560}\) But a significant aspect of the kenotic theory relates to a recovery of the significance of Christ's humanity. In *Doctrine and Development,* Rashdall raises his persistent criticism of what, to his mind, was the latent Apollinarianism of the contemporary popular understanding of the orthodox understanding of the doctrine of the Incarnation.\(^{561}\) This ancient doctrine assumed that Christ had a divine mind, thereby minimising his humanity.

Finally, Rashdall's Christology of Sonship contains controversial elements, particularly his application of analogy to Christology. The real meaning of the terms 'only-begotten' and 'the Unique Son', expressed the view that God is revealed in the historic Christ.\(^{562}\) Rashdall's Christology connects theology, Christology and an ethic which is disclosed by a perfect character, Jesus Christ.

Rashdall extols the role of the Holy Spirit in his revelatory theology saying:

> Only in so far as there is in our own hearts some measure of that Spirit which proceeds from the Father and the Son shall we be able to recognise the work which that Spirit is doing in the moral and religious, the social and intellectual movements of the society in which we dwell.\(^{563}\)

---

\(^{556}\) Rashdall, 'Limitations of Knowledge in Christ,' Lecture III (1889) in *Doctrine and Development,* pp. 33-57; p. 38.

\(^{557}\) Rashdall, *Doctrine and Development,* pp. 36-37.

\(^{558}\) Ibid. p. 38.

\(^{559}\) Ibid. p. 35.

\(^{560}\) Ibid. p. 38.

\(^{561}\) Ibid. p. 38.

\(^{562}\) Rashdall, 'Some Plain Words to Bishop Gore II: Athanasius and Bishop Gore,' in *Modern Churchman,* 11 (1921-22), pp. 6-28; pp. 20-21.

\(^{563}\) Rashdall, 'Unique Son,' in *Doctrine and Development,* pp. 81-83.

\(^{564}\) Rashdall, *Doctrine and Development,* p. 123.
Rashdall has been accused of advocating salvation by merit, a type of Pelagianism. But because of Rashdall’s pneumatological emphasis, this criticism of his theological anthropology does not support this contention. Rashdall’s christological position caused controversy during the first decade of the 20th century. The next sections will investigate his interpretation of the divinity of Christ, the Jesus of history and the eschatological question relating to his outlook on revelation.

4.3.3 Degree Christologies and the Impact of Pantheism on Christology

During 1903 Rashdall re-iterated his Sonship Christology; for him, degrees of revelation existed while human nature, he claimed, represented a true revelation of God. But in Christ is found 'the fullest revelation of God, in Him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily'. Rashdall, 'In What Sense was Christ the Son of God?' in *The Christian World Pulpit* (July 1903), pp. 5-7; p. 5.

Unfortunately his views were open to misrepresentation; he could be labelled as a pantheist, though Rashdall clearly did not advocate pantheism. In other words, Rashdall did not identify the world exclusively with God, similar to Hegelian philosophers who identified the world with the 'Absolute'. Rashdall’s Christology was, in this respect, a degree Christology where God is revealed to all humanity but in varying modes and degrees.

The highest significance was assigned to the revelation of God in Christ. During the 1903 C. Beeby controversy and the 1907 R. J. Campbell controversy, important issues of philosophical theology were raised relating to Christology. Rashdall made a significant clarification of his degree Christology in relation to revelation, when he maintained:

To all men some measure of the Divine nature was communicated; He (Christ) felt that to Him it was communicated to in an exceptional degree. Human nature is, generally a revelation of God. He felt that to Him in an exceptional way was committed the task of revealing God to His fellow men, of revealing to others their true sonship.

Rashdall’s degree Christology was redefined as a communication of the divine nature to an exceptional degree, enabling him to teach eternal truths by both his life and words. Rashdall established Christ was the unique bearer of God’s revelation. The highest significance was assigned to the revelation of God in Christ.

564 Rashdall, ‘In What Sense was Christ the Son of God?’ in *The Christian World Pulpit* (July 1903), pp. 5-7; p. 5.

565 Here, Rashdall explains his views on pantheism, criticising some particularly extreme views of Divine immanence. Still Rashdall does not use the concept of panentheism to explain the action of God either on or in the world. Rashdall, 'The Alleged Immanence of God,' in *Ideas and Ideals*, pp. 180-201.

566 Rashdall, 'In What Sense was Christ the Son of God,' in *The Christian World Pulpit*, pp. 5.

567 Ibid. p. 6.
During 1903, Charles Beeby, a colleague of Rashdall, clashed with Bishop Charles Gore concerning liberal principles. C. Beeby had criticised the policy of subscription to the Creeds and Anglican articles. His theological position involved reconciling evolutionary theory with a symbolic approach towards Christian doctrine. He courted controversy by questioning the Virgin Birth as historical fact on the grounds that a Virgin Birth compromised Christ's humanity. Beeby had reached this conclusion on evolutionary grounds and he understood Christ as a product of nature; nature as the instrument of God, produced Christ. Thus the crown of human evolution originated through the processes and operations of nature, not by way of a supernatural creation untouched by nature. Similar to Rashdall, Beeby stressed the humanity of Jesus Christ.

During 1907, christological controversies clarified Rashdall's position on pantheism when he evaluated the impact and significance of the so-called 'New Theology', formulated by Reginald J. Campbell. Rashdall publicly criticised the Christology of The New Theology in an article in the Hibbert Journal. He observed that Campbell was unduly influenced by the pantheism of John McTaggart (1866-1925) and F. H. Bradley. Rashdall, in his review, advances a persuasive argument against radical immanentist and pantheist views, commenting:

I could not worship or reverence a God of whom Caesar Borgia or Napoleon Buonaparte was a portion.

On these grounds, Rashdall rejected pantheistic and radical immanentist tendencies since for him they cannot solve the problem of evil. R. J. Campbell minimised the reality of evil and, as far as Rashdall was concerned, entertained a facile optimism relating to the human condition. He evaluated Campbell's theism to be a version of Hegelism influenced by T. H. Green. Rashdall

568 Charles Beeby, 'Doctrinal Significance of a Miraculous Birth,' in Hibbert Journal (October 1902), pp. 125-140; p. 129.
569 Ibid.
570 Ibid. pp. 128-129.
571 Rashdall criticises Campbell's philosophical influences, pointing out, 'I do not think Mr Campbell quite appreciates the difficulty of reconciling the formula which he adopts from Hegel or from Green with the theistic faith which he himself undoubtedly shares.' Rashdall, 'The New Theology,' in Hibbert Journal, V (1906-1907), pp. 921-928; p. 923. Consider further R. J. Campbell, The New Theology (New York: MacMillan Company, 1907).
574 Ibid. p. 924.
united his revelational theology with Christology, insisting that both a difference and identity existed between Christ and humanity; between the 'Revealer and the Revealed'.

Finally, revelational concepts made up a crucial component of degree Christologies. God's fullest revelation is found in Christ. A communication of the divine nature was given to Christ to an exceptional degree, but here Rashdall goes against a 19th century trend towards immanentism, and for him Christ is not simply identified with humanity. By 1914 Rashdall defined his understanding of the divinity of Christ: God indwelt humanity and was more fully present in the prophets and saints. But it is possible for God to dwell in one person uniquely. Here, he laid out essential christological principles, which again caused misunderstanding when they were discussed in the public and media domains.

With Rashdall's declaration that God's indwelling in Christ cannot be isolated, or differentiated, from the indwelling of God in every person, one can see why this was controversial. Of course Rashdall qualified this assertion: God's indwelling in Christ is recognised as a unique or supreme indwelling of God, and as representing a supreme realisation of true relation between God and humanity. But characteristically, Rashdall asserted that the proof of the divinity of Christ lay in his appeal to the moral and religious consciousness of humanity.

Rashdall offered a critique of the so-called New Theology, particularly with its stress on the 'immanence of God'. He recognised the theory of divine Immanence was associated with Benedict Spinoza (1632-1677). The word 'God' for Spinoza, denoted a representation of an ultimate substance behind the universe. To Rashdall, Spinoza was not a crude materialist: both matter and mind are attributes of this universal substance. Rashdall maintained metaphors are being used when it is said God is immanent in the world. The spatial world is in a sense 'in God', but not in the sense God occupies space.

---

576 Ibid. p. 924.
578 Percy Ewing Matheson quotes Rashdall, 'If God dwells to some extent in all men, in the prophets and the saints more than in other men, then it is possible that in One Man He may have dwelt uniquely, supremely. And such I believe was the nature of the indwelling of God in Christ.' Matheson, The Life of Hastings Rashdall, p. 151.
579 Ibid.
580 Ibid.
581 Rashdall stresses the primacy of the ideals of Christ as constituting an unique revelation. Rashdall, 'If Christ had not been born,' in Principles and Precepts, pp. 110-118.
583 Ibid.
584 Ibid. p. 187.
Revelation plays a central role. Rashdall maintained 'all knowledge is from the idealistic point of view a kind of Revelation'. He puts forward the supposition that the doctrine of the Incarnation itself corrects extreme views of the divine Immanence. The two-nature doctrine of Christ is significant, especially where the humanity of Christ is linked to the divine nature, while the Logos dwelling in Christ is divine, being a revelation of God. The revelation of the Divine is, in other words, 'the reproduction of the Divine Consciousness', in the minds of humanity. This process is a matter of degree. God is 'immanent in Christ', to a fuller degree than other people. It is a misrepresentation of Rashdall to maintain he was a pantheist who maintained God and the world are actually identical.

4.3.4 Christological Controversies Concerning the Jesus of History

During 1907 Rashdall published a paper on the relation between religion and history, in regard to christological issues. Rashdall discussed the relation between the Christ of faith and history. Jesus Christ is the unique revealer of the revelation 'of the Father's will and nature'. Rashdall's revelational theology involved a commitment to recover a portrait of the Jesus of history. In order to discover his teachings and ethics, Rashdall elaborated as follows:

We are invited to believe in an ideal Christ who is frankly admitted to have little or nothing to do with the Christ of history.

Rashdall here asserted that the Jesus of history cannot be separated from the Christ of faith. For Rashdall, the moral and religious consciousness of Christ appropriated by the believer is more significant than historical testimony and miracles. Still, Rashdall is open to criticism, when he asserted the following:

Doubtless the Christian ideal would be true, if it could be shown that the Gospel picture of Jesus was wholly due to the mythopoetic faculty of the early Church: and nothing would be more foolish than to deny the enormous value which that picture, even so considered, would still possess for the world.

---

585 Ibid. p. 193.
586 Ibid. p. 200.
587 Ibid. p. 201.
588 Ibid. p. 201.
589 Rashdall, 'Religion and History,' in Liberal Churchman, (January 1907), pp. 11-29.
590 Ibid. p. 15.
591 Ibid.
592 Ibid. p. 17.
In conclusion, his position entailed that Christ's ideals are more important than historical details but the role and work of the Spirit is recognised as essential. Here, Rashdall is not arguing from an excessively idealist or rationalist standpoint, but insisting on an appeal to the latest historical scholarship to answer the questions of who Christ was and what he taught.593

Rashdall’s historical approach was influenced by Bishop Westcott and his approach taken towards St John's Gospel, which impacted on Rashdall's revelatory theology. Rashdall knew B. F. Westcott personally and was ordained a Deacon of the Church of England by him at Bishop Auckland on 8th June 1884. Rashdall later wrote an appreciation of Bishop Westcott in the series of essays published posthumously in Principles and Precepts (1927). Westcott had influenced Rashdall in a number of areas, passing on interests and concerns which remained with Rashdall all of his life.

Rashdall was aware Westcott was associated with the Cambridge Triumvirate of biblical scholars who also included Joseph Barbar Lightfoot (1828-1889) and Fenton John Hort, (1828-1892). Indeed, it was Westcott who helped F. J. Hort to construct a new critical text of the New Testament. The division between traditional belief and more liberal views on issues of biblical scholarship had caused heated debate in Victorian and Edwardian England.594 But along with Westcott and J. B. Lightfoot, their contribution to New Testament studies became crucial to the acceptance of Biblical criticism by the churches. However, Rashdall was critical of the theological endeavours of Westcott in some respects. Rashdall, with his historical background, did not perceive Westcott as possessing a historical consciousness.

Rashdall thought Westcott could not distinguish between the actual teachings of Jesus and their development by the writer of The Gospel of John.595 The concept and importance of doctrinal development is a constant crucial feature of the theology of Rashdall. While assessing his influence, Rashdall thought Westcott's writings would not live on, with such few and intense ideas, characteristic of a transient stage of thought.596 Still, Rashdall believed Westcott, more than anyone, carried forward the theology of F. D. Maurice. Rashdall and his theological method and enterprise were shaped by the theological environment and the rapid social, political and cultural transformations of later Victorian and early 20th century Britain.

For Rashdall, Westcott expounded the spiritual meaning of Christianity, especially found in the Johannine writings.597 Christ is a revealer who discloses the eternal nature of God. Rashdall's

595 Ibid. p. 166.
596 Ibid. p. 170.
597 Ibid. p. 169.
outlook on revelation could be summarised by the verse 1.1 found in the New Testament Epistle to the Hebrews. Rashdall perceived revelation in terms of event; it involved the breaking-in of Jesus Christ in history.

The concept of revelation occupies a major theme in the Fourth Gospel of John, an insight retrieved by Rashdall. The Logos imparts revelation. Faith is a vision in response to revelation. As expounded in John 6.40, 12.45 and 4.19, Jesus is both the revealer and proclaimer of the truth of God. Revelation is completed at the Parousia but at present time is imperfect. The eschatology found in the Gospel is realised, already present in the life and person of Jesus Christ who embodies revelation. But Rashdall does not judge the Johannine discourses as giving a true historical account of the words of Jesus, or an actual interpretation of them. Rather they represented an eternal meaning, an interpretation of Jesus which is not affected by the eschatological background to his thought.

For Rashdall, a rejection of detail did not invalidate the whole narrative. Scepticism about the recorded statements of Christ does not weaken a belief in the historicity of the Gospel narrative. Judgements relating to the historical worth of the Gospels rested on the spiritual significance of the whole picture. The complete revelation of God can be made through Christ, and Greek religious philosophy expressed this conviction by saying the Son or Logos, the reason or Word of God, is incarnate in him. The Johannine Christ was a gateway to the Father, enlightening the world.

The ideals of Jesus contain the true basis of later development. Rashdall uses the Logos doctrine to harmonise idealistic philosophy with theology. The Logos as divine truth indwells the historical Jesus. Real truth lies in the statement, 'Christ is the light of the world', and no person can come to the Father in the fullest degree, except through the avenue of approach instituted by this historical revelation. One of the positive gains of criticism for Rashdall is to be able to read the statements made by the Johannine Christ as statements made by a disciple about the value of Christ and his revelation.

Finally, God is revealed through creation which embodies his thought; Rashdall and Westcott both place an emphasis on The Prologue to The Gospel of John. Here, creation has been made through the agency of the Word who is progressively revealed through the consciousness and intellect of humanity. The Fourth Gospel envisages the person of Christ the full and complete incarnation of The Word of God which has been gradually revealed in creation. Westcott is commended for his scriptural hermeneutics and his retrieval of patristic exegesis of scriptural

598 Rashdall, Conscience and Christ, pp. 185-186.
599 Ibid. p. 186.
interpretation. History is central for Rashdall, and the literary preoccupations of Westcott are of lasting value.

4.3.5 Revelation and the Eschatological Question

The first decade of the 20th century witnessed new questions emerging relating to Rashdall’s revelational theology, especially the quest for the historical Jesus and the eschatological question. Liberal-modernist theologians assumed that scholarly investigation of the New Testament as a historical source provided a reliable portrait of the historical Jesus. Furthermore, the whole liberal-modernist project assumed that this quest was valid.

But the recovery of the eschatological dimension to the teachings of Jesus in the early years of the 20th century, especially the new emphasis on the genre of apocalyptic and eschatological material in the Gospels, is now recognised as having helped to undermine contemporary liberal theology and its presuppositions. The raising of the eschatological question could affect Rashdall’s outlook on the New Testament, his view of revelation: if Christology and Christianity involved ‘a revelation of ethics’, then Rashdall had to justify the liberal theological project in order to safeguard his concept of revelation.

The most influential of the criticisms of the quest for the historical Jesus was raised by Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) who summarised the mainly German Protestant attempts to recover an authentic picture of Jesus of Nazareth. Schweitzer emphasised the eschatological and apocalyptic context of the life and message of Jesus of Nazareth. For liberal theologians, including A. Harnack, A. Schweitzer’s book posed a problem since the apocalyptic and eschatological content of the teachings of Jesus were emphasised to the detriment of Jesus’ ethical and spiritual concerns.

Schweitzer perceived the ethical teachings of Jesus as offering an interim-ethic, designed for the last few months of the life of Jesus. Given this presupposition, such ethics as these were useless for modern people and provoked the conclusion that Christ’s ethics were neither the product of revelation nor valid for all time. Rashdall discussed the eschatological question in his Conscience and Christ in 1916. Here, he referred to discussions of Schweitzer’s views and their bearing on the

---


601 Rashdall here evaluates the significance of the eschatological question for his christological position. Rashdall, ‘Lecture II. Ethics and Eschatology,’ in Conscience and Christ, pp. 36-76; p. 44.
person of Christ, enlisting the modernist C. W. Emmet to support his views of the Kingdom of God as involving a gradualist realisation or a 'realised' eschatology'.

Rashdall additionally justified his approach to the eschatological question by invoking C. Montefiore's study of the Synoptic gospels. Jesus' ethics are not invalidated because of his eschatological expectations.

The historical Jesus, according to C. Montefiore, expounded eternally valid principles but these must be distinguished from particular applications. Jesus' ethical teachings are often located in the exposition of parables about the Kingdom. C. Montefiore, for Rashdall, emphasised that the words ascribed to Jesus in the gospels highlighted the historical nature of his life and character, particularly the concept of the 'Kingdom of God' which was central to the teaching of Jesus Christ.

Rashdall stood in a tradition of theological liberalism which emphasised the interior nature of the Kingdom of Heaven, and he advanced this opinion in his *Conscience and Christ*. Side by side with a future kingdom, Jesus recognised a present kingdom, advancing gradually: 'The kingdom of God is within you'. This outlook, in which the Kingdom of God represented an ethical and spiritual reality, is in the tradition of F. D. Maurice. Rashdall interpreted the notion of the Kingdom of Heaven in terms of a gradual, revelatory transformation of human society in line with the ethics of Christ.

Rashdall noted that both the parables and the teaching of Jesus stressed repentance, righteousness and moral regeneration. Simply because Jesus taught about a messianic Kingdom, his ethical teachings were not invalidated since Rashdall interpreted the historical Jesus as having prioritized ethics over eschatology.

The eschatological tendency of contemporary modern theology was to criticise the old-fashioned 'transmuted eschatology'. As the 'ultra-eschatological' ideas gained ground Rashdall stressed, in the words of Ernest Von Dobschütz (1870-1934), the importance of a 'transmuted

---

602 Rashdall, *Conscience and Christ*, p. 76.
604 Ibid.
605 Ibid. p. 59.
606 Ibid. p. 40.
607 Ibid. p. 40-41.
608 Ibid.
609 Ibid. p. 59.
610 Ibid. p. 54.
eschatology', which was in line with his revelational theology. E. Von Dobschütz provided an alternative to Schweitzer's thoroughgoing eschatology. By advocating a modification of the 'liberal mutism', his transmuted eschatology emphasised a realisation of the Kingdom of God rather than an interruption of God to transform the world, in other words not an apocalyptic approach.

Finally, Rashdall discussed in *Conscience and Christ* (1916) the views of George Tyrrell, a Catholic modernist, in relation to eschatology. G. Tyrrell believed that the Christianity found in the modern world must be eschatological. He ridiculed ideas of indefinite progress and social improvement, and was pessimistic about the condition of the world. But, for Rashdall, the essence of Christianity is symbolised by the hope of a better future, in an after-life, rather than a literal and materialistic sense. Rashdall perceived the Kingdom of God as an ideal to be realised partly now, and more fully in a life hereafter.

Still, Rashdall did not abandon his position on the eschatological question and remained committed to the quest of the historical Jesus, despite its known limitations. Anglican modernist opinion split on the eschatological question, with both H. D. A. Major and W. R. Inge agreeing with Schweitzer. The recovery of eschatological ideas challenged the Victorian liberal theology and it coincided with a time of crisis and social change during the Edwardian era. But perhaps Rashdall successfully met the challenge to his revelational theology made by the 'eschatological question', by emphasising a gradualist, evolutionary eschatology.

### 4.3.6 Rashdall's Girton Conference Christology and its Reception

This section outlines the importance of the Logos Christology elaborated by Rashdall at a conference of liberal Anglican clergymen held in Girton College, Cambridge (1921). At the Girton conference, Rashdall introduced a Logos Christology which he considered capable of being adapted and reinterpreted for the modern era. This appeal to a Logos Christology safeguarded, to Rashdall's satisfaction, the absolute revelation of God in Christ, and the affirmation that Jesus' character

---

611 Ibid. p. 51.
612 Ibid. pp. 51-3.
615 Rashdall, *Conscience and Christ*, p. 70.
616 So the new emphasis on eschatology and apocalyptic recovered in the preaching of Jesus could prove problematic for liberal theologians. Mark Chapman evaluates the impact of the eschatological portrait of Christ on liberal theology as follows, 'No longer was he seen as the comfortable and relatively safe ethical teacher with a decidedly Johannine flavour who had dominated the preceding Victorian culture; instead he became the herald of an apocalyptic crisis, who simply could not be contained within the old liberalism.' Mark D.Chapman, *The Coming Crisis: The Impact of Eschatology on Theology in Edwardian England.* in JSNT Monographs (Supplement Series. 208: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.), p. 13.
revealed the fullest disclosure of God. Rashdall's christological position was subsequently criticised by F. J. Foakes-Jackson and C. Gore, although H. D. A. Major gave a positive evaluation.

The criticism from Foakes-Jackson of Rashdall's Girton paper proved influential. He criticised Rashdall's opinion that the human soul and flesh of Jesus had no pre-existence, together with Rashdall's assertion that the Logos was impersonal from eternity and cannot be distinguished from the Father. Rashdall put forward the view that the humanity of Jesus Christ did not exist before he became incarnate, rather the Word which became incarnate in Jesus Christ pre-existed as the Word with the Father. More controversially, Rashdall did not emphasise their plurality, rather their unity in the Trinity.

Foakes-Jackson takes an eschatological view that the original Christ is a risen saviour who will come in judgement. For him, Rashdall's paper retained the divinity of Christ but divested it of any meaning; giving a unitarian explanation of the Incarnation. Foakes-Jackson voiced a common criticism of Rashdall and of Anglican modernism in general, with regard to their theology of revelation.

For Foakes-Jackson, Christianity is more than a system of ethics; it relates to a supernatural revelation and is a religion imparting salvation by grace and the sacraments. Christianity is a supernatural faith; a religion of salvation, where Jesus Christ is a saviour figure. The modernists, according to Foakes-Jackson, aimed to substitute a 'Jesuanity', i.e a religion centred on Jesus, instead of a religion focused on the risen Christ. The development of Christianity, he insisted, was more complex than the effect of a personality on his immediate disciples. Moreover, miracles and the resurrection of Jesus are an integral part of the New Testament and cannot be eliminated. English Modern Churchmanship was thus both too rational and unscientific, occupying a middle ground where compromise is impossible.

H. D. A. Major, by contrast, observed that Rashdall's main contribution to Anglican modernist Christology was his promotion of the perfect humanity of Jesus. Major points out that

---

619 F. J. Foakes-Jackson, comments of Rashdall, 'Dr Rashdall sets himself the task of proving that the reality of the Manhood of Jesus is compatible with a doctrine of his divinity.' Offering a vindication of both the humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ. Ibid. p. 201.
620 Ibid. p. 203.
621 Ibid.
622 Ibid. p. 203
623 Jackson perceived the modernists present Jesus Christ, 'as a Teacher rather than a saviour.' A persistent criticism of the Anglican modernists. Ibid. p. 204.
624 Ibid. p. 205.
625 Major, English Modernism, pp. 150-151.
Rashdall taught in his *Jesus Human and Divine*, 'Jesus had a human body, soul, intellect'. But, paradoxically, alongside a growing recognition of the humanity of Jesus, there was evidently a growing realisation of the importance of the Logos, the form of New Testament Christology which appealed most to Anglican modernism.

Logos Christology entailed a fuller stress on revelation's importance. Rashdall, as far as H. D. A. Major was concerned, promoted the unity of the Godhead and the essential deity of Jesus. The relation to God on the part of men and women consisted in a person's possession of a moral, rational and spiritual nature, which is essentially divine. Jesus Christ is not just God and humanity united, but the God-person, *deitas sub specie humanitatis*. For H. D. A. Major, the indwelling of God in Jesus Christ differed in degree, but not in kind, from the Divine.

Rashdall also criticised the Christology of C. Gore, perceiving it as Apollinarian. Apollinarus (c310-390) was a patristic theologian criticised for holding that Christ did not possess a human mind; rather his mind was inhabited by the divine Logos. Rashdall declared that if Christ is simply proclaimed as God, without also affirming his humanity, then such an outlook is Apollinarian. Popular understandings of orthodoxy, Rashdall held, are in effect a refined form of Apollinarianism, denying that Jesus Christ had a human will. On this score, not only C. Gore but also the influential Bishop of Zanzibar, Frank Weston was named an Apollinarian by Rashdall.

To be fair to Gore, his opinion on Apollinarianism appeared in a review of Charles Raven's (1885-1964) book on Apollinarius. This review contradicts Rashdall's assertion that C. Gore minimised the humanity of Christ. For Gore, the Son of God in the Incarnation took full humanity, including 'his human reason and spirit'. Gore asserts that Apollinarianism made the personhood of Jesus unreal, and the Incarnation, 'merely a theophany'. C. Gore is anxious to maintain a balance in Christ, 'who though one person, was both truly divine and truly human, and yet one person'. So, both C. Gore and Rashdall affirmed the humanity of Jesus. Rashdall had criticised Bishop Frank Weston's views on the impersonal nature of Christ's humanity and his divine ego.

628 Ibid. p. 153.
629 Ibid. p. 159.
630 Rashdall, 'Some Plain Words to Bishop Gore: II. Athanasius and Bishop Gore,' in *Modern Churchman*, XXII, (1922), pp. 6-28; pp. 8-12.
631 Ibid.
634 Ibid. p. 121.
635 Ibid. p. 133.
The issue of the divine humanity of Jesus led Rashdall to considerations of the human soul of Jesus, and he posed the question of whether it was the same as the eternal person of the Trinity, who appeared as Jesus Christ. If so, for Rashdall, the door was opened to quasi-docetism, and Jesus Christ could be seen as a spirit, rather than a real human being. As noted, a crucial issue between Gore and Rashdall involved the assertion by Rashdall that Gore was an Apollinarian who minimised the humanity of Christ. Gore mentions Rashdall accusing the patristic theologian Irenaeus of Apollinarianism.

Gore quotes Irenaeus as holding the view Christ had a human mind, and criticises Rashdall for holding that Athanasius, like Irenaeus, was Apollinarian. But Rashdall asserts Athanasius in his Orations did not recognise Jesus possessed a human soul. Gore disputes Rashdall's interpretation of Athanasius. Gore's reading of patristic theology admits Alexandrian theology emphasised the Godhead of Christ. But for Gore, Athanasius in his Orations recognised the human mind of Jesus, both limited and liable to change. Gore stressed Athanasius was not an Apollinarian and he points to Harnack, Bright and Robertson's accounts of Athanasius's doctrines to support him.

Rashdall's Sonship and degree Christologies show influences of both Ritschl and Harnack, but Rashdall departed from Harnack's view that the Christologies associated with the prologue to the Fourth Gospel were distortions of the original Gospel. The Fourth Gospel influenced and determined the form and content of Rashdall's Logos Christology.

---


638 Ibid. p. 504. Note 1.

639 Rashdall asserts the central idea of Ritschlianism is as follows. 'The true basis of Christianity is and must be (as it seems to me) the effect produced upon the heart and conscience by the Gospel picture of Christ's life, Teaching, personality.' Rashdall, 'Ritschlianism,' p. 35.
4.3.7 The Later Christological Views of Rashdall Relating to Revelational Christology

Dean Rashdall's final views relating to divine revelational Christology are set out in various letters. The letters express scepticism about concrete historical evidence for the establishment of Christ's divinity. Rashdall perceives Jesus of Nazareth as having possessed consciousness of his Messiahship, rather than of his divinity. He writes:

I do not think I should admit even an implicit claim to Divinity. If you ask exactly what our Lord did claim, I do not feel able to give any positive answer. I think he claimed Messiahship, but rather in the way of allowing himself to be so designated accepting the role, though in a sense very different from common expectations.\(^{640}\)

On these grounds his Christological position is open to criticism since, for Rashdall, the narratives of the Fourth Gospel and The Gospel of Matthew could be challenged. He asserted:

Even if all are genuine that does not prove Divinity in the Nicene sense. Do not think the saying in the Fourth Gospel can be trusted. When those sayings are removed, there are no sayings in the Synoptics which imply consciousness of the actual Divinity. Even if Mt XI. 27 be genuine, this would not prove more than a high conception of Messiahship.\(^{641}\)

Rashdall minimises the sense Jesus was conscious of his own divinity by examining the Biblical statements which implied this. Using Biblical critical methods he eliminates these sayings as inauthentic. But Rashdall rescues this perspective by emphasising the concept of revelation which is central to his Christology.

Rashdall concludes:

I don't think the historical data allow us to say more than that our Lord was conscious of intimate union and communion with the Father, and a mission to communicate to others knowledge of God which went beyond that of the prophets.\(^{642}\)

The mission of Jesus entails a communication to others of knowledge of God. Jesus Christ's primary role is to teach and reveal God, following in the tradition of the Hebrew prophets even though his teachings went beyond them.

---


\(^{641}\) Ibid.

\(^{642}\) Ibid.
Rashdall maintained:

The divine Sonship of the historic Christ they can understand: the metaphor of Sonship is a natural way of expressing close and intimate union, likeness of character, the derivation of Christ from God, the revelation of God in Christ.®'*^  

So Rashdall defines his interpretation of the Sonship of Christ in the following ways: the use of the term Sonship is a metaphor to denote a close union and revelation between God and humanity through Christ. He further explains:

And in that sense the doctrine of Christ's Divinity does express what heartily convinced modern Christians naturally feel towards Him and think about him. Those to whom the ideal realised in the character of Christ presents itself as the highest ideal of humanity, really think of God, so to say in terms of Christ; for them the character of Christ is the character of God.®'*®

In this passage, Rashdall's revelatory theology is crucial to his Christology. Rashdall can be criticised for using language concerning the relation of Christ to God as 'like'; likeness is not the same as identification, as the debates concerning the Fourth century Arian controversy showed. But characteristically for Rashdall, the significance of the Incarnation lies in the disclosure of the Will and character of God through Christ.®'*®

4.3.8 Conclusions

Rashdall's christologies were diverse, and it is difficult to establish a harmony between them. He anticipated later 20th century criticisms of orthodox Christology, and his concept of revelation is closely associated with his christological positions.

Rashdall affirmed the importance of history for christological reflection and John Macquarrie would later emphasise this view.®'*® According to J. Macquarrie's typology, Rashdall's Christology can justifiably be called idealist since it exhibits similarities to Kant's 'rationalist Christology'.®'*® Classical Christology has tended to be a 'Christology from above',®'*® while Rashdall, in common with modern

644 Ibid. p. 33.
645 Ibid.
647 Ibid. p. 185.
648 Macquarrie employs the terminology of Wolfhart Pannenberg outlining christologies from 'below' and from 'above.' Ibid. p. 342.

133
Christologies, stresses the humanity of Christ.® Macquarrie noted a distinction between 'Jesuology and Christology' in church history, which Rashdall was fully aware of.®

Finally, Rashdall empathises with Jewish thought, though his stress on the revelation of God in Christ opens a route to considerations of the Trinity of Christian theology. Rashdall anticipates later 20th and 21st century criticisms of orthodox Christology, made by John A. T. Robinson (1919-1983), John Hick, Don Cupitt and Frances Young, particularly in affirming the significance of Jesus not having claimed divinity for himself.® Even so, Rashdall was consistent in Christ representing the supreme revelation of God through the medium of his life and message. But, as we shall find out in the next section, Rashdall made a valid contribution to 20th century trinitarian theology by linking trinitarian reflection to revelation.

4.4 Trinity

4.4.1 Introduction

This section shows the importance of trinitarian theology for Rashdall's theology of revelation. Rashdall's espousal of trinitarian theology is not characteristic of Broad Church or liberal Protestant theology in general. Again, as in the case of Rashdall's christologies and of his theology of the atonement, the basic outlines and contours of his trinitarian theology are found in his lecture on the Trinity found in Doctrine and Development. Here, Rashdall emphasises the significance of both Augustinian and medieval Scholasticism for trinitarian theology.

This leads on to discussions of trinitarian theology in relation to contemporary debates concerning the Athanasian Creed. Rashdall's trinitarian contribution to the Girton conference will be assessed. Finally, the significance for theologies of revelation of Rashdall's controversy with Charles Gore will be evaluated.

4.4.2 Trinitarian Theology in Doctrine and Development

Rashdall addressed trinitarian theology in his Doctrine and Development. He did not claim originality for his approach, claiming that his trinitarian theology was influenced by Augustine and Aquinas. He outlined a trinitarian theology of revelation.® His 1894 lecture on the Trinity examined the trinitarian theology expounded by Augustine, and his interpretations of Augustine's trinitarian position are controversial, but they represent an enduring characteristic of his outlook. Augustine's

650 Macquarrie J, Jesus Christ in Modern Thought, p. 62.
outlook on the Trinity is located principally in *On The Trinity*, in which he emphasised a parallel, or analogy, between the divine Trinity and the human mind. Rashdall’s other main authority on the Trinity is the medieval scholastic Thomas Aquinas, particularly the discussion of trinitarian doctrine in his *Summa Theologica*.

Rashdall points out that the medieval scholastics, particularly Thomas Aquinas, rely on the principle of analogy when speaking of the Trinity, and stress the ‘relation’, between the persons of the Trinity, represented as ‘the Power of God, the Wisdom of God and his Love or Will’. This theological formula appears throughout Rashdall’s writings. Different activities of the Trinity are understood by Rashdall as being essential to the nature of God, not temporary modes of Being. He appeals to the *Summa Theologica* of Thomas Aquinas in order to refute the allegation of modalism. Rashdall considered orthodox scholastic theologians would have seen debate about a society existing within the Trinity as pure tri-theism. Rashdall would have regarded the Social Trinity model of Canon Peter Green as tri-theism.

Finally, an abiding characteristic of Hastings Rashdall’s thought until at least the Girton conference of 1921, concerned personality and God in relation to the Trinity. Rashdall expounded the theory the Christian Fathers and medieval scholastics elaborated a Trinity of ‘persons’ in the unity of the Godhead; they used the word person in a sense altogether different from modern connotations. Thomas Aquinas, for instance, used the word person in a particular sense when discussing the Trinity, speaking of *Persona* in terms of *Proprietas*, and of *tres Personae* or *tres Proprietates*. Rashdall understood Aquinas to distinguish within the word *Proprietates* three separate, distinct and essential properties, powers or activities, or modes of existence. Rashdall accepted the concept of analogy, and therefore that of mystery, in his discussions of trinitarian theology.

---

653 Ibid. pp. 21-22.
655 Ibid. pp. 21-22.
657 Rashdall quotes from Canon Peter Green, he thought of the divine Persons as, ‘Distinct entities of Will, Knowledge and Desire, functioning in and through one common nature.’ Rashdall, ‘Some Plain Words to Bishop Gore III. Bishop Gore and Thomas Aquinas.’ in *Modern Churchman*, XII (1922), pp. 196-213; p. 209.
659 Ibid. p. 23.
660 Ibid.
661 Ibid.

135
4.4.3 Controversies Relating to the Athanasian Creed

Rashdall addressed the importance of trinitarian theology during a controversy in 1912 concerning the recitation of the Athanasian Creed in Hereford cathedral. He had preached a sermon on 5 January 1913, later published as *The Liturgical Use of the Athanasian Creed*, in which he had noted the Augustinian nature of the Creed, embodying a revelational trinitarian theology. He explained:

> The doctrine of the Holy Trinity expressed in simpler terms – the doctrine that God is a self-revealing God, who has revealed Himself once and for all in a full and in some sense a final manner in the God-person Jesus Christ, and who yet goes on revealing himself through the Holy Spirit.  

Trinitarian theology is thus intrinsically related to revelation, the revelation of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Furthermore, Rashdall affirms that 'these two great revelations correspond to and reveal eternal distinctions in the nature of God'. Rashdall outlines two concepts of the Trinity, namely the immanent Trinity and the economic Trinity: the immanent Trinity concerns the eternal distinctions within the Trinity, while the economic Trinity concerns external relations and the economy of salvation; Rashdall saw the two coming together.

Rashdall noted the presence in the Athanasian Creed of significant philosophical and theological concepts. He compared the practice of theology with a language or dialect; the theology (or language) of the 5th or 6th centuries differs from that of today. This explains why Rashdall's contemporaries often found the language of the Creeds incomprehensible.

Finally for Rashdall, the doctrines affirmed in the Athanasian Creed have been framed in a difficult and ultra-technical way, in the language of philosophy. This creed raises other important questions, such as whether salvation or revelation is extended to non-Christians or to those Christians who did not accept the Athanasian Creed. Rashdall concluded that the statements found in this particular creed compromised the moral character of God and denied the fundamental Christian doctrine that God is love.

---

662 Rashdall, *The Liturgical Use of the Athanasian Creed.*
663 Ibid. p. 4.
664 Ibid.
665 Ibid. p. 5.
666 Ibid. p. 5.
667 Ibid. pp. 11-12.
4.4.4 The Girton Conference: Controversy with Charles Gore

This conference marked a watershed in Anglican modernist theology. Rashdall’s trinitarian theology overlapped with his Logos Christology since a persistent problem for trinitarian reflection concerned distinctions within the Godhead. For example, identifying the Logos with God led to questions concerning the distinctions between the Father and the Logos. Rashdall’s interpretation of Christian doctrinal history envisaged a long process of controversy in patristic times, out of which orthodox Christology evolved. He noted that many of the early Fathers did not view the Logos as a ‘separate Mind, Will, centre of consciousness from the Father’. They were, therefore, modalist or Sabellian in their theology.\(^{668}\)

C. Gore defined the church doctrine of the Trinity in opposition to Rashdall’s interpretation, in his *The Reconstruction of Belief* (1926). He did not go into direct controversy with Rashdall, the discussion is mainly in his notes, but Gore shows a direct acquaintance with the work of Rashdall. Gore defines the doctrine of the Trinity in the following way: he uses a relational model of God subsisting in three persons based on an underlying substance.\(^{\text{Gore, The Reconstruction of Belief, p. 540.}}\) Like Rashdall, Gore is aware of difficulties and ambiguities when relating the concept of person to the Trinity; the word person means different things when applied to the Trinity.\(^{670}\)

Gore notes two main approaches taken to trinitarian theology in patristic and later medieval times. He takes this scheme from a reading of Harnack and the approaches are associated with the Cappadocians, Basil of Caesarea (c329-79) and Gregory of Nazianzus (c329-90), and an outlook associated with the Alexandrian Athanasius, and the Latins, Augustine and Thomas Aquinas.\(^{671}\) The Cappadocians stressed the persons of the Trinity moving on to the unity, while Athanasius and Augustine began with the unity of God.

Gore envisages Rashdall putting forward a conception of Augustine and Aquinas’ trinitarian theology as not emphasising the personality in the Trinity. Rather, the unity of God is stressed, the names Father, Son and Spirit are names for different activities or aspects of the one mind. They are not separate persons.\(^{672}\) This interpretation is central to Rashdall’s trinitarian theology.\(^{673}\)

---

\(^{668}\) Rashdall, *Doctrine and Development*, p. 22.

\(^{669}\) Ibid. p. 541.

\(^{670}\) Ibid. p. 541.

\(^{671}\) Gore mentions Rashdall’s view found in his *Jesus, Human and Divine*, the historical Jesus did not pre-exist, but Gore relies on the testimony of John’s Gospel. Ibid. p. 531. Note 2.

\(^{672}\) Ibid. p. 542.
Still Gore admits Augustine's trinitarian analogy theology, with its outlook of the Trinity as involving a self, thought and will, would not mean three persons in Trinity. This unitarian position is qualified for Gore by Augustine's stress on the Trinity as established by divine revelation. For C. Gore, the essential doctrine of Augustine is found in the Athanasian Creed. The divine being is one mind, one will; present in three persons each containing God. C. Gore outlines his perception of the Trinity, and his use of the word person in relation to the Trinity, in the following terms:

The divine being is one-one substance, one mind, one will. But this divine being exists in three persons, each of whom is whole God in each of whom the divine mind and all the divine attributes exist personally. 674

Gore attempts to reconcile opposing tendencies in trinitarian theology, to emphasise the unity of the Trinity as Rashdall does, rather then the plurality of persons within the Trinity. Gore discusses Aquinas, particularly his Summa Theologica, where Aquinas asserts the subsistence of the divine being in three persons, who are distinct from each other. 675

Rashdall enlisted Athanasius against Gore in order to show that the distinctions between Father and Son in the Trinity were not as Bishop Gore thought, the same as the distinctions between two human beings. 676 Neither Athanasius, nor still less Thomas Aquinas, claimed Rashdall, would have thought of the three persons of the Trinity as three separate minds or 'centres of consciousness', as Gore apparently did. 677

For Rashdall, it was not necessary from the standpoint of reason or orthodoxy to perceive the Word before the Incarnation as possessing a mind or consciousness distinct from that of the Father. For Rashdall, if Christ is proclaimed as God without affirming his humanity, then such a proclamation could be seen as a version of Apollinarianism. Rashdall's discussion of the meaning of the word 'person' caused controversy after the Girton conference. He accused those whom he called 'traditionalist' theologians — including Canon Peter Green — of speaking of three 'persons' of the Trinity, by which they meant 'three minds or centres of consciousness'. Because they did not

---

674 Ibid.
675 Gore disputes Rashdall's interpretation of both Augustine and Aquinas's trinitarian theology. He points out, of Aquinas, 'In article after article of his Summa he asserts, like Augustine, That the Divine being subsists in three eternal and co-equal persons. The relationships in God are not qualities but persons.' Ibid. p. 543.
676 Rashdall, 'Some Plain Words To Bishop Gore: II. Athanasius and Bishop Gore,' in Modern Churchman, XII (1922), pp. 18-20.
677 Ibid. p. 22-23.
perceive God as one mind, the 'traditionalists' were accused by Rashdall of being at odds with Augustinian and scholastic orthodoxy.\(^7\)

Gore, according to Rashdall, had not explained the meaning of the terms *hypostasis* or *persona* when he had expounded trinitarian theology and claimed that the ancient theological sense held true.\(^7\) Thus, a pressing theological issue for Rashdall was to have Gore explain his understanding of personality or person, which Rashdall thought was at the root of the issue in relation to the Trinity.\(^8\)

For Rashdall, doctrines of the Logos and Trinity were expressions of ethical convictions. These had been expanded into metaphysical dogmas under the influence of Greek philosophical terminology and, in this regard, Rashdall followed Harnack in accepting when the Christian church found itself in a Greek milieu, a 'Hellenisation of dogma' had taken place. Here, he expressed the view that it was the divine Logos to whom pre-existence was attributed, not the human Jesus.

Christ revealed God, because the Word or Logos of God is united to the human soul. The purpose of revelation is the redemption of the human race. Issues of the divine humanity of Jesus led to considerations of the human soul of Jesus, posing the question whether it was the same as the eternal person of the Trinity, who appeared as Jesus Christ. C. Montefiore, a Jewish theologian, agreed with the interpretation of the Trinity put forward by Rashdall.\(^8\)

The Logos theology of the Fourth Gospel is influenced and moulded by Greek philosophical speculation. Rashdall poses the question of whether the doctrine of development had stopped. Rather than rejecting ancient formulas, Rashdall envisaged they could be transferred into meanings that modern people could understand. He realised church teaching on the Trinity had not always been the same, and this evolution of doctrine is central to Rashdall’s doctrine of the Trinity.\(^8\) For Rashdall, the essential meaning of the Trinity for Thomas Aquinas concerned the supposition the three persons are three internal relations within the divine Mind.\(^8\) The essential aims of trinitarianism and the Creeds in which they are found are to express the truth of a final revelation of

\(^7\) Rashdall, 'Some Plain Words to Bishop Gore: III. Bishop Gore and Thomas Aquinas,' in *Modern Churchman*, XII (1922), pp. 196-213; p. 209.
\(^8\) Rashdall, 'Some Plain Words To Bishop Gore: II. Athanasius and Bishop Gore,' in *Modern Churchman*, XII (1922), pp. 18-20.
\(^8\) Rashdall, 'The Trinity and The Modern Mind,' in *Principles and Precepts*, p. 39.
\(^8\) Ibid. pp. 43-44.
God in Jesus Christ. This revelation for Rashdall is ongoing, particularly operating in the church, which for Rashdall is the society of Christ's followers.  

4.4.5 Conclusions to Chapter Four

The atonement, in particular, became related to Rashdall's revelational theology. Medieval theologies of the atonement had influenced Rashdall, as well as earlier Victorian interpretations of the atonement, particularly on the issue of the relation between revelation and atonement. An important medieval theologian for Rashdall was Abelard, framer of the 'Abelardian view of the atonement'. Later 19th century theologies of the atonement, even if they stressed the objective, sacrificial aspect of the atonement, nevertheless gave a more prominent place to exemplarist theologies of the atonement. Christ's example inspired humanity because of its exemplary nature.

Rashdall discussed medieval theologies of atonement, which included Abelard and Anselm. Abelard rejected then current Ransom theories of atonement where Christ's death released humanity from captivity to Satan. Rashdall also criticised Anselm's theology of atonement where it was envisaged Christ's death paid the penalty for human sin. Rashdall, it has been argued, made an original contribution to theologies of the atonement by linking the doctrine of the atonement to his notion of revelation. Christ is seen by Rashdall as the supreme revelation of God, who is unsurpassed due to the perfect moral ideal made manifest in the words, character and deeds of his life. The significance of the atonement lay in its ethical dimension, which constitutes the most important component of his understanding of atonement.

Rashdall's *Doctrine and Development* established a link between atonement and sacrifice. Rashdall highlighted Westcott's interpretation of The New Testament, *Epistle to The Hebrews*. This extolled the sacrificial nature of the death of Christ, as a sacrifice of the heart and will. Themes utilised by Rashdall, especially his interpretation of sacrifice, re-emerged in 20th century theologies of atonement. The work of Christ is a revelation of love. This theology of atonement by Christ's death on the Cross produced repentance and moral regeneration in believers. The primary significance of the atonement is soteriological but with an ethical dimension.

Contemporary political events, particularly the First World War, influenced Rashdall's revelatory theology. God suffered with his creation. Rashdall anticipated Jürgen Moltmann's theology of a crucified God. During the time of the First World War, he speaks of a God who suffered through humanity because of the Incarnation. Rashdall's theology of atonement was extremely influential but it faced, and continues to face, severe criticism. Later 20th century critics

---

684 Rashdall, 'Trinitarian Doctrine from St Athanasius to Thomas Aquinas,' in *God and Man*, p. 121.
Rashdall’s contribution to Anglican and 20th century discussions of the atonement was a positive one, in contrast to his far more controversial views on Christology.

Rashdall’s concept of revelation is central to his christologies and is particularly evident in his emphasis on Christ as revealer. The concept of revelation is conjoined to his christologies. Rashdall did not put forward a single Christology, but elaborated several during his career, including Sonship, degree and Logos christologies. Rashdall expanded his degree Christology. He affirmed that Christ had felt that the divine nature had been communicated to him to an exceptional degree.

Rashdall published a 1907 paper on the relation between religion and history which related to christological issues, and he discussed the relation between the Christ of faith and history. But Rashdall did not rely on history alone (and, by implication, on the contemporary quest for the historical Jesus) to confirm Jesus of Nazareth. The role and work of the Spirit is recognised as essential. Here Rashdall is not simply an excessive idealist or rationalist.

During the first decade of the 20th century the liberal-modernist project came under attack by the advent of the so-called eschatological question. Raised by A. Schweitzer, it focused on the importance of the apocalyptic side of Jesus Christ’s message. This proved a problem for Rashdall’s revelatory theology in that it maintained Jesus’ revelation of ethics was only temporary and invalidated. Rashdall met this challenge by promoting a realised eschatology; it envisaged a gradual realisation of the Kingdom of God. Critics of this approach included G. Tyrrell. Rashdall met the challenge but his Victorian ideas of inevitable progress were threatened.

Rashdall made a significant contribution to 20th century Anglican theology at a conference of Liberal Anglican clergymen, the 1921 Girton conference, when he promoted a Logos Christology. His appeal to a Logos Christology was intended to safeguard the absolute revelation of God in Christ and the character of Christ revealed the fullest disclosure of God.

Rashdall anticipated later 20th century criticisms of orthodox Christology, particularly in attributing significance to Jesus not having claimed divinity for himself. Here, the negative and reductive aspects of Rashdall’s christological outlook show he was sceptical about concrete historical evidence existing for the establishment of Christ’s divinity. But despite the criticisms of his position, the uniqueness of the revelation of God given by Jesus Christ was always the key to Rashdall’s preaching and teaching. Rashdall’s later christological position minimised Christ’s consciousness of

---

685 Rashdall, ‘In What Sense was Christ the Son of God?’ in The Christian World Pulpit, p. 5.
686 Ibid. p. 6.
his own divinity, but his emphasis on Christ as the revealer of God was central. Rashdall's christologies could be labelled as idealist. His criticisms of Christology anticipate the later 20th century positions held by John A. T. Robinson, John Hick and Don Cupitt.

Trinitarian theology was a central preoccupation of Rashdall. He made a valid contribution to 20th century trinitarian theology by linking it to revelation. Rashdall did not claim originality for his trinitarian theology.\(^{687}\) Trinitarian theology is intrinsically related to revelation, the revelation of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

As observed, Rashdall had affirmed the trinitarian theology of Augustine and Aquinas, with the Trinity representing an analogy of 'distinct mental activities of one human mind'. But perhaps Rashdall ignored the concept of perichoresis, the mutual indwelling of the persons of the Trinity which would have clarified the problem. He placed trinitarian reflection in regard to the Athanasian Creed, the Girton conference and trinitarian controversy. Rashdall outlined his basic trinitarian theology in his *Doctrine and Development*; the reality of the Trinity for Rashdall was established by revelation. The Trinity for Rashdall represented Power, Wisdom, and Love.

Rashdall's Logos Christology had trinitarian connections. As we have seen, C. Gore indirectly answered Rashdall's criticisms of his trinitarian theology, especially his *Reconstruction of Christian Belief*. Gore defined the Trinity in terms of personal relations, God subsisting in three persons. He acknowledges Augustine's Trinity theology is based on divine revelation. Revelational theology plays a fundamental regulatory role determining both the form and content of the theology and theological method of Rashdall. His theologies of atonement, Christology and Trinity were conditioned by revelational theology.

---

\(^{687}\) Rashdall, *Doctrine and Development*, p. 23.
Chapter Five: Evaluations and Conclusions

5.1 Evaluation of Rashdall's Revelational Theology

This chapter evaluates the revelational theology of Rashdall; it addresses criticisms of his theological project, and his revelational theology is assessed in relation to modern theology. Several themes emerge from this discussion: the significance of salvation history for revelation, Christ is the summation of salvation history; revelation is the self-disclosure of God, rather than the acquisition of supernatural knowledge; doctrines of inspiration changed, revelation is now mediated through Scripture by the process of divine inspiration, particularly concerning the interpretation of scripture. As we have seen, one of Rashdall's unique contributions to his revelational theology is his focus on ethics, and his insistence that revelation is ethical and progressive.

Rashdall discussed revelation in regard to philosophical issues. Jesus Christ was presented as the fullest revelation of God, as Rashdall harmonised idealist philosophy with Christian revelation. Rashdall placed revelation in relation to doctrinal development. Yet his revelational theology and theological project has faced criticism; his entire theological legacy and heritage was often judged purely in the light of the controversies surrounding the 1921 Girton conference.

An example: Rashdall's concentration on ethics is criticised by Alister McGrath. In particular, McGrath criticises Rashdall's principles which rely on a foundationalism criticised by postmodernism. McGrath's basic criticisms of Rashdall include the charge he concentrated too much on Christian ethics in relation to salvation. Humanity is saved by following the ideals of Christ, rather than by the grace of Christ.\(^{688}\)

On the question of whether Rashdall was an agent of secularisation, he vindicated revelation and emphasised the role of the Holy Spirit in continuing revelation, a point attested to by H. D. A. Major.

This chapter evaluates the revelational theology of Rashdall, contextualising and defining both its role and significance. Rashdall's revelational theology can be evaluated using the typologies of George Lindbeck, Hans Frei and H. R. Niebuhr, and it can be judged as being appropriate to deal with the changing circumstances and differing theologies of his day. I shall also address the issues of critiques of Rashdall in this chapter, as well as the centrality of Ritschlianism and theological modernism in his work. Lindbeck, Dulles and Frei will be used to assess the validity of Rashdall's revelational theology. Criticisms of Rashdall's theology of revelation will be assessed in relation to

\(^{688}\) McGrath, *Christian Theology*, p. 219.
present-day modern theology, evaluating its viability and relevance. Finally, Rashdall's revelatory theology will be considered in the light of current theological reflection by referencing Avery Dulles and F. G. Downing to help me position Rashdall within current understandings of the theology of revelation.

5.2 Critiques of Rashdall

As I have already established, the theology of Rashdall has largely been ignored and his influence marginalised because his theological project was judged in relation to his contribution to the 1921 Girton conference. It was seen in a negative light by theological opinion in general, but I have shown that an examination of the theology of Rashdall corrects often distorted and one-sided perspectives of his work.

One critique of Rashdall's ethical position is outlined by A. McGrath, on the grounds that Rashdall held a strongly exemplarist view of the moral and soteriological relevance of Jesus Christ. Serious criticisms of Rashdall made by McGrath centre on his idealist and ethical presuppositions; for McGrath, the view of Christ as a moral example is inextricably linked with a deficient view of human nature. A theological anthropology ignoring the concept of human sin, exemplarism locates the moral authority of the narrative of Jesus of Nazareth in its reflection of previously recognised human values, the validity of which is independent of him. This entailed an ethic addressed to an idealised humanity. These major criticisms of Rashdall made by McGrath centre on his idealist and ethical presuppositions. For McGrath, Rashdall's stress on the ideals of Christ harmonises with his philosophical idealism. This applies to Rashdall's ethical evaluation of Jesus Christ. MacGrath perceived Rashdall to have minimised the role of Christ as redeemer and instead just saw him as a moral exemplar.

5.3 Rashdall on Ritschlianism

Rashdall held a lifelong interest in German academic theology and history. His revelational theology is influenced by the Ritschlian school, particularly by its insistence on Christ as the revelation of God. Moreover, Rashdall was influenced by Harnack's insistence on the appeal to the life, character and teaching of Christ. Rashdall is not an uncritical Ritschlian and, as a philosopher, he disagreed with the Ritschlian depreciation of philosophy. Rather than emphasising Christ in terms of metaphysics or the Trinity, Ritschlians portray Christ as the full and complete revelation of God.

---

690 Ibid.
691 Rashdall, 'Ritschlianism,' pp. 19-43.
Christ conveys knowledge of God rather than philosophical insights into, for example, the nature or essence of the deity.  

Rashdall saw Ritschlianism as an attitude of mind rather than a fixed system of doctrine. Alfred Ernest Garvie (1861-1945) who wrote an important study of Ritschlian theology in 1889, thought that Ritschlian theology failed to interpret the New Testament correctly.

Rashdall situated the origins of Ritschlianism amongst three circumstances of the religious situation in Germany: firstly, a reaction against Hegelianism, coupled with attempts to express religious ideas in philosophical modes; secondly, the view that Christianity could not be proved by miracles, and a stress on the unique spiritual teaching of Christ; and thirdly, a tradition of Lutheran Evangelicalism with its doctrines of justification by faith, with a tendency towards individualistic and emotional piety. Ritschlianism was an attempt to combine Christianity with an acceptance of modern knowledge. Ritschl's hostility to Pietism was due to his outlook that Pietism would be a kind of mysticism. Rashdall explained Ritschl based his theology on 'the permanent truth and unique value of the ideal taught by Christ in work, act and character'. Ethics and morality are the foundation of Christianity, not the Pietist stress on a personal faith allied with the growth of holiness. Ritschl would have agreed with Kant's stress on ethics and on Christ as a teacher, and also his dislike of theological metaphysics. The Ritschlian depreciates metaphysical and philosophical proofs and arguments for the existence of God. Ritschl also followed Kant's stress on practical reason and the importance of conscience.

Rashdall became influenced in his revelational theology by Ritschlianism in several respects. In particular, its stress on Christ as the perfect revelation of God, who gives practical saving knowledge of God, rather than insights into his metaphysical nature or the essence of the Trinity. As a result, the divinity of Christ is asserted, but in a subjective manner. Christ has the value of God to the believer and is the only avenue of approach to the Father. Rashdall follows the emphasis of the Ritschlians on ethics, and agreed with their disparagement of mysticism. He endorses the ideas of Ritschl concerning the true basis of Christianity as the effect which the Gospel picture of Christ's life and teachings has on a person's heart and conscience, but seems curiously unaware of the theology of Schleiermacher, because of Schleiermacher's emphasis on the centrality of religious experience.

---

692 Rashdall, 'Ritschlianism,' p. 33.
693 Alfred Garvie, The Ritschlian Theology Critical and Constructive: An Exposition and Estimate (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1902)
694 Rashdall, 'Ritschlianism,' p. 40.
696 Rashdall, 'Ritschlianism,' p. 35.
Rashdall studied Ritschl and knew of Schleiermacher which shows considerable originality as their works were only translated into English in the early part of the 20th century. Rashdall commented on the Ritschlian depreciation of philosophy, perceiving it as a weakness: the Ritschlian 'is contemptuous of all philosophical defences of theism and of philosophical presentations of Christianity'. Attempts to base religion on a philosophical scepticism or agnosticism have been made throughout the history of Christian thought, but for Rashdall Christianity would become impossible for thoughtful men once its theistic base is perceived as not rational.

The central Ritschlian doctrine of the Fatherhood of God is itself seen as a metaphysical doctrine by Rashdall. Value judgements assured us of the existence of God. The teaching of Harnack is perceived by Rashdall as a refined and cultivated form of Evangelicalism. Rashdall calls Harnack a modern person, and he agrees with W. Sanday's criticism that when Harnack uses the words, doctrine, Church or worship, he rarely mentions them without disparagement. Rashdall sees the great defect of Ritschlianism as its having no idea of development, and this is at the root of its criticism of philosophy, dogma and Christian society. Rashdall perceives a corrective to this tendency as being provided in the teaching of the French Roman Catholic modernist Abbé Loisy who does not isolate Christ, like the Ritschlians, from doctrines of the development of doctrine.

The influence of German theology in Anglican theology became marked throughout the latter half of the 19th century; Rashdall in particular is influenced by German liberal Protestantism. However, not all clergy or indeed Anglican theology, subscribed to this influence. The term 'liberal Protestant', used to describe 19th and 20th century German theologians, is a label rather than a reality. Many German theologians were not 'liberal' at all, in the sense known in Britain. The reality is more complex and nuanced. Finally, non-doctrinal factors affected the reception of Ritschlian theology in Britain, especially the First World War, giving a reason why Rashdall's liberal theology had made him a marginal figure in Anglican theology. The Ritschlians, particularly Harnack, were enthusiastic supporters of Germany in the First World War and as a result, their reputation and theological outlook was condemned.

697 Ibid, p. 29.
698 Rashdall uses the term in his article, 'Ritschlianism,' p. 42.
699 Ibid. p. 40.
702 Schleiermacher for Graf never called himself a liberal in theology. Rather he envisaged himself as a 'mediating theologian.' Ernst Troeltsch (1865-1923 ) and Wilhelm Bousset (1865-1920) used the term in a pejorative fashion to characterise an over optimistic theology which failed to come to terms with the fragmentation and pluralism involved with the advent of modernity. For Graf the term 'liberal' rather describes 'cultural theologies,' focusing on a universal faith in humanity. Ibid, p. 25-28.
5.4 The Significance of Theological Modernism for Rashdall’s Revelatory Theology

During the early 20th century, liberal theology gradually became known as modernism; although the movement had its own distinct characteristics, it had affinities to 19th century liberalism. Modernism, similar to theological liberalism, had emerged due to the rise of historical criticism, the growing influence of utilitarian theory and the theory of evolution. Basic characteristics of modernism include a belief that the Christian faith needs to be restated in the light of current knowledge. George Tyrrell’s famous summary is influential: a modernist is a person who believes in a synthesis between the essential truths of religion and modernity.\(^3\)

Anglican modernism was a product of totally different circumstances than Roman Catholic modernism. The former was a product of theological liberalism, while the latter, with its representatives who included Tyrrell, Loisy and von Hügel, was a movement who protested against the neo-scholastic theology and ethos of the early 20th century Roman Catholic church. In particular, the neo-Scholastic view of revelation which envisaged revelation as the appropriation of doctrinal propositions.

Rashdall aimed to rethink traditional theology which he thought had become unintelligible to modern people who did not have a technical knowledge of its history and content. Theology, for Rashdall, has to be reconstructed in the light of modern philosophy, science and criticism, and these were modernist principles. Another characteristic of modernist theology is its sympathy towards the emerging field of comparative religion. Several core beliefs of modernist theologians have re-emerged in contemporary 20th and 21st century religious debate; these include the importance of religious experience, and the question of whether belief in an objective God is compatible with contemporary philosophy and science. Hastings Rashdall, in his work on the doctrine of the atonement, had shown an awareness of the development and history of doctrine and showed a modernisation of Christian belief taking place. By modernisation, it could be said later 19th century Christian theology was influenced by modernity, including the growth of new sciences, and the impact of the historical critical method.

P. Badham assesses Rashdall in connection with his 1921 Girton College elaboration of a Logos Christology.\(^4\) An abiding characteristic of liberal-modernist theologians was their claim that Christ is a revelation of God, a position maintained by Rashdall. This view led to discussions of the

---

\(^{3}\) Tyrrell G, *Christianity at The Crossroads*, p. xv. Tyrrell defines modernism in the following, 'The hope of a synthesis between the essentials of Christianity and the assured results of criticism is very widespread nowadays, and those who share it are commonly called Modernists or Liberals.'

relation between Christianity and the world religions. The attitude towards world religions of the modernist theologians emphasised a movement away from exclusive claims for Christianity towards a 'fulfilment' model. Rashdall envisaged God as being present in other religions, but viewed these religions as preparing the ground for a future disclosure of Christ.

A difference in modernist theology emerged between the classic position of modernism and the more radical movements which have superseded it. Rather than the classical liberal Protestant and modernist approach of keeping to the essentials of the faith and re-interpreting them, more radical theologians wanted to change the basic structure of Christian belief, as illustrated in the theology of Don Cupitt. So the established modernist movement faced both right and left-wing challenges; there were therefore varieties of both modern and post-modern theologies.

The modernists had been confident of being able to find the real historical Jesus. P. Badham interprets liberal theology in the early 20th century as having taken up the approach of Harnack, in religious approach and critical methodology. Broadly speaking, Harnack's approach centred on the historical Jesus as retrieved by historical-critical scholarship, as well as his stress on the ethics of Christ and a concentration on the realisation of the Kingdom of Heaven. His approach was influential.

Rashdall, as a liberal theologian, can be seen to exemplify an approach emphasising freedom of interpretation without denying tradition and authority within the Christian faith. This approach influenced his theology of revelation. As we have observed, the 19th century saw the rise of historical-critical methodologies and the natural sciences. Perhaps the origins of Christian liberalism could be found in several different sources, particularly in the theology of the medieval scholastics; a theme found in Rashdall, especially the attempt to apply reason to faith and the placing of religion 'upon a rational foundation'. Scholasticism promoted reason and placed a harmony between Faith and reason, concerns later found in Christian liberalism.

Rashdall's revelational theology influenced Anglican modernism. A. Stephenson summarised the basic beliefs associated with the English modernists, and the theological positions associated with Rashdall. His summary is taken from Adam Fox (1883-1977), Dean Inge and Hastings Rashdall's *Conscience and Christ*.

Characteristically, English modernist Christology was a degree Christology. Furthermore, Jesus was not seen as an eschatological prophet, rather as 'The Lord of Thought who proclaimed the

---

705 Rashdall, 'The Scholastic Theology,' in *Ideas and Ideals*, p. 165.  
Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. The modernists' doctrine of atonement was Abelardian or exemplarist. The findings of the latest Biblical scholarship were accepted, Jesus did not perform miracles, his resurrection was a spiritual one and the Virginal Conception did not take place. But on a more positive note, modernists believed in personal immortality and were universalists. Rashdall pioneered or espoused most of these beliefs, with the exception of adoptionism and universalism.

Perhaps more importantly for the English modernist, exemplified by Rashdall himself, ethics were more essential than dogmas and doctrines, and dogmatic definitions were kept to a minimum. A great gulf did not exist between the sacred and the secular, and a modernist would describe himself as a liberal Protestant. Modernists were interested in social questions, and Hastings Rashdall was a member of the Christian Social Union.

The word 'modernist' eventually began to be used in the wider sense of a large movement of religious thought embracing Anglican, British non-conformists, and American and Continental Protestants. Anglican Modern Churchmen did not openly espouse the name 'modernists' until after a conference they held at Girton in 1919. Their Churchmen's Union for the Advancement of Liberal Thought became the Modern Churchmen's Union in 1928.

Stephenson maintains that the high point of modernism was between 1920 and 1940. The Church of England's Doctrine Report in 1938 legitimated the right of modernists to be in the Church of England. But he also states the end of the movement in England took place in 1961 when H. D. A. Major died, and the Conference held by Norman Pittenger in Somerville in 1967, brought the modernist era to a close.

Stephenson holds Major's William Belden Noble Lectures, English Modernism, Its Origins, Methods, Aims, published in 1927, as a definitive summary of Anglican English modernism and Major had been editor of Rashdall's Principles and Precepts (1927). Other colleagues of Hastings Rashdall included W. R. Inge and P. Gardner, who were Presidents of the Churchmen's Union. So the revelatory theology of Hastings Rashdall has been shown to be widely influential in the theological movement known as Anglican modernism. Core modernist beliefs were either associated with, or formulated by, Rashdall.

---

707 Ibid. 708 Ibid. 709 Ibid. p. 13.
5.5 Rashdall and Post-modernism; Rashdall and Post-liberal Theology

Rashdall's revelational theology can be evaluated by post-modernist and post-liberal theologies. These movements have been widely influential from the latter half of the 20th century. An evaluation of them can shed light on both the limitations and the possibilities of Rashdall's revelatory theology.

As observed, during the 20th century Rashdall's theology of revelation, together with his theological liberalism, have been criticised on several grounds. Other influential movements include post-modernism and post-liberalism, and all can be seen as species of modern theology. Graham Ward points out post-modernism is a moment within modernism. Post-modernism is a complex phenomenon with diverse trends and is a reaction against modernity itself.

The emergence of post-modernism has implications for the 'modern' theology of revelation held by Rashdall. Post-modernism emerged as a movement among 1960's French intellectuals who rejected the notion of a universal reason which was neutral and disinterested. They abandoned the concept of autonomous individuality along with a belief in absolute objectivity; a procedure which has significant implications for theology and the theological method. Rashdall stressed the appropriation of revelation by the individual and the importance of reason in the apprehension of revelation.

The perception of history held by Rashdall, including the view of a universal progressive continuing revelation, is abandoned. Post-modernism frowns on metanarratives involving large total explanations of history, with comprehensive explanatory frameworks of culture and science. Pluralism is encouraged and language is seen as a social construction. The grand metanarratives of existentialism, structuralism and Marxism are now deemed to be redundant. A basic characteristic of liberal theology is an association with the historical critical method, of which Rashdall as a noted historian was an exponent. One type of liberal theology concentrates on theistic belief as discovered by examining the character of human experience in the world; other types of liberal theology start from an authoritatively given tradition of faith and then apply liberal modes of critical application.

---

712 Rashdall, Doctrine and Development, p. 25.
714 Ibid.

150
Rashdall’s assumptions of the self contained individual, and his relying on the centrality of reason for the human subject and its objectivity, can thus be criticised in a radical manner.

Basic fundamental criticisms of both Enlightenment and liberal theology emerged from a movement of Yale theologians, including George Lindbeck, later characterised as post-liberal theology. Post-liberal theology, in particular, criticised the theological and philosophical presuppositions behind Rashdall’s theology of revelation.

5.6.1 Rashdall and George Lindbeck

An influential theological typology has been outlined by Lindbeck and this can be used to evaluate Rashdall’s revelatory theology. Lindbeck’s three main interpretative models are: the propositionalist, the experiential-expressivist, and the cultural-linguistic model. Lindbeck’s *The Nature of Doctrine* (1984) contains ideas characteristic of the later post-liberal theological school. The study is concerned with doctrine which has a bearing on theologies of revelation. Lindbeck regards modern theology as influenced by a propositionalist approach which understands doctrine as pieces of information, conveying truth-claims about an objective reality.

As established in Chapter Two, the propositionalist approach can be applied to 19th century theologies of revelation, where revelation was understood to convey supernatural truths. So, Rashdall cannot be evaluated as conveying a propositionalist approach in this sense. The advantages of the propositionalist model is a certain objectivity given to Christian truth-claims and therefore, of doctrines of revelation. However, a criticism of this approach concerns the supposition that this approach cannot account for doctrinal change. Lindbeck asserts in no way can the meanings of doctrines change while remaining the same doctrine. So doctrines must remain the same or be discarded and doctrinal change cannot happen.

But it can be argued that Rashdall’s approach, despite his concentration on Christ embodying revelation, is propositionalist due to his stress on recovering the ideals of Christ and his estimation of Christianity as a revelation of ethics. Rashdall would have insisted on the objectivity of the Christian revelation, but in terms of a relationship with Christ. This relationship is expressed in a

---

717 Ibid. pp. 231-234.
719 Ibid. p. 16.
society, headed by Christ, which forms part of the relation between 'the three great authorities, Conscience, Christ and Church', thus embodying the ethical and the institutional.\textsuperscript{720}

Lindbeck criticises F. Schleiermacher and liberal theologians for holding an 'experiential-expressivist' model of theology which perceives doctrines as symbols of inner feelings and orientations.\textsuperscript{721} Lindbeck promotes a cultural-linguistic approach which treats theology as a grammar; doctrines are functional and legitimated by a community. The project of theology is a working out of a subculture and 'form of life'. Lindbeck's experiential-expressivism model in general was not shared by Rashdall, but his colleague, W. R. Inge exhibited experiential-expressive tendencies.\textsuperscript{722} Rashdall had to contend with this approach in order to justify his revelatory theology.

Analysing Lindbeck's \textit{Nature of Doctrine} is significant for Rashdall's revelatory theology, when Lindbeck discusses the relation between religion and experience. Surprisingly, Lindbeck points out the experiential-expressive approach has a place in the cultural-linguistic model.\textsuperscript{723} The reflective language of the mystics is different from that of the trained theologian, who relies on theoretical knowledge and uses recognised procedures in their theology.

Where Rashdall and Lindbeck meet is an insistence by Lindbeck of the importance of language for articulating doctrine, which could be transposed to revelation. The apprehension of revelation relates language and a pre-given interpretative scheme handed down in the practice, theology and tradition of the Christian community. A pre-cognitive, unmediated religious experience does not exist; it has to be appropriated through the medium of language.

Rashdall does discuss the priority of language in relation to theology in his pamphlet 'The Liturgical Use of the Athanasian Creed' (1913) when relating trinitarian theology to revelation.\textsuperscript{724} Rashdall holds that theology of a certain era, for example the patristic, may become incomprehensible for modern people and he compares theology to a dialect which needs to be reformulated in order to be intelligible. But there is no such thing as a private language. Revelational theology involves public discourse and verification. Rashdall, as a late 19th and early 20th century theologian, was not aware of this approach and yet he stressed the communal nature of doctrinal utterances in relation to his revelatory theology.


\textsuperscript{722} Inge laid stress on religious and mystical experience when he commented, 'We take the mystical experience quite seriously as a revelation of ultimate truth.' Inge, W, \textit{Mysticism in Religion} (London: Hutchinson's, 1947) p. 10.

\textsuperscript{723} Lindbeck, \textit{The Nature of Doctrine}, p. 31.

\textsuperscript{724} Rashdall, \textit{The Liturgical Use of the Athanasian Creed}, pp. 4-5.
5.6.2 Rashdall and Hans Frei

Another theologian associated with the Yale School is Hans Frei, whose typology can be applied to Rashdall's revelatory theology. H. Frei outlined five main types of Christian theology which define theological approach, method and theologians.\(^{725}\)

The first type repeats a traditional theology or received version of Christianity, conceiving all reality on its own terms, with no recognition of the significance of other perspectives which have emerged over the centuries. While the second type gives priority to the self-description of the Christian community. This approach is characteristic of theologians, including Anselm of Canterbury with his dictum that faith seeks understanding. It emphasises the priority of the Christian identity with reality interpreted in its light, but still insists Christianity has to engage with its contemporary world and its concerns.

The third type, characteristic of the approach of Paul Tillich and David Tracy, uses correlation. This aims to bring Christian faith and understanding into dialogue with modernity and tries to relate the two; in this approach, the modern world poses the questions which Christianity answers. The fourth type also exemplifies an approach which utilises a modern philosophy to interpret Christianity, integrating Christianity into the understanding of modernity. Christianity is subservient to current philosophical understandings, particularly secular understandings. Finally, a complete priority of a contemporary world view takes place in the fifth type, and Christianity is subservient to it. Christian faith and practice is assessed and valued by criteria external to Christianity.

Rashdall's revelatory theology can be assessed using this typology. His theology is definitely not Type 1 as it is not hermetically sealed from contemporary thought. Rather, Rashdall's theological modernist approach has affinities with Type 2 because Rashdall aimed to re-interpret and explain Christianity to the contemporary world. For him faith had to be rational, but informed by faith; he believed faith did seek understanding.\(^{726}\) The Type 3 theology of correlation did not fit Rashdall's interest in Abelard, although his ethics did aim to meet contemporary concerns and problems.

Rashdall's theology certainly has elements of Type 4. His utilising of idealistic philosophy did influence his theological approach. However, he would say his theology and philosophy, rather than


his philosophical theology, acknowledged the primacy of the revelation of God in Christ. This was
the centre-point of his theological and philosophical method. Rashdall harmonised his idealism with
the 'true ideal of human life', where Christ was necessarily revealing the eternal nature of God.\textsuperscript{728}

Rashdall has been open to criticism from K. Clements amongst others, of unconsciously
adopting Type 5. But in fact, Rashdall is seen as adopting a position only similar to Frei's Type 5.
Rashdall always maintained the centrality of Christian revelation, that God is uniquely revealed
through Christ.\textsuperscript{729}

Perhaps Rashdall would have seen contemporary philosophical movements as promoting a
kind of natural theology, valid for Christianity, similar to the medieval scholastics' use of Aristotelian
philosophy to present the Christian message. This approach is a respected one but it has had fierce
critics, ranging from Harnack's thesis that Christianity was corrupted by Greek philosophy, to the
early K. Barth's strictures against natural theology. Rowan Williams has pointed out medieval
scholasticism achieved for the 13th century what Feminism and Liberation theology are doing
today.\textsuperscript{730} Type 5 does not apply to Rashdall, since he asserted the centrality of the Christian
revelation over other philosophical and ideological systems.

\subsection*{5.6.3 Rashdall and H. Richard Niebuhr}

H. Richard Niebuhr's \textit{Christ and Culture} (1951) provides another useful typology which can be used
to evaluate Rashdall's revelatory theology.\textsuperscript{731} Niebuhr believes a perennial problem of Christianity to
be its relation to culture, and this was a question which Rashdall, as a liberal modernist, clearly
faced.

Niebuhr's Type 1 stresses the opposition between Christ and culture, while his Type 2
envisages a fundamental agreement between Christ and culture.\textsuperscript{732} In Type 3, Christ is above culture
and yet transcends it.\textsuperscript{733} Type 4 highlights the paradox between Christ and culture, and finally Type 5
stresses Christ as transformer of culture.\textsuperscript{734}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{727} Rashdall, \textit{Doctrine and Development}, p. 111.
\item \textsuperscript{728} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{729} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{730} Rowan Williams, \textit{On Christian Theology}, p. xiv.
\item \textsuperscript{731} H. Richard. Niebuhr, \textit{Christ and Culture} (New York: Harper & Row, 1951)
\item \textsuperscript{732} Ibid. Type 1, pp. 60-81. Also Type 2, pp. 101-108.
\item \textsuperscript{733} Ibid. Type 3, pp. 145-147.
\item \textsuperscript{734} Ibid. Type 4, pp. 171-187. Also Type 5, pp. 194-207.
\end{itemize}
Niebuhr gives examples of theologians associated with each type. Tertullian is representative of Type 1 as he substituted revelation for reason. Hastings Rashdall would have been a representative of Type 2 where Christ and culture are accommodated; Christ is harmonised with society, and revelation is compatible with the surrounding culture. Niebuhr cites Abelard and Ritschl as representatives of this group and these figures, as we have discovered, had a decisive influence on Rashdall. Revelation, for this group, is essentially the religious name for a process of reasoning growing in history. Niebuhr criticises this outlook, and indirectly Rashdall, for its emphasis on Jesus as a teacher rather than as Jesus as the Christ. Revelation cannot simply be equated with reason.

Niebuhr notes the perspective of Christ as above culture, the third type, is a part of the mainstream Christian tradition and holds one of its main representatives to be Thomas Aquinas. Christ is embedded in culture but transcends it in a creative synthesis. Rashdall's revelatory theology exhibits elements of this approach, particularly where the ethics of culture have to be harmonised with those of the Gospel. An exemplar of this approach, noted by Niebuhr, was Bishop Joseph Butler whose work *Anology of Religion* related ethics, philosophy and revelation. As we have discovered, Rashdall was influenced by Butler. The synthesis approach is attractive to Niebuhr but because of historical change, he held that the synthesis cannot be final due to the contingencies of history, time and circumstance.

In his fourth classification, Niebuhr subsequently mentions a paradox between Christ and culture. The previous model can be criticised for having an inadequate perception of radical evil in the world which precluded any easy harmony between Christ and culture. The paradoxical approach can be construed as dualist as it contrasts the fallen-ness of the world against the priority of God's grace. In Niebuhr's view, Luther exemplifies this approach.

Leading on from the dualist model, the final and conversionist model is similar, but distinctive from it. Theologians associated with Christ as the transformer of culture include Augustine, F. D. Maurice and John Wesley. They exhibit a more positive attitude to culture than the dualists mentioned previously. Likewise for Rashdall, who perceived Christ as transforming creation in the Incarnation, through the agency of the Word of God. History is the story of an ever present encounter with God. The Gospel of John contains themes compatible with the conversionist motif. John's Gospel places salvation, the membership of the Kingdom of God, as a present event not just a

---

735 This approach emphasized Tertullian's celebrated maxim, 'What has Athens to do with Jerusalem,' contrasting Greek philosophy with Hebraic thought. The events of salvation history. Ibid. p. 77.

736 Ibid. p. 111.
part of the eschatological future. Rashdall concurred with all these themes, especially where historical and spiritual interpretation intersect.

For Niebuhr, F. D. Maurice is the clearest exponent of the conversionalist idea. The Kingdom of God may be within but is also present to transform the World. Rashdall wrote an appreciation of F. D. Maurice in 1920 examining his theological opinions, and noting his stress on the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of humanity. Rashdall noted Maurice’s distinct emphasis on the social role of the church, allied with a stress on the Kingdom of God as transforming society, not just through the agency of the church. 737

Finally, Niebuhr’s survey concluded that the world of culture exists within the domain of grace which represents Christ’s Kingdom. Explaining why he favoured the conversionalist model, Rashdall wrote an appreciation of culture in an 1897 article entitled ‘Christ and Culture’. 738 He envisaged Christ’s revelation in moral and spiritual terms, not primarily intellectual; the character of God was revealed through him and Christ’s message appealed to the conscience, not the speculative intellect. But Rashdall also thought intellectual work or secular knowledge had a place, which places him in the conversionalist model of Christian transformation.

5.6.4 Rashdall and Post-modernism; Rashdall and Post-liberal Theology. Conclusion

As we have seen, Rashdall’s revelational theological methodology can be evaluated utilising the typologies of Lindbeck, Frei and Niebuhr. Rashdall’s revelational theology can be criticised by post-modern methodologies which eschew grand narratives of history and theories of progressive revelation. Lindbeck’s typology of theological approaches can fault Rashdall’s stress on the importance of the ideals of Christ, which can be construed as propositionalist.

Rashdall’s approach can be further assessed by Frei’s typology, where Rashdall’s revelatory theology exhibits characteristics of Type 2 where Christianity is harmonised with contemporary culture, which would fit Rashdall’s modernist pre-suppositions. Rashdall is influenced by philosophical movements, characteristic of Type 4 but not of Type 5, because his revelatory theology is centred on the revelation of God through Christ. Niebuhr’s typology leads to the conclusion that Rashdall’s revelatory theology exhibits a synthesis between Christ and culture; in addition, that revelation involves a creative transformation of society, i.e. the conversionalist model.

737 Rashdall, ‘Frederick Denison Maurice,’ in Principles and Precepts, pp. 154-163; p. 159.
738 Rashdall, ‘Christ and Culture,’ Chapter XIV (1897) in Doctrine and Development, pp. 229-246; p. 232.
5.7. Avery Dulles on Revelation

Rashdall's revelatory theology can also be evaluated using Avery Dulles' five models of revelation. These are revelation as doctrine, history, inner experience, dialectical presence and new awareness. For Dulles, Jesus Christ is subsistent revelation, a position he finds outlined in 2 Corinthians 4.4-6 and Hebrews 1.1-2. The revelation which he has been given becomes revelation insofar as Christ is recognised as Son and redeemer. Different manners, modes and degrees constitute revelation. Our apprehension of the divine truth is obscure, full revelation and its appropriation will take place in the next life, and with the Second Coming of Christ. Johannine terminology uses the term 'reveal' in a future tense which will concern the consummation of history, with the coming of the Son of Man (1 John 3.2). Similar to Dulles, Rashdall stressed the importance of salvation history, its degrees and modes of revelation, and his perception of revelation is multi-faceted.

The first approach, revelation is doctrine, views revelation as propositional by nature, and as found in two main forms including a conservative evangelical type with a verbally inspired and inerrant Bible which is the locus of revealed propositions. The second approach emphasises revelation is history: this view sees God's disclosure found in the history of Israel and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is not what God said but what God does which constitutes revelation. This approach is characteristic of the mid 20th century biblical theology movement, which included the theologians Charles H. Dodd (1884-1973) and Oscar Cullmann (1902-1999).

Dulles' third approach stresses revelation as inner experience: God is disclosed through experience, characterised as the holy, numinous or ultimate concern. The historic faiths are products of religious experience and its representatives include Schleiermacher and Tyrrell. The fourth approach envisages Revelation is dialectical presence: it is understood to be the Word of God that confronts us in scripture and changes our preconceptions. The final approach views revelation is new awareness: God is seen as immanent in nature and history. The disclosure of revelation is affective rather than cerebral, and representatives include Teilhard de Chardin and John Hick. Dulles derives insights from symbolic mediation.

Rashdall's revelational theology faced radical criticism, particularly during the 20th century, when Francis Gerald Downing disputed both traditional and contemporary understandings of revelation.

---

739 Dulles, *Models of Revelation*, pp. 36-114.
For Downing, the words 'reveal' and 'revelation' had become dominant motifs in Christian theology since the 18th century. He argued that the idea of revelation, as usually supposed, does not occur in the New Testament. Revelation is usually defined as the disclosure of what otherwise has been hidden or unknown, but Downing perceives in the Biblical narratives the supposition believers having to be prepared for the knowledge of revelation, rather than possessing it in entirety (John 14.9, 6.31).

Downing points to this outlook being clearly asserted in 1 John 3.2 and points out that Paul does so more firmly, for example in 1 Cor 13.12, when he uses the language of looking through a glass darkly. Revelation is veiled and is allied with the use of a language of reflection which is found in 2 Cor 3.18-4.6. The scriptures are open to varied interpretations and do not seem to contain the traditional view of revealed propositional truth. If the words 'reveal' and 'revelation' are used in biblical interpretation, an explanation is needed to clarify how the words are intended.

The Fourth Gospel is the closest narrative which uses a communication model in its discourse, with the frequent use of the words 'knowing', 'truth' and 'believing' (John 14.7, 17.3). However, Downing distinguishes in the narratives between believers being prepared for the knowledge of revelation, rather than being given it (John 14.9, 6.31). Because of our finite and sinful condition we cannot know God. Rather the implicit interpretative models stress a gradual education. The terms of revelation have to be defined, especially the example of Paul or Philo (c20 BC-c.AD40) who regarded God as preparing for revelation, rather than interpreting revelation as already achieved.

But a major objection noted by Dulles concerned the question of whether Christianity needs a revelation at all. If true it would cut to the centre of Rashdall's revelatory theology. This denial of revelation is a position associated with Karl Jaspers (1883-1969) where Christian revelation can be translated into valued transforming insights, which preserves the memory of Jesus by the church. Revelation is understood by this approach in a mythical symbolic way. Accepted notions of prophecy and insight are to be re-interpreted in terms of the light they give to human existence and the human situation.

---

744 Dulles, Models of Revelation, p. 9.
Dulles evaluates F. G. Downing's *Has Christianity a Revelation* (1964) where Downing criticises the notion of revelation.745 Dulles finds that Downing does not perceive any Biblical justification for the concept of a revelation and notes the difficulties of the use of the word revelation and its meaning.746 Downing splits revelation from salvation, saying that the New Testament teaches revelation is imperfect.

Rashdall's revelatory theology can be further assessed by the revelatory models proposed by Dulles. Late 20th century models of revelation faced numerous difficulties which could also be applied to Rashdall's revelational theology, in particular the pre-supposition of the existence of a divinely given revelation. Rashdall was well aware of these objections having rejected earlier 19th century views of revelation as involving a deposit of truth. New obstacles included the growth of agnosticism which, in principle, cannot hold to a concept of divine revelation. This agnosticism against an idea of a divine revelation questions what were the grounds of proof for revelation and how is it verified. Other philosophical criticisms include analysing the language of revelation in terms of linguistic analysis; in addition, modern theories of epistemology blur the distinction between natural and revealed knowledge.

An important aspect of Rashdall's revelatory theology entailed the connection between revelation and history. Dulles notes J. Baillie's contention that 19th century theories of revelation changed from those which saw revelation as a supernatural communication of truths towards the perception that God reveals himself in action.747 As we have discovered, this approach of revelation occurring within history was characteristic of Gore and Rashdall. Revelation is not doctrinal statements but the self-manifestation and disclosure of God.

Two major 20th century Protestant theologians, Oscar Cullmann and Wolfhart Pannenberg, relate the concepts of revelation and history; indeed, Cullmann put forward a concept of salvation history.748 Rashdall's revelatory theology did have characteristics of the salvation history approach, with history as involving a process of redemption culminating in the advent of Jesus Christ.

As noted, the concept of salvation history was utilised by patristic theologians especially through their Logos theology which influenced Gore, Rashdall and the *Lux Mundi* school. Criticisms of the salvation history approach perceive a schism between secular and salvation history; ordinary history is contrasted with a supernatural history. Again, Rashdall's revelatory theology related the

745 Ibid. p. 11.
746 Ibid. p. 12.
747 Ibid. pp. 52-54.
748 Ibid. p. 58.
natural and the supernatural. His approach followed late 19th century developments as exemplified by C. Gore.

Revelation is rather located in a universal history of the world, a position Rashdall would have endorsed. For W. Pannenberg, history is the combination of event and the meaning of revelation. The relating of history to revelation has many advantages, and it is also known as an event theory of revelation. Rashdall did espouse aspects of this position, which instead of concentrating on doctrine, also considers phases and the totality of history.749

As seen previously, Rashdall was influenced by Dulles' third model, revelation as inner experience, though only in the sense that he reacted against it.750 For Rashdall, the role of Christ's teachings is emphasised rather than inner mystical experience, although as pointed out in Chapter Two, Rashdall did assign an important role to the Holy Spirit in imparting and sustaining revelation. Rashdall put forward a critique of W. James' exposition of religious experience: it was elitist, favouring a certain group of spiritual visionaries.751 Even so, Rashdall would have upheld a place for interpreting the revelation acquired in religious experience. The experiential dimension in revelation had been recovered, which was a corrective to the neo-Thomist tendency, although it was granted that religious experience had to be mediated.

Dulles' fourth model, revelation as dialectical presence, is characteristic of the early K. Barth and R. Bultmann. It does not however apply to Rashdall, as for dialectical theology revelation occurs through God's Word taking place in the present.752 Although similar to Rashdall, Barth connects revelation and salvation. Dialectical theology was biblically based but its critics were concerned that if the Word of God is totally beyond humanity, its appropriation is problematic.

Dulles' last model, revelation as new awareness, as a movement with its roots in philosophical idealism would have had some affinities with Rashdall's revelatory theology.753 Dulles names Teilhard de Chardin, P. Tillich and Rahner as representatives of this school. The position stresses the human subject and its reception of revelation as embodying the highest peak of participation in the divine life. Both Rahner and T. de Chardin adapted revelation to an evolutionary perspective. Similar to Rashdall, T. de Chardin promoted an over optimistic stress on human progress.

749 Ibid. pp. 53-67; p. 98.
750 Ibid. pp. 68-83.
751 Rashdall commented on the views on Christian mysticism held by William James in an article, 'Review of The Varieties of Religious Experience,' p. 245.
752 Dulles, Models of Revelation, pp. 84-97.
753 Ibid. pp. 98-114.
Finally, Dulles added a further theory of revelation by putting forward the supposition that revelation involves symbolic communication. This theory goes beyond Rashdall's revelatory theology. Although Rashdall did not use a symbolic approach towards revelation, he would have been aware of the Catholic modernists, Tyrrell and F. von Hügel, and their symbolic approaches towards doctrine and dogma. During the 20th century, the idea of revelation representing a symbolic disclosure gained a wide currency. Symbolic language once associated with a symbolic approach became applied to theology. This approach is exemplified in Paul Tillich who translated religious statements, for example the Logos and other Christological statements, into symbols.

A symbolic approach could illuminate Rashdall's revelatory theology in the application of revelatory symbolism to the New Testament, particularly the symbolic language found in the preaching of Jesus Christ, for example the parables and the Kingdom of Heaven. Christ himself can be seen as a revelatory symbol of God. In conclusion, Dulles points out that revelation, rather than being fully revealed at the start, is progressively enunciated as theology developed. Revelation is central to the theological enterprise. Rashdall, as we have discovered, was well aware that revelation was both historical and progressive, and it operated in measures and degrees admitting of change and doctrinal development.

Finally, Rashdall's revelatory theology is coherent and exhibits a valid concept of revelation involving the disclosure of God in Christ. In his *Doctrine and Development*, Rashdall acknowledges that the New Testament incorporates degrees of revelation but this does not invalidate the concept of revelation. For him, the Incarnation is the central revelation of God. Moreover, unlike Downing, Rashdall does not separate revelation and salvation. Revelation effects and enables salvation rather than constituting an alternative. Rashdall's study of the Bible suggested a viable model of revelation. Different modes of revelation exist, but this does not negate the New Testament concept of revelation. Other advances included the advent of biblical criticism, as noted in Chapter Two.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of these advances was the discovery that the Bible did not provide authoritative statements of revelation. The Bible was no longer literally inspired and free from factual errors. It had to be interpreted and both its contents and authors contextualised. It is now difficult to deduce articles of the Bible from proof texts taken out of the Bible. Also, as noted by Rashdall, the application of historical-critical methods to the study of the Bible led to changed conceptions of the Books of the Bible and their status. The model of Christ as revealer and teacher

---

754 Ibid. p. 131-154.
found in the Gospel of John is particularly helpful and adds to Rashdall’s revelatory theology which is rooted in the Gospel of John, enhancing his model of revelation.

5.8. Contemporary Studies of Revelation; Views of Revelation

As noted earlier, theological reflection in the 20th century moved away from theories of propositional revelation towards the perception of biblical events as the self-revelation of God. Ronald Thiemann (1946-2012) has examined concepts of revelation and perceives modern theology, before 1960, holding defective concepts of revelation because the possibility and nature of the human knowledge of God had not been clarified. In his Revelation and Theology (1985), Thiemann observes Downing and J. Barr as showing that theologians have no scriptural base for loose or broad theories of revelation. The central problem of revelation is the relation of the priority, and relation of the reality, to God. For R. Thiemann, the flaw which modern doctrines of revelation hold is their epistemological foundationalism, which means the grounds of knowledge used by theologians to justify belief in God’s prevenient.

Their theory of knowledge, underlying their theory of revelation, relies on innate principles, for example the existence of God and the revelation of God through Christ. This is used to justify the ever present Grace of God, rather than stressing the prevenient of God as a prior act of Grace by God, given to all humanity.

On the other hand, Ben Quash sees two views of revelation present throughout the 20th century, a reductionist one and a positivist approach. The reductionist view is associated with theological liberalism and theologians who include Rahner, Tillich and Schleiermacher. The reductionist approach is associated with 19th century liberal Protestantism which downplayed the importance of revelation by questioning the need for it, or by aligning it too closely to human perception, justifying it on the basis of rational argument, historical enquiry, and analysis of human perception or moral motivation.

By the end of the 19th century the concept of revelation was viewed in terms of the sphere of the human, rather than of the Divine or supernatural. Ritschlian theology in particular saw revelation as being identified with the moral and spiritual example of the earthly Jesus. His message could be appropriated as historical phenomena which could be accessed by historical criticism. F. Schleiermacher emphasised the importance of experience in the apprehension of God by the human subject; human nature exhibits evidence of the Divine.

---

The positivist approach is associated with K. Barth, E. Jüngel and a post-liberal mix of P. Avis and D. Ford.\textsuperscript{765} Other perceptions of revelation indicate revelation as divinely given; God is both transcendent and hidden, and can only be known when he makes himself known. God ensures his own knowability.\textsuperscript{766} Theology must be descriptive, and narrative must be central. Narrative theology has become more influential since the 1970's; revelation involves the story of God set out in the narratives of the Bible. This also relates to the life, death and subsequent revelation of Christ. For narrative theology the New Testament is a story of the saving events and the revelation of God in history.\textsuperscript{767}

5.9. Vindication

Rashdall gives a definitive explanation of what theological liberalism meant to him, how it influenced his theological method and moulded his outlook on revelation. As we have discovered, a 1909 collection of essays analysed the contribution of Anglican liberalism to Anglican theology as a whole, and Rashdall contributed an essay on liberalism from the viewpoint of an Anglican clergyman.\textsuperscript{768}

Theological liberalism is not new, but the liberalism of today differs from the liberalism of earlier times. For Rashdall, from the middle of the 19th century the new science of historical criticism created the phase of theological opinion now known as liberalism. He understood theological liberalism as a general attitude of mind towards theology rather than a definite set of opinions. It represented the attitude of people who wished religious ideas and knowledge to keep pace with the advance of other kinds of knowledge.

The question, however, can legitimately be asked, is theological liberalism inevitably tainted by the Barthian critique of essentially European German liberalism? A vibrant theological tradition exists in the U.S.A., and Rashdall both lectured and published there. Rashdall commented on the philosopher Josiah Royce (1855-1916) and William James, and he was influenced by American philosophers, writers and theologians.

Rashdall's outlook on the revelatory function of Christ's ideals has a similarity to those of P. Tillich. When Rashdall conceived the ideals of Christ as eternal, it echoes Tillich's insistence on Christ 'as the bearer of New Being'. The New Being became actualised in Christ.\textsuperscript{769} Tillich further maintains

\textsuperscript{765} Ibid. p. 336.
\textsuperscript{766} Ibid. p. 337
\textsuperscript{767} McGrath, \textit{Christian Theology}, p. 167.
\textsuperscript{768} Rashdall, \textit{Anglican Liberalism}, pp. 77-134.
\textsuperscript{769} Tillich, \textit{Systematic Theology} 2, p. 159.
Christ is not isolated, he represents ‘the power of the New Being’. This manifests itself in Jesus as the Christ throughout history. But Tillich points out Christ, while manifesting the New Being, is ‘the actualisation of which is the work of the divine Spirit’.

Tillich’s idealistic theology exhibits other resemblances to Rashdall’s revelatory theology, particularly in Rashdall’s emphasis on the significance of the Logos for revelation. The stress found on encountering the Logos of the Fourth Gospel is significant for both. Rashdall and Tillich affirm the Logos as the affirmation of an eternal divine self-manifestation which occurred in Jesus Christ.

5.10. Rashdall’s Place in Modern Theology

During the 20th century Rashdall’s theology of revelation, tied with his theological liberalism, was criticised on several grounds. Rashdall vindicates revelation against 20th century discussions of the viability of the concept of revelation. As we have discovered, his revelational theology is shaped by a combination of intellectual concerns, theological, historical and ethical. Theology had to be reconstructed in the light of modern philosophy, science and criticism, and these were modernist principles.

But surely, the key to the views of Rashdall towards revelation is in his role as an ethical philosopher. Revelation for Rashdall is ‘a progressive revelation of ethics’. A contemporary of his, H. Major, was perceptive when he saw the concept of revelation was basic to Rashdall’s theology. The uniqueness of the revelation of God given by Jesus Christ undergirded Rashdall’s teaching.

Central criticisms of Rashdall focus on his philosophical presuppositions which impact on his revelational theology. A recent study of the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) by Fergus Kerr uncovers grave criticisms of philosophical idealism, mirroring 20th and 21st century theologies.


Ibid.

Ibid. p. 10.

A collection of sermons illustrate Tillich’s concern with time and adds a new dimension to revelatory theology. Rashdall spoke about the time/eternity dialectic. Tillich elaborates a dimension of revelation relating to the ‘eternal now.’ By which he means, ‘It was a religious event when Meister Eckhart pointed to the ‘eternal now’ within the flux of time, and when Kierkegaard pointed to the infinite significance of every moment as the ‘now’ of decision.’ Augustine had considered the mystery of time in his Confessions and Tillich elaborated Augustine’s outlook by saying, ‘In each such ‘now’ eternity is made manifest; in every real ‘now’, eternity is present.’ Tillich reconciles transcendence and immanence in time by referring to the Fourth Gospel, commenting, ‘According to the Fourth Gospel eternal life is a present gift: he, who listens to Christ, has eternity already.’ Ibid. Tillich, The Shaking of the Foundations (London: SCM, 1949.), pp. 42-44.

Dulles, Models of Revelation, pp. 111-113.

Major like Rashdall asserts the importance of a continuing evolving revelation, ‘It is divine inspiration which provides the impulse of this Religious Evolution through its various stages.’ Furthermore, ‘Revelation did not stop with the conclusion of the New Testament. It has, in accordance with Christ’s promise of the gift of the Spirit, been continuously operating ever since.’ Major, English Modernism, p. 120.
of revelation which criticise the influence of philosophical idealism on theology in general. Kerr stresses the influence of René Descartes (1596-1650) on European philosophical thought, especially his emphasis on the turn to the human subject, exemplified in his dictum 'I think therefore I am'. Descartes' *Meditations* (1641) extolled basic principles namely, the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. These principles were upheld by Rashdall along with an extra principle which was 'the revelation of God in Christ'. He outlined the essential elements of his theological project again in 1899 and continued:

In modern language we adhere to three great essentials of the Christian religion, belief in a personal God, in a personal immortality, and while not limiting the idea of revelation to the Old and New Testaments in a unique and paramount revelation of God in the historic Christ.

This passage neatly summarises Rashdall's theological programme. It establishes the essentials of the programme and has three basic principles: belief in God, the significance of personal immortality and finally, while not limiting revelation to the Old and New Testament, the revelation made by God through Christ is primary.

Descartes influenced Kant and both subsequently imposed their perceptions of the self on European philosophy, as well as the notion of the autonomous individual, with an absolute self-consciousness and self-reliance. Rashdall's perception of Christ, where he is seen as a heroic exemplar, is influenced by this outlook. Donald MacKinnon (1913-1994) discussed the influence of philosophical idealism in two essays found in his *Explorations in Theology*. He summarises the conflict between the opposing philosophical world views, realism and idealism, which was a re-occurring controversy throughout the history of Western European philosophy. MacKinnon notes that idealism is centred on the human mind though Keith Ward has pointed out that the Western philosophical tradition was predominantly idealist, so Rashdall was standing within a respectable philosophical tradition.

As noted, an essential element of Rashdall's whole theological project emerged in relation to his ethical outlook. The question of salvation is, for Rashdall, the way in which human souls can

---

67 Ibid. pp. 3-5.
68 Rashdall, *Diversity in Unity*, p. 5.
attain to the highest ideal or end of their being, representing profound questions relating to moral philosophy, psychology and metaphysics.

A succinct summary of the main philosophical issues and concerns relating to salvation was given by Rashdall in 1919, but could apply to his whole career. He defined salvation in metaphysical terms.

A full and complete philosophy of salvation would involve nothing less than a philosophy of the universe. It would involve a discussion of all those questions about the ultimate nature of the universe, about its ultimate goal and destiny, about the relations between mind and matter, between subject and object, body and soul, the universal and the particular, God and man, the human will and the Divine, necessity and contingency, time and eternity, which is the business of philosophy and philosophical theology to answer.  

This passage asserts belief in God must rest, in the last resort, on the basis of philosophy. No religious belief can retain its hold, which does not satisfy reason. Now the theologian is a person who mediates between the position of religion and science. On these grounds, Rashdall advocated a modern equivalent to the scholastic philosophy is needed. It is not assumed, as Rashdall did, Christianity could be harmonised and reconciled with contemporary culture. On the other hand, Rashdall promoted Christianity as not involving a new recreation, rather a fulfilment of discovered innate notions and ideals.

But, for Rashdall the role of salvation is directly related to revelation. Rashdall perceives salvation in ethical terms which he re-interpreted and de-mythologized. He insisted no other ideal existed by which humanity could be saved except through Christ’s moral ideals. He envisaged a process of salvation taking place in an appropriation of ethical ideals. Christ is the highest expression of moral reason. This moral reason is present to a degree in all persons, but the highest manifestation of reason in Christ is found in the incarnate Logos.

5.11 Conclusions

Chapter Five aimed to evaluate the revelational theology of Rashdall. Addressing criticisms of his theological project, his revelational theology was assessed in relation to modern theology. Revelational theology is central to Rashdall’s theological project. Several themes emerged: the significance of salvation history for revelation, Christ is the summation of salvation history;

775 Ibid. p. ix.
revelation is seen as the self-disclosure of God, rather than the acquisition of supernatural knowledge; doctrines of inspiration changed, revelation now involves scriptural inspiration; and, as we have seen, one of Rashdall’s unique contributions to his revelational theology is his focus on ethics, revelation is ethical and progressive.

Rashdall discussed revelation in regard to philosophical issues. Jesus Christ was the fullest revelation of God. Rashdall harmonised idealist philosophy with revelation. He placed revelation in relation to doctrinal development. Rashdall’s concentration on ethics is criticised by A. McGrath. Rashdall’s principles are also criticised; a foundationalism criticised by post-modernism. On the question of whether Rashdall was an agent of secularisation, he vindicated revelation and emphasised the role of the Holy Spirit in continuing revelation, a point attested to by H. D. A. Major, especially when he assesses Rashdall’s outlook on revelation found in Rashdall’s *Jesus Human and Divine*.\(^{776}\)

---

\(^ {776}\) Major comments on the centrality of the Spirit for Rashdall’s revelatory theology. Quoting Rashdall ‘Let us try to take seriously the doctrine that the Holy Spirit is teaching something-something important and something new- to the Church of our own generation.’ Major, *English Modernism*, p. 121.
Chapter Six: Final Conclusions; the relevance of Rashdall’s revelatory theology for the Modern World

One of the aims of the concluding chapter is to justify how Rashdall is relevant for today. Rashdall is not just a liberal modernist theologian, he is a theologian of modernity, which impacts on his revelational theology. He faced a situation similar to today, perhaps even more unsettling, due to the advent of new knowledge, the progress of new sciences and how they impacted upon his theology. Despite Rashdall’s Victorian background, his theology of revelation was a central concern of his theological project and is still relevant today. His theology of revelation has a contemporary appeal in that it mirrored the changes made to theologies of revelation which took place during the 19th century. 

In summary, new perceptions of revelation emerged which Rashdall espoused. Revelation was now seen as a disclosure made through the person of Jesus Christ. The truths of revelation involve a transforming relationship not just the disclosure of supernatural knowledge alone. Rashdall aimed to justify his theology of revelation which could be contrasted with secular atheism, and as a professional philosophical teacher, Rashdall was well aware of the atheist position.

A significant contribution made by Rashdall was the emphasis he gave to the importance of conscience. Influenced by Newman, he affirmed the significance of conscience but he also related conscience to revelation. Conscience is part of a wider relationship involving Christ and the church. It does not exist in isolation. Christianity involves ‘a progressive revelation of ethics’. His outlook is holistic, in that revelation does not enlighten the intellect alone but the whole person; an outlook characteristic of modern theology and contemporary thought.

Rashdall was an ethical philosopher. A valuable contribution made by him to ethical thought, which is still relevant today, was his ‘social’ conception of ethics, where he related ethics to the conduct of actual communities. This, together with an idealistic utilitarianism, where the welfare and happiness of the whole community was the ideal for which to strive, was indicative of his thought.

Rashdall’s stress on the relevance of the ideals of Christ, are a novel way of relating the message and significance of Jesus Christ for the modern World. In an era where human rights are important, these ideals add a Christian dimension to current thought. Philosophical idealism has been criticised, even though it emphasises the importance of the mind in the interpretation of

---

Hugh MacDonald notes after 1860 views asserting the unity of scripture were changing to fit into an evolutionary perspective. McDonald, *Theories of Revelation*, p. 176.
reality. Rashdall’s philosophical idealism was related to his theology of revelation, and his emphasis on the illumination of the mind by divine revelation, understood as a disclosure by Christ, offers new possibilities to the contemporary world. Rashdall revived an Augustinian perception of revelation where revelation entails an illumination of the mind.

Rashdall promoted a doctrine of development, and this stress on development was not typical of Victorian Anglican theologians. Influenced by J. Newman however, Rashdall employed a doctrine of development to legitimate his theology of revelation. The importance of Rashdall’s doctrine of development lies in its insistence that a basic continuity exists in Christian doctrine and theology throughout the centuries.

The church can maintain its faith, adapting to new situations, and be inculcated in different societies outside its original home in Palestine. Moreover, Rashdall justifies his doctrine of development by revelation. According to Rashdall, The Holy Spirit guides and leads the church throughout the centuries, safeguarding its revelation. Rather then perceiving revelation as finished, Rashdall maintains that revelation is both continuous and progressive. New truths can be disclosed in new situations and the present church is not bound by the past. Rather, it is open to the future and new possibilities. This aspect of Rashdall’s theology of revelation is relevant today.

Rashdall analysed other world religions in relation to Christianity. His pyramid model of religions with its hierarchy of so-called lower and higher religions, was influenced by Victorian racial and imperialist assumptions. Rashdall held an exclusivist stress on the unique revelation made by God through Jesus Christ. But this revelation can be received and appropriated by adherents of other world religions, so it had an inclusivist side to it. In this aspect Rashdall anticipated K. Rahner’s theory of the anonymous Christian. Although this theory is now dated, in its day it was a genuine attempt to justify the place and significance of both Christ and Christianity towards other world religions.

Rashdall, although prepared to spread the Christian message to other non-Christian lands, believed in the supremacy of Western European civilisation and the so-called civilising role of the British Empire. He had an outlook that assumed the natural superiority of British culture and Empire. He was Islamophobic and influenced by Victorian racist outlooks, with a hierarchy of races.  

Entangled with this outlook was a belief in the inevitability of human progress: things

---

778 Rashdall speaks of a hierarchy of races and religions in these terms, 'Even among quite uncivilised peoples contact with white men is rapidly destroying belief in all the more primitive religions.' Furthermore, 'The lower races of Africa may become Mohammedans [Islamic] but for the more civilised peoples there is in the long run no alternative between Christianity and materialistic Atheism.' Rashdall, 'Alternatives to Christianity,' in Principles and Precepts, p. 189.
would naturally improve. Western civilisation led the way by involving a historicist approach which assumed inevitable patterns of change. On these issues he was a product of his time, situation and place.

Rashdall did not appreciate the downside of progress, and the advent of The First World War proved human progress was not always inevitable. Advances in technology were not always beneficial, and progress could also be associated with colonialism and international trade, with slavery as an example of yet another downside. In addition, the advances of industrialisation led to the growth of economic inequalities between nations and within nations. Rashdall addressed the idea of progress in an essay against W. Inge's strictures against progress. Inge asserted that despite accumulating knowledge and science humanity has not advanced. Against this view, Rashdall perceived a gradual progression. Considering the whole of human history, he envisaged 'a slow and gradual increase in values or valuable consciousness'. This advance may not be uniform but human life will improve.

Despite Rashdall's assumptions about Western European culture, he did appreciate the non-Christian religions, especially Buddhism and Hinduism. Even though he asserted that Christianity was the final unique revelation of God, Rashdall was prepared to admit that salvation can exist outside the boundaries of Christianity, particularly where the ideals of Christ have been appropriated by other religions, for example by Buddhist sects and so-called Hindu reform movements.

But this salvation is mediated through Christ. Rashdall can be justly criticised for this position, now seen by many as outdated. But for his time, place and situation, his outlook was radical, and was characteristic of 20th century attempts to extend salvation outside Christianity, as found in Rahner's theory of the anonymous Christian and the declaration of the Second Vatican Council on the world religions.

Rashdall was a pioneer of dialogue between Christianity and Judaism, as illustrated in his correspondence with Claude Montefiore. This dialogue anticipated later 20th and 21st century studies of the origins of Christianity and its relation to Judaism, raising important questions for

---

779 Rashdall mentions William Inge's assertion today's humanity was no more cleverer or better than the people of the Palaeolithic Age. Rashdall, 'The Idea of Progress,' in Ideas and Ideals, p. 81.
780 Ibid. p. 89.
781 The Council declared the various non-Christian religions 'reflect the brightness of truth' and does not reject any thing true or holy in those religions. ‘Declaration on The Relation of The Church to Non-Christian religions. Vatican II. 1965,' in Hick J, Christianity and Other Religions, pp. 80-86; p. 82-83.
today. Although Rashdall was a supersessionist, asserting Christianity had superseded Judaism, Montefiore made him more aware of the Jewish background of both Jesus and the New Testament.

Rashdall's theology of atonement is still valid for today. Rashdall maintained the atonement was an act of revelation. He also noted the significance of medieval theologies of the atonement, and clarified the evolution of these for Christian theologians. He explained how earlier Ransom theories of atonement were superseded by both Anselm's and Abelard's theories of atonement. Rashdall made an outstanding contribution to 20th century theologies of atonement by connecting a theology of revelation to the atonement. He transformed his revelational theology of atonement by reviving the so-called Abelardian theology of atonement which stressed the atonement as a revelation of the love of God. Christ gave his life as a sacrifice of love to redeem humanity and his sacrifice aimed to be an example to inspire others.

Criticisms of Rashdall's theology of atonement perceived that his theology was not objective enough, as it did not establish the atonement having put in place an eternal covenant between God and humanity. It is still, however, a theory of moral example and self-sacrificing love which can be appropriated today. Paul Fiddes discusses themes elaborated by Rashdall about the suffering of God and maintains, 'The belief that God is a suffering God has become compelling for recent theology'.

The atonement is viewed in ethical terms. Rashdall related his theology of atonement to salvation, and this theology of atonement found in his The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology, has been widely influential in 20th century Anglican theology, and more widely in Europe.

Rashdall's theology of atonement can be compared to that of Jürgen Moltmann. The impact of the First World War influenced Rashdall's outlook on suffering, an area which otherwise Rashdall did not tackle in great depth. Like Moltmann, Rashdall stresses that the Cross is a revelation of a suffering God. Christ's suffering on the Cross is one with the sufferings of humanity.

Rashdall clarified various questions relating to Christology and pantheism in his revelatory theology. He envisaged a revelation of God to all humanity, but rejected pantheism because of the problem of evil. How could God be incarnate in evil individuals? Rather, his Sonship Christology concentrated on the unique revelation of God in Christ. Rashdall clarified various questions relating to Christology and pantheism in his revelatory theology. He was not a pantheist: the world and God are not identical. The unique revelation of God in Christ was not repeated in humanity as a whole.

---

782 Paul Fiddes notes ideas about the impassibility and immutability of God have been changing. Rashdall had discussed these issues. Paul Fiddes, The Creative Suffering of God (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 16.
because of the problem of evil, as for Rashdall God could not indwell evil individuals.  But the human nature of Christ revealed God, and Rashdall asserted the nature of this unique revelation, that God has communicated his divine nature to all humanity in some degree. God revealed himself in Christ in an exceptional degree. This was the basis of Rashdall’s Sonship Christology and it was revelational; because it was unique, Christ could communicate this revelation to all humanity.

The validity of the quest for the historical Jesus was affirmed. Scholarship and biblical research must be used to establish the teachings, personality and character of Jesus Christ. This position is vindicated by the later 20th and 21st century revivals of the quest for the historical Jesus, for example in the work of E. P. Sanders. The position that the historical Jesus cannot be reached or established by historical scholarship and research is rejected. A picture of the authentic historical Jesus can be established, and Rashdall’s revelatory theology is rooted in the New Testament teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. Rashdall promoted trinitarian theology, unifying it with a theology of revelation.

As noted, the 19th century witnessed the rise of historical methodology and the natural sciences. Rashdall was a noted medieval historian, and historical studies informed and influenced both his theological outlook and method. Producing a history of medieval universities, he was the last of the medieval scholastics who espoused a scholastic view of an essential harmony of faith and reason which existed in a productive synthesis, not in an estrangement from one another. In this respect, the scholastics had the same aim as the 20th century modernists, and for Rashdall no rigid partitions existed between those areas.

---

784 Rashdall, ‘In What Sense was Christ the Son of God,’ in Christian World Pulpit, p. 6.
785 Ibid. p. 5.
786 Ibid.
787 Rashdall perceived the scholastics faced a similar situation to Rashdall’s because ‘To us Darwinism, the higher criticism, historical discovery, are what Aristotle and Averroes were to the men of the Thirteenth Century.’ These difficulties can be faced ‘in the spirit, of Thomas Aquinas.’ Rashdall, ‘The Scholastic Theology,’ in Ideas and Ideals, p. 172.
6.1 Rashdall and the Second Vatican Council

The enduring significance of Rashdall's revelatory theology can be made clearer by comparing and contrasting it with a constitution made on revelation by the 20th century Second Vatican Council. The Council discussed revelation in Dei Verbum, The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (1965). Rashdall's revelatory theology has similarities to the theology of revelation outlined by the Council, particularly in Chapter One of the document.

This first chapter outlines the history of salvation: following the Fall of the human race, the promise of redemption by God was maintained. The Council uses the same Biblical testimony and text regarding revelation as Rashdall. The Epistle to the Hebrews (1:1-2) is highlighted in order to establish the revelation of God took place through the Son; furthermore, he 'spoke' through the Son, meaning revelation is an active process involving speaking. Jesus Christ is actually revelation itself, using John 1:1-8, Christ is envisaged as 'the eternal Word' who 'enlightens' all men and reveals the innermost nature of God.

The document declared the revelatory plan of God involves two aspects. The deeds and words possess an inner unity; God's works through the history of salvation are both clarified and proclaimed by words. But essentially, the revelation of God is mediated through Christ, who is the fullness of revelation. Revelation is mediated through a person, Jesus Christ. Significantly, the Council changed Roman Catholic theologies of revelation: it is not only propositional truths, but revelation that takes place through the Word Jesus Christ. Both the Council and Rashdall promote the centrality of revelation in terms of salvation history.

The Council updated its theology of revelation and asserted that revelation has a historical character; it is not just a timeless idea but is the historical activity of God in time, where humanity achieves salvation in history. The Council concentrated on the dimensions of salvation history: the function of the Logos in salvation history is affirmed; creation has a christological element in that Christ as the Logos works through creation. Rashdall's theological position mirrors this outlook of creation as ordered towards salvation affected by Christ.

Like Rashdall, the Council asserts the time before Christ witnessed a preparation for the Gospel. Christ as 'the Word made Flesh' completes and perfects the works of salvation. The events in Christ's life, 'his words and deeds', his death and resurrection from the dead, all are

---

789 Ibid.
790 Ibid.
791 Ibid.
confirmation of his mission and life. A new distinctive Christian dispensation has been established. No new public revelation will take place until the coming of Christ (Tim 6.4 and Tit 2.13).

Scripture and tradition have a bond and an inner connection and unity. The Council puts forward the following perception of biblical inspiration saying: 'For Sacred Scripture is the word of God inasmuch as it is consigned to writing under the inspiration of the divine Spirit.' The Council moved away from the view of Scripture as a literal dictation of the Holy Spirit, which was rather taught dogmatically, and furthermore maintained that 'Sacred tradition and sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the Word of God, committed to the Church'. So, an ecclesiological dimension is introduced to the impartation of revelation.

The role of the Holy Spirit is proclaimed in giving a deeper understanding of revelation using the concept of 'The Obedience of Faith' (Rom 13:26 and 1:5 and 2 Cor 10:5.6). A personal perception of the reception of revelation is outlined whereby the apprehension of revelation by a person entails 'the full submission of intellect and will to God who reveals'. An assent to these truths has to take place, but 'the grace of God and the interior help of the Holy Spirit must precede and assist.' A more personalist emphasis is introduced, i.e. revelation is also appropriated by the individual, rather than exclusively mediated through an institution.

The Council departs from earlier Catholic outlooks on revelation by proclaiming its theology of revelation in a way similar to Rashdall. It maintains that divine revelation is the communication of God himself which relates to the soteriology of humanity. These truths of revelation 'transcend the understanding of the human mind'. The Council affirms the validity of natural theology, a tradition maintained from the First Vatican Council.

That Council asserted 'God the beginning and end of all things can be known with certainty from created reality by the light of human reason'. But this declaration associated with The First Vatican Council is qualified or corrected by the statement that this can be ascertained only through divine revelation, even though because of this general divine revelation, these religious truths can be ascertained by human reason, which is accessible to all humanity.

---

792 Ibid.
793 Ibid.
794 Ibid.
795 Ibid.
796 Ibid.
797 Ibid.
798 Ibid.
799 Ibid.
800 Ibid.
801 Ibid.
802 Ibid.

174
The Constitution on Revelation represented a great change in the Roman Catholic outlook on revelation; in particular, its divergence from the theory of revelation outlined in The First Vatican Council. This earlier Council examined revelation from the vantage point of the so-called natural knowledge of God to the consideration of supernatural revelation. *Dei Verbum* reverses this approach, putting forward God's revelatory activity first before considering natural theology. As well as transforming Catholic understanding of revelation, this process also put God's revelation in relation to salvation history.®®

This approach has several consequences for Catholic revelatory theology.®® The Constitution gives a new emphasis on the personal and theo-centric starting point of revelation. Revelation involves the person, not just the ecclesiastical institution.®® Furthermore, revelation is the self-communication of God and reaches into the very person. The Council text is Christo-centric in the sense that Christ is the mediator of revelation, and is the fullness of revelation. But a trinitarian emphasis is present where Christ is led by the Father, in the dimension of the Spirit.®®

Significantly, the text moves against earlier Catholic theories of revelation. In particular, the 16th century Council of Trent's advocation of a two source theory of revelation, Scripture and tradition. Tradition was an additional source of revelation alongside Scripture. Vatican II went back to a single-source tradition, where revelation is based on Scripture, which has to be interpreted.®® The neo-Thomism of the later 19th century perceived revelation in terms of a deposit or store of mysterious supernatural teachings. Faith was seen as an acceptance of these supernatural truths. The Council changed this emphasis towards the supposition that revelation involves word and event; revelation involves dialogue with the whole person.®®

6.2. Conclusions.

Finally, and as illustrated by the document of the Second Vatican Council on revelation, in many respects the revelatory theology of Rashdall has relevance for the modern world. Rashdall's approach towards revelation foreshadowed the theology of revelation outlined by the Council, particularly with its stress on the centrality of salvation history for revelation. In addition, its move away from revelation as being perceived as doctrine only, to an emphasis on revelation as involving

---

a disclosure of Christ, combined with a more personalist approach rather than concentrating purely on the institution, confirmed their similarities and contemporary appeal.

So, Rashdall's revelatory theology is bound up with his theological project as a whole. Rashdall has been judged in the light of his association with Anglican modernist theologians. He was not a pantheist, nor Pelagian; he emphasised the role of the Holy Spirit in the appropriation of revelation by the community and individual. Rashdall's apologetic motivation was paramount; he aimed to rethink established theology which he thought had become unintelligible for modern people.

In many respects Rashdall was an innovator and departed from Victorian theological conventions. He examined history from a European standpoint and was a sympathetic commentator on medieval intellectual history, including scholasticism. His theological legacy includes his promotion of the Abelardian doctrine of atonement. He also promoted an appreciation of the doctrine of the Trinity. His revelational theology can appear dated, but the linking of ethics to revelation and its importance for theology deserve a fair hearing today.

Often ethics and theology have been separated, but Rashdall asserted revelation is 'a revelation of ethics'.\(^{809}\) Rashdall further criticises the division between Christian revelation seen as doctrine and moral precepts which have no connection. Revelation entails 'Revelation by character'.\(^{810}\)

Rashdall's revelatory theology is multi-faceted. His endeavours transcend theological party labels in several respects: his theology shows a unique combination of history, philosophy, ethics and theology, and all illustrated and illuminated his approach. Rashdall's approach to his theology of revelation meant it was informed by his historical studies, for example his espousal of an Abelardian doctrine of atonement. His philosophical and ethical studies influenced his theology of the Trinity and his exposition of the ideals of Christ. His theological studies influenced his Christology and theory of development.

In my research, areas of his Christology, or his doctrine of atonement and Trinity, or his ethical approach, could have been concentrated on, but in fact my aim has been to show how his revelational theology unites all of these disparate elements in one creative synthesis.

My study of Rashdall is not simply a researching of past knowledge, rather I have pointed to his contribution to other areas beyond theology, with a view to establishing Rashdall's relevance for

---

\(^{809}\) Rashdall, *Doctrine and Development*, p. 112.

\(^{810}\) Ibid. p. 110.
the theology and theologians of today. An important aspect of Rashdall's theological project was an ecumenical concern for an engagement with other theologies and theological traditions outside Rashdall's own, particularly Roman Catholic theologians and Roman Catholic modernism. These theologians included John Henry Newman, George Tyrrell and Alfred Firmin Loisy. Rashdall also engaged with German Protestant theologians and theological movements, including Albrecht Ritschl and Adolf Harnack, as well as American theological debates and liberal theological concerns.

7. Areas of further Research

Aspects of Rashdall's thought have yet to be explored in depth, especially his philosophical position and idealism, reacting to Francis H. Bradley, and the neo-Hegelian movement in Britain. Additionally, Anglican modernism, including the modernist journal, Modern Churchman, present a wealth of unexplored material to further explore aspects of 20th century Anglican modernism.

Reactions to the 1921 Girton conference, and the corpus of anti-modernist writings produced by it, have yet to be investigated in depth.

Rashdall's political philosophy has not been explored. Rashdall was not apolitical, he was a member of the Christian Social Union, and his attitude to both the Liberal and Conservative parties, and the main political events of his day, could be explored further. Rashdall wrote about socialism and this aspect of his thought could also be investigated.

Rashdall's theology is influenced by George Tyrrell, and an avenue of research could be to investigate more links between them. They were both members of the Synthetic society during the first decade of the 20th century.
8. Bibliography

1. Libraries consulted:

Trinity College Library
Bodleian Library Oxford
New College Oxford
Birmingham Central Library
Birmingham University Library
Galway University Library (NUI)
Mayo County Library Castlebar
National Library of Wales Aberystwyth

2. Letters and papers:

New College Oxford:

Miscellaneous Papers; PA/RAS/S1. Hastings Rashdall, 1890-1904 Letters:
November 30 1892; To his Mother
October 7 1898; To Ferrar
February 22 1903; To Percy Gardner
June 26 1902; To Hone

Miscellaneous Papers; Letters:
February 1912, To C. Webb

Miscellaneous Papers; PA/RAS/6/2. Hastings Rashdall, 1920-October 1923 Letters:
March 16 1920; To Feltoe
August 31 1920; To Cruickshank
August 24 1921; Unnamed, Dear Madam
July 1 1922; To C. Montefiore
December 26 1922; To Hartill
July 17 1923; To Professor Gardner

Miscellaneous Papers; PA/RAS/S1. Hastings Rashdall, 1890-1904 Letters:
September 7 1923; To C. Webb

October 3 1923; To Bishop, Unnamed

Bodleian Library Oxford:

M.S.S. Eng lett. 361; Letters to H. Rashdall:

M.S Eng Lett. 6. 362

8 January 1922; M.G. Glazebrook

19 April 1922; N. Micklem

Professor Cruickshank; Appreciation of H Rashdall, given at Durham Cathedral, March 23 1925

M.S. Misc. 9. le

21 January 1888; T F. Tout, Fellow of Pembroke College Oxford and Professor of History at St David's College Lampter

M.S. Eng. lett. C. 348

June 1916; C.G. Montefiore to Rashdall

31 July 1916; Gore to Rashdall; About Divorce

October 17 1917; H. Henson to Rashdall; Deanery Durham

M.S. Eng. lett. C. 349

26 December 1919; C. J. Montefiore to Rashdall

3. Journals:

American Journal of Theology

Cambridge Review

Challenge

Church of England Pulpit and Ecclesiastical Review

Church Quarterly Review

Church Times

Downside Review

Economic Review

Expository Times

The Guardian
4. Articles of Rashdall in chronological order:

'Professor Sidgwick's Utilitarianism,' in *Mind* X (1885), pp.200-226.


'Diversity in Unity,' London: The Churchmans Union (1899) Pamphlet.

'Dr Moberly's Theory of the Atonement,' in *Journal of Theological Studies* III (1902), pp.178-211.


'In What Sense was Christ the Son of God,' Christian World Pulpit (1st July 1903), pp.5-7.

'Miracles,' St Paul's Association (Order 4.1903), pp.1-23.


'Ritschlianism,' in The Liberal Churchman I (1904), pp.19-43.

'The Creeds and the Clergy: A Reply to Dr Sanday,' in Independent Review II (1904), pp.48-65.


'A Plea For Undenominationalism,' in Liberal Churchman II, (1906), pp. 93-117.


'Religion and History,' in Liberal Churchman (January 1907), pp.11-19.


'Fighting Against God,' in *Modern Churchman I* (1911-1912), pp.696-706.

'Is Liberal Theology a Failure,' in *Modern Churchman I* (1911-1912), pp.23-35.


'Episcopacy and the Apostolic Succession I,' in *Modern Churchman IV* (1914), pp.74-78.

'On Christ's Teaching about Future Reward and Punishment,' in *Modern Churchman IV* (1914), pp.18-30.

'The Creeds,' in *Modern Churchman IV* (1914), pp.204-214.


'The Ethics of Conscientious Objection,' in *Modern Churchman VI* (1916-1917), pp.52-58.


'The Religious Philosophy of Professor Pringle-Pattison,' in *Mind NS XXVII* (July 1918), pp.261-283.


'Christ as Logos and Son of God,' in *Modern Churchman XI* (1921-1922 ), pp. 278-286.

'Some Plain Words to Bishop Gore: I. Obscuring the Issue,' in *Modern Churchman XI* (1921), pp.469-480.

'Some Plain Words to Bishop Gore: II. Athanasius and Bishop Gore,' in *Modern Churchman XII* (1922), pp.6-28.

'Some Plain Words to Bishop Gore: III. Bishop Gore and Thomas Aquinas,' in *Modern Churchman XII* (1922 ), pp.196-213.


'What is the Church,' in *Modern Churchman XIII* (1923-1924), pp.21-29.

5. Books by Rashdall in chronological order:


Christus In Ecclesia: Sermons on the Church and its Institutions. Edinburgh: T& T Clark, 1904.


6. Secondary Publications


----------, *Theological Essays*. London: James Clark, 1853.


Montefiore, Claude. 'The Significance of Jesus for His Own Age,' in *The Hibbert Journal*. Vol X. 1911-12, pp.766-779.


Mozley, John K. Some Tendencies in British Theology. From the publication of Lux Mundi to the present day. London: SPCK, 1951.


Von Hügel, Baron F. 'Father Tyrrell; Some Memorials of The Last 12 Years of His Life.' In The Hibbert Journal VIII (October 1909-1910), pp. 233-252.


Welch, Claude. In This Name: The Trinity in Contemporary Theology. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1952.


----------, 'Butler's Western Mysticism: Towards an Assessment.' in Downside Review. 102 July, pp.197-215.


190