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PASCAL AND THE JEWS

City University of New York

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PASCAL AND THE JEWS

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ESTHER HANNAH STERN

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1981

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in French in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract

PASCAL AND THE JEWS

by

Esther Hannah Stern

Adviser: Professor Henri Peyre

This study examines the subject of Pascal and the Jews, their Bible, and their religion. Since there were very few Jews in the cities which Pascal frequented in the seventeenth century in France, the many references to them found mainly in the Pensées deal more with the Jewish religion and the Jewish Bible, the Old Testament, than with the Jewish people per se.

The prime motive which led Pascal to confront the Jews was their rejection of the divinity of Jesus. For Pascal, Christ was the key to both man's salvation and to Scripture.

Pascal's preoccupation with the Jews is shown to have influenced many of his key concepts: "Dieu caché," "aveuglement," "misère," "vanité," "abîme," and "coeur."

This study introduces psychoanalytic interpretations and an understanding of the history of the Christian-Jewish encounter throughout the ages to help clarify Pascal's ambivalent attitude of admiration and hate toward the Jews. Special note is made of Pascal's use of the Pugio Fidei, a medieval polemic which tried to prove that the Talmud admits

the divinity of Jesus, as a source of Pascal's emphasis on the figural interpretation of the Bible as well as his vocabulary.

Our study suggests that although Pascal's understanding of the Jews and their Bible bears many resemblances to the writings of Christian apologists of earlier centuries as well as to the works of his contemporaries, it also reveals a unique subtlety and modernity. These qualities which have prompted many thinkers to label Pascal as a precursor of modern existentialism are reflected both in his style and in his thinking. Our thesis is that the Hebrew Prophets and the book of Job in particular as well as other Biblical books influenced both his style which depends heavily on dialogue, antithesis, exclamation, and interrogation, and his concepts of faith, mystery, and man's relationship to God.

The question of Pascal's anti-Semitism is touched upon briefly since he stands among the many polemicists in the long tradition of the Christian-Jewish encounter.

To my parents who drew upon
their tradition to instill in me a
true love of learning.

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Finally, I extend my warm friendship to my dear friends Ben and Simone who provided me with their moral support.

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INTRODUCTION

Pascal's treatment of the Jews and their religion found throughout the Pensées but mainly in fragments 449-489 of the Lafuma edition and in the last chapters, made up of fragments 556-727 in the Brunschvicg edition, is often dismissed as superficial or unimportant. This is due to two factors: one, the general avoidance and disdain of theological matters, especially Biblical references, which require an expertise not held by many Pascalisants, and two, the influence of Pascal's most famous critic Voltaire, who wrote in the Lettres Philosophiques: "La religion Chrétienne est si véritable qu'elle n'a pas besoin de preuves douteuses, or, si quelque chose pouvait ébranler les fondements de cette sainte et raisonnable religion, c'est ce sentiment de M. Pascal."¹ Renan in the nineteenth century continued to downplay this aspect of Pascal's work characterizing it as "cette vaine argumentation par les prophètes et les miracles...."²

This attitude has changed somewhat in the light of recent studies. Although the chapters on the Jews and/or the well-known concept of the "figuratifs," to which Pascal constantly refers, are brief as in Jeanne Russier's La Foi Selon Pascal and Gouhier's Blaise Pascal, Commentaires, yet these works emphasize the role of the Jews, their religion,

and their Bible in the formation of Pascal's thinking. Others such as Jon Miel's Pascal and Theology deal only secondarily with the broad topic of Pascal and the Jews, although Miel's work has the outstanding merit of recognizing that first and foremost Pascal is a religious thinker. Malcolm Hay's The Prejudices of Pascal pinpoints in detail references to the Jews in Pascal, but it deteriorates into a highly partial polemic. We must not fail to mention Philippe Sellier's Pascal et St. Augustin which deals at length with Pascal and the Jews and Lacombe's L'Apologétique de Pascal, both of which contribute effectively to the subject.

Only a handful of articles exists on the subject of Pascal and the Jewish religion, the most important of which are Lionel Cohn's, "Pascal et le Judaïsme," Textes du Tricentenaire, La Grange's, "Pascal et les prophéties messianiques," Revue Biblique, and Lovsky's, "Pascal et les Juifs," Cahiers Sioniens.

There is only one major study devoted completely to Pascal and Judaism, Jean Lhermet's Pascal et la Bible. Its chief merit lies in its wealth of information; however, that is also its prime fault since the reader becomes lost in a maze of facts. A more recent and worthwhile study of Pascal and the Bible is that of André Gounelle, La Bible Selon Pascal which, in contrast to Lhermet, focuses on Pascal's concept of Scripture, its role and nature, and not on

biblical influence per se.

Our study will examine and introduce new insights into Pascal's concept of the Jews and their religion as well as into the influence of the Old Testament on his thinking and style. We shall see that although his methods of approaching the Bible may in some respects justify Voltaire and Renan's accusations of Pascal's lack of historical sense, there are many other aspects of Pascal's existential approach to the Bible which withstand those strictures. Pascal's approach shows an intuitive understanding of the relationship between prophet and God and God and man in the Bible which has not been treated in any of the literature on Pascal unless it be in André Gounelle's recent volume which touches upon this briefly.

We shall note that this concept of the Jews and their religion has analogies with much of the earlier Christian tradition and apologetics as well as with the writings of his contemporaries. This apologetic tradition deals with several important issues which have been central throughout the ages in the Christian-Jewish encounter. First and foremost, there is the debate over the Messiah and Christ, and secondly the question of the Law and the Gospel, the Letter and Spirit, which deals with the views on the proper mode of interpretation of a common sacred text. Pascal understood that the intelligent "libertin" could question the stubborn fact of Jewish belief and survival as he stated

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Notes

¹ Voltaire, "Vingt-cinquième lettre," Lettres Philosophiques, (1734; rpt. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 1938), p. 155.

² Ernest Renan, Correspondance 1845-1892, Tome X of Oeuvres Complètes (Paris: Calmann-Levy, 1961), p.11.

³ Arthur Hertzberg, The French Enlightenment and the Jews: The Origins of Modern Anti-Semitism, (New York: Schocken, 1970), p. 11.

⁴ See Albert Maire, Bibliographie des oeuvres de Pascal, (Paris: Leclerc, 1925) and Henri Peyre, "Pascal et la critique contemporaine," Romanic Review, 21 (1930), pp. 325-40.

CHAPTER I

PASCAL'S PERSONAL CONTACT WITH JEWS¹

JEWS OF AUVERGNE, ROUEN, PARIS

Pascal's possible personal contact with the Jews is hard to determine, and one can safely assume that it was minimal owing to Pascal's personality and life experience as well as to the fact that Jewish life in the cities which Pascal frequented, Paris, Rouen, and Clermont-Ferrand was very underdeveloped.

All we know of the Jews in Auvergne is that a community of Marranos lived there as of the sixteenth century.¹ According to an oral tradition, it is told that a certain Rigaud d'Aurette imported Jews from Hanover in order to construct a castle at Villier. In the community of Ville-neuve, the descendants of those Jews became Catholic but retained their Hebraic names of Salomon, Samuel, Macchabée, Eva, etc.²

Rouen was a small but intellectually important Marrano center. A group led by Moses Pinto Delgado, a distinguished poet, came there in the 1620's. A certain Antonio Enriquez Gomez, who published a pamphlet in Spanish against the Inquisition in Rouen, spent some time in Bordeaux on flight from Madrid, and then in the 1640's moved to Rouen where the

pamphlet was published. Dutch Jews could be found in Rouen in the seventeenth century. The Portuguese in Rouen were suspected of being Jews. On March 21, 1633, the king named a group of commissioners to inform against them.³

As far as the Jews of Paris are concerned, negative characterizations of them can be found in a grievance addressed by Parliament to the king. A warning is contained therein against the rise of new sects. Among these sects were Jews who were supposed to have infiltrated the homes of the nobles as well as the court: "anabaptistes, juifs, magiciens et empoisonneurs."⁴ They are referred to as "ennemis" a term we find frequently used in Pascal as well as in the writings of Pascal's contemporaries. These Jews were further accused of trying to establish a synagogue. Did they succeed and did Pascal know of its existence? Pascal's biographers give us no clues.

In 1652, when Pascal spent time in Paris, there were many publications against the Jews and their synagogue. These were provoked by an incident during a parade when the son of a certain Jean Bourgeois, a merchant, was asked what company was passing by. He answered that it was the synagogue. At this point a group of second hand clothes dealers, later accused of being Jews, tied him up, hung him up, and spat at him. These second hand clothes dealers were always suspected of being Jews and were offended when they were reminded of their ancient religion.

Not only publications relative to this affair raised questions of the origins of the second hand dealers but also the actions of a certain Th. Renaudot, the creator of the Gazette. He set up a bureau of information and placement offering free medical consultations and loans, a type of Mont-de-Piété. A quarrel with Guy Patin ensued over this and a Factum appearing around 1644 reproached him for having made "une salle de fripiers et usuriers et d'une boutique de journal (gazette) une synagogue de médecins."⁵

A memoir of the seventeenth century denounced the subtlety of the commerce, banks and correspondence of the second hand clothes dealers. They were also accused of conspiring with the Spanish, then the inveterate enemies of the French.⁶

On the basis of these meager facts of Jewish life in the France of Pascal, we are doubtful of his direct contact with these people.⁷ However, because Pascal came from a family of merchants, we may speculate that he had some awareness of the Jewish merchants. His maternal grandfather Victor Begon was a merchant; his maternal grandmother Antoinette Forfreyde was the daughter of a merchant and his paternal grandparents were merchants.

We may assume that these merchant families saw the Jews as competitors. The commercial privileges and the money lending rights granted them early in history by William the Conqueror placed them in the odious light of usurers.⁸ Even

though the financially predominant position of the Jews was taken over by the Christians, they in turn capitalized on the custom of blaming the Jews in order to divert attention away from their own malpractices.

These merchant families invested great sums of money in the acquisition of land, the chief status symbol, as Soboul points out in his article in Pascal Présent: "Ces fortunes marchandes s'investissaient d'abord en domaines fonciers, la propriété de la terre constituait le signe par excellence de la réussite et de la suprématie dans une société."⁹

From a psychological point of view, we may say that somewhere along the way, Pascal developed a distaste for his merchant milieu and then projected or transferred this preoccupation with land, symbol of earthly and material things, on the Jews who, from the time of Judas' betrayal of Christ for forty shekels of silver, had become a symbol of a people concerned with the material and not the spiritual. This negative characterization of the Jews was then reinforced by his faith in Christ, the symbol and protector of the poor.

One of Pascal's chief complaints against the Jews was their preoccupation with material things and land in particular, the land that was promised to their forefathers, to Abraham and his descendants: (frag. 275-643) "L'objet de Dieu n'était pas de sauver du déluge, et de faire naître tout un peuple d'Abraham pour ne nous introduire que dans une terre grasse." He attributes their absorption with the "terre grasse" as the

reason for their turning away from God and not accepting Jesus as the Messiah: (frag. 269-692) "Il y en a qui voient bien qu'il n'y a pas d'autre ennemi de l'homme que la concupiscence qui les détourne de Dieu, et non pas des (ennemis), ni d'autre bien que Dieu, et non pas une terre grasse." Through Jesus, man is not led into a "terre grasse" but rather into a new land where the people are nourished by a new law: (frag. 607-766): "Sauveur, père, sacrificeur, hostie, nourriture, roi, sage, législateur, affligé, pauvre, devait produire un peuple, qu'il devait conduire et nourrir, et introduire dans sa terre."

There is an opposition between the old ways of the Jews and the homo novus which Christ introduces. Pascal uses the verb "vieillir" to describe those who have not yet recognized the truth of Christ: (frag. 270-670) "Le monde ayant vieilli dans ces erreurs charnelles, J.-C., est venu dans le temps prédit mais non pas dans l'éclat attendu, et ainsi ils n'ont pas pensé que ce fût lui." In his discussion of the "figuratifs," Pascal uses the same verb "vieillir" to accuse the Jews of their preoccupation with terrestrial things: (frag. 270-670): "Les Juifs avai(en)t vieilli dans ces pensées terrestres: que Dieu aimait leur père Abraham, sa chair et ce qui en sortait, que pour cela il les avait multipliés et distingués de tous les autres peuples sans souffrir qu'ils s'y mélassent. . . ."

PASCAL'S CONCERN FOR THE POOR

In contrast to the Jews, Christ emphasizes poverty as opposed to material wealth. The Messiah is described as "pauvre." (frag. 502-571). He is poor and humble. In this, Pascal is inspired by the prophetic and wisdom literature of the Old Testament in which the meek are the mass of simple folk, over and against the wealthy and luxurious classes.¹⁰ The new king or Messiah may rule all nations, but he is still poor and humble: (frag. 487-727): "Les prophéties qui le représentent pauvre le représentent maître des nations. Is. 52.16, etc. 53.-Zach. 9.9." In these passages, the Messiah is described as a victorious king but nonetheless mounted on an ass. This is furthermore the quality of David, who, although a king who possessed great wealth, continued to characterize himself as poor: (Ps. 39:18): "Seigneur, je suis pauvre et mendiant."

It is through His humility and poverty that Christ is able to communicate with all men. His dual nature as the exalted God and the abject and suffering human account for His glory: (frag. 946-785):

Considérer J.-C. en toutes les personnes:
 J.-C. comme père en son père, frère en son
 frère, pauvre en les pauvres car il est par
 sa gloire tout ce qu'il y a de grand étant
 Dieu et est par sa vie mortelle tout ce
 qu'il y a de chétif et d'abject. Pour cela
 il a pris cette malheureuse condition pour
 pouvoir être en toutes les personnes et
 modèle de toutes conditions.

Pascal is so personally taken by the view of Christ as poor and lowly that in one of his rare outbursts characterized by the use of the personal "je," he exclaims: (frag. 931-550) "J'aime la pauvreté parce qu'il l'a aimée."

Pascal's personal life reflects the same concern for the poor. It can be seen in three different efforts: 1) the rent contracts handed over to Maignart de Bernières, a type of director of charitable works, 2) in the affair of the carrosse à cinq sols, where all benefits were to be given over to the poor people of Blois who suffered greatly during the terrible winter of 61-62, 3) in his last will and testament where Pascal left half of his earthly goods to the hôpitaux généraux of Clermont and of Paris, hospices which received the poor. At the end of his days, he lived with the barest essentials having removed curtains from his room, sold his furniture and his books with the exception of the Bible, St. Augustine, and a small number of others. We are told by his sister that he got along without servants and that he made his own bed.¹¹ She describes him as being completely obsessed with the poor:

Enfin, il n'avait rien dans le coeur et l'esprit que les pauvres, et il me disait quelquefois: 'D'où vient que je n'ai encore jamais rien fait pour les pauvres, quoique j'aie eu toujours un si grand amour pour eux?' Et comme je lui répondais: 'C'est que vous n'avez jamais eu assez de bien ... Je devais donc leur donner mon temps, disait'il, et ma peine; c'est à quoi j'ai manqué. Et si les médecins disent vrai, et que Dieu permette que je relève de cette

maladie, je suis résolu de n'avoir d'autre occupation ni d'autre emploi le reste de mes jours que le service des pauvres.¹²

His final commitment may be seen in his adoption of a poor servant to whom he left his home when he moved in with the Périer's, and in the case of the young fifteen year old girl whom he brought to the seminary where he left money for her care.¹³

Notes

¹ According to Francisque Michel in his Histoire des races maudites de la France et de l'Espagne published in Paris in 1847 "en 1610, il aborda et entra en France, en plusieurs fois, tant par mer que par terre, plus de 150.000 Morisques ... une grande multitude de Juifs s'était jointe à eux ... lesquels n'ayant pas la ressource d'aller en Afrique, se seraient installés sous le masque chrétien en France, en particulier en Auvergne." (Léon Poliakov, Histoire de l'Antisémitisme Paris: Calmann-Levy, p. 367).

² Robert Anchel, Les Juifs de France, (Paris: J.B.Janin, 1946), p. 142.

³ Anchel, p. 145.

⁴ Robert Mandrou, Magistrats et sorciers en France au XVII^e siècle, une analyse de psychologie historique, (Paris: Plon, 1968), p. 184.

⁵ Anchel, pp. 130-131.

⁶ Anchel, p. 133.

⁷ It is curious that Pascal's first place of residence in Paris was on the Rue des Juifs where he lived for one month.

⁸ Rudolph M. Lowenstein, Christians and Jews: A Psychoanalytic Study, (New York: Delta, 1951), p. 83.

⁹ Albert Soboul, "Clermont au temps de Pascal" in Pascal Présent, Collections Ecrivains D'Auvergne, (Clermont-Ferrand,

G. de Bussac, 1962), p. 210.

¹⁰ Yehezkel Kaufmann, The Religion of Israel, trans. Moshe Greenberg, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 321.

¹¹ Charles Baudouin, Blaise Pascal, (Paris: Classiques du XX^e Siècle, Editions Universitaires, 1969), p. 106.

¹² Baudouin, p. 107.

¹³ Baudouin, pp. 107-108.

CHAPTER II

MIRACLES: GENESIS OF THE APOLOGY

KEY CONCEPTS OF PASCAL FOUND IN DISCUSSION ON MIRACLES

Since Pascal's personal contact with Jews was limited or non-existent, his concept of the Jews was formed by Christian tradition and his personal reading of Scriptures. We should first examine what he learned from the Christian tradition as well as from his contemporaries and then turn to a study of his personal reading of the Bible. However, before undertaking this task, it is worthwhile to begin with Pascal's discussion of miracles since this is the genesis of the Apology.

In light of Lafuma's ordering of manuscripts, Pascal scholars agree that the Apology is a result of the notes of 1656-7 on Montaigne Miron, the Pyrrhonians, and "divertissement," with notes on miracles, perpetuity and the errors of the Jesuits.¹ While Pascal was writing a series of letters against Père Annat and Père de Lingendes destined to refute the Rabat-joie, a polemical Jesuit work against the March 24 miracle of the Sainte Epine, he was led to reflect on other aspects of the faith.² The result was the Apology. His discussion of miracles involves key concepts and vocabulary: "charité," "aveuglement," "concupiscence," "l'intérieur,"

"l'extérieur," "visible," and "invisible" which we shall see developed in the Pensées particularly in his discussion of the Jews, their Bible, and their religion. Our concern here is twofold: first, the biblical sources of Pascal's views on miracles and secondly the characterization of the Jesuits as the Jews of today in the discussion on miracles.

The biblical source of Pascal's discussion on miracles is made clear to us by Gilberte who cites her brother's source with great admiration:

Il démêlait tout cela avec une lumière admirable, et quand nous l'entendions parler et qu'il développait toutes les circonstances de l'Ancien et du Nouveau Testament où étaient rapportés ces miracles ils nous paraissaient clairs.³

Pascal's interest centers on three characters of the Old Testament: Abraham, Gideon and, of course, Moses.

The first two personages illustrated that miracles were a good means of affirming the faith. This was important to Pascal since the miracle of the Sainte Epine could also be used to confirm the faith, first against the Jesuits and secondly against the heretics and "libertins." Miracles are a visible exterior of God's grace which is an interior act. Both are above nature: (frag. 861-805): "Les deux fondements, l'intérieur, l'autre l'extérieur; la grâce, les miracles, tous deux surnaturels." Miracles serve as a display of dramatic evidence for a supernatural order of reality. They are evidence calculated to incline the believer to the acceptance of other mysteries. They are the "corps" or the

external side of religion: (frag. 848-806): "Les miracles et la vérité sont nécessaires à cause qu'il faut convaincre l'homme entier en corps et en âme."

Moses presented two criteria for the discernment of true miracles: first, that the prediction be fulfilled as stated in Deuteronomy 18 and second, that a true miracle not lead to idolatry, i.e. that the faith in a one true God be maintained as stated in Deuteronomy 13. Pascal recalls incidents where a prophet of God was challenged by false prophets as in the cases of Jeremiah versus Hananias and Eli versus the prophets of Baal. Pascal concludes that in these cases where the true God was being challenged the miracle always occurred on the side of truth: (838-671): "Toujours le vrai prévaut en miracles. Les deux croix."

Pascal also mentions the miracles of the flood and the crossing of the Red Sea. In fact, because of these outstanding miracles it was difficult for the Jews to accept Jesus as the Messiah and His miracles as extraordinary.⁴ The refusal of the Jews to accept Jesus as the Messiah is further attributed to their "concupiscence" or lack of "charité."⁵ It is not reason which interferes with belief but rather a lack of "charité:" (frag. 834-826) "Ce qui fait qu'on ne croit pas les vrais miracles est le manque de charité."

PAIRING OF JEWS AND JESUITS

In addition to a lack of "charité," a state of "aveuglement" prevents the acceptance of miracles. Here an analogy is drawn between the Jews' blindness which prevented them from accepting Jesus and his miracles and the Jesuits' failure to see whether the five propositions found in the book of Jansenius conform in spirit to the Catholic doctrine of grace. Instead, the Jesuits challenge the miracle of Port Royal: (841-829):

John 7.40. Contestation entre les Juifs comme entre les Chrétiens d'aujourd'hui ... car, ses miracles étant convaincants, ils devaient bien s'assurer de ces prétendues contradictions de sa doctrine à l'Écriture, et cette obscurité ne les excusait pas, mais les aveuglait. / Ainsi ceux qui refusent de croire les miracles d'aujourd'hui pour une prétendue contradiction chimérique, ne sont pas excusés.

Later in fragment 962-902, without comparison but still using the term "aveuglement" usually applied to the Jews, Pascal writes of the Jesuits,

Les jésuites n'ont pas rendu la vérité incertaine, mais ils ont rendu leur impiété incertaine. La contradiction a toujours été laissée pour aveugler les méchants, car tout ce qui choque à la vérité, ou la charité est mauvais. Voilà le vrai principe.

Pascal goes on to explain that the blindness of the Jews is also an instrument of God's fulfilling the words of the prophet Isaiah: (893-573) "Il les a aveuglés, etc."

The disbelief of the Jews is God's intended obscurity. We have here the seeds of the concept of the "Dieu caché,"

for if miracles were so clear to everyone then God would no longer be a "Dieu caché." This concept resolved the question of why the Jews and the Jesuits could not accept miracles.

We not only find the seeds of the concept of the "Dieu caché" but that of the concept of the miracle as "witness." Before Christ's death, the resurrection and conversion of the nations were all predicted. Once this was accomplished, the prophecies were vindicated. The prophecies themselves thus become a "miracle subsistant" which could be used against the Jews. (frag. 180-838).⁶

The Jews like the Jesuits confuse miracle and doctrine.⁷ Because Jesus performed miracles on the Sabbath, the Jews, in accordance with their doctrine which prohibited work on the Sabbath, failed to understand that the spirit of the miracle coincided with the doctrine. Another example of this confusion of miracle and doctrine was the Jews' refusal to accept Jesus as the Messiah since the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem while Jesus was from Nazareth in the Galilee. For Pascal there is a dialectic rapport between the miracle and the doctrine.⁸ Doctrine lends meaning to the miracle while the miracle causes us to reflect on the true meaning of the doctrine (840-843.)⁹

Both the Jesuits and the Jews are concerned with appearances, "devoirs extérieurs," and not higher values. This analogy was first used in the fifth Provincial Letter concerning the "grâce efficace" where Pascal writes, "Ce n'est pas seulement pour faire pratiquer aux hommes les

devoirs extérieurs de la religion c'est pour une vertu plus haute que celle des pharisiens et des plus sages du paganisme."¹⁰

The Jesuits are also to be compared to the false prophets whom the Jews followed (frag. 965-889):

Car si quelques-uns de ces hommes qui ... fait profession de sortir du monde et de prendre l'habit du religieux, pour suivre dans un état plus parfait que le commun des chrétiens sont tombés dans des égarements qui font horreur au commun des chrétiens sont devenus entre nous ce que les faux prophètes étaient entre les Juifs, c'est un malheur particulier.

This analogy between the false prophets of the Jews and the Jesuits is the central theme of the Projet de Mandement contre 'L'Apologie pour les Casuistes.' It is based on a verse from Pet. II, 1: "De la même manière qu'il y a eu de faux prophètes entre les Juifs, aussi il s'en élèvera entre vous."¹¹ In this letter Pascal presents a strong warning against the spread of the "Apologie pour les Casuistes." He fears that the Church might fall into destruction as the ancient Temple and Synagogue did under the guidance of the false prophets of the Jews. He urges all faithful Christians to resist Jesuit doctrines just as the saints of the Old Testament did in the struggle against the false prophets and their doctrines:

Car de la même manière que la piété des saints de l'Ancien Testament consistait à opposer aux nouveautés des faux prophètes qui étaient les casuistes de leur temps; de même la piété des fidèles doit avoir maintenant pour objet de résister aux relâchements des casuistes qui sont les faux prophètes d'aujourd'hui.¹²

By turning the reader's attention to the Jews and to their evil ways and counsel, Pascal tries to fill his heart with the fear of being identified with the Jews whom he depicts as the Jesuits of yesteryear. He ends the letter on a note of doom--the destruction of Jerusalem and total annihilation of the Temple--leaving the reader with the horror the future portends under the leadership of the Jesuits:

Les princes sont dans la corruption, les prêtres les y accompagnent, les prophètes les y confirment et tous ensemble en cet état se reposent encore sur le Seigneur en disant: 'Dieu est au milieu de nous; il ne nous arrivera pas de mal.' C'est pour cette raison, dit le Seigneur, que Jérusalem sera totalement détruite, et que le temple de Dieu sera renversé et anéanti.¹³

In the pairing of the Jesuits and the Jews Pascal saw an opportunity to attack his arch opponents. The comparison of one's opponent to the Jews was a traditional polemical device used by Tertullian and other Church Fathers as well as countless writers throughout the Middle Ages. Not only on the subject of miracles, the beginnings of the Apology, and in fragment 286-609 of the Pensées,¹⁴ but also in the Ecrits des Curés de Paris, we find Pascal comparing the Jesuits to the Jews. In the "Deuxième Ecrit", the Jesuits are labeled as the Pharisees of the New Law (pharisiens de la loi nouvelle); in the "Cinquième Ecrit", he compares the wretched state in which the Jesuits have left the Church to the prophets' admonition to the sons: "Vous m'avez rendu odieux aux peuples qui nous environnent."¹⁵

In the "Sixième Ecrit", he resorts to the same vocabulary of "aveuglement" to describe the Jews in his condemnation of the Jesuits, "Ainsi, c'est pour un aveuglement étrange, où la providence de Dieu les a justement abandonnés, qu'après qu'ils nous ont tant accusés...."16

Pascal saw that the disbelief of both the Jews and the Jesuits on the question of miracles could be used successfully to attack the Jesuits. Later on, as the Apology developed, he again used the Jews to convince the "libertin" that his refusal to accept Jesus would make him like the Jews. This resemblance would persuade and break down the "libertin's" indifference and disbelief. Pascal included the Jews and their religion in the many fragments of the Pensées for this polemical purpose. He knew that aside from the Jesuits disbelief, but more importantly, the "libertin" could question the disbelief of the Jews. (273-745): "Ceux qui ont peine à croire cherchent un sujet en ce que les Juifs ne croient pas."

This question of Jewish disbelief has a long history in Christian tradition. Pascal as well as his contemporaries were influenced by this tradition.

In order to better determine Pascal's concept of the Jews and their religion, we shall discuss the question of Jewish disbelief in the Christian tradition as well as in the writings of his contemporaries.

Notes

¹ Gouhier in his analysis of the entire question believes that these notes were written as a "Provinciale" on miracles.

² Henri Gouhier, Blaise Pascal: Commentaires, (Paris: J. Vrin, 1966), p. 164.

³ Gilbert Périer, "La Vie de Monsieur Pascal," in Pascal: Oeuvres Complètes, (Paris: The MacMillan Company, Editions du Seuil, 1963), p. 24.

⁴ fragment 264-746: "... grands et éclatants miracles ... attendait donc de plus éclatants."

⁵ The miracles of Jesus are one of the outstanding features of His ministry according to Pascal, and an aspect of His divinity which differentiates Him from Mohammed who did not perform any miracles, doing only what all men can do (321-600).

⁶ J.-C. a fait des miracles et les apôtres ensuite.... Avant donc qu'il ait été mort, ressuscité et converti les nations tout n'était pas accompli et ainsi il a fallu des miracles pendant tout ce temps. Maintenant il n'en faut plus contre les Juifs, car les prophéties accomplies sont un miracle subsistant."

⁷ Tetsuya Shiokawa, Pascal et les Miracles, (Paris: Editions A.-G. Nizet, 1947), p. 160.

⁸ Shiokawa, p. 162.

⁹ ". . . Cela est une vérité que la doctrine doit être soutenue par les miracles dont on abuse pour blasphémer la doctrine. Et si les miracles arrivent on dit que les miracles ne suffisent pas sans la doctrine et c'est une autre vérité pour blasphémer les miracles."

¹⁰ Blaise Pascal, "Cinquième Lettre Ecrite à un Provincial Par un de ses Amis," Blaise Pascal, Oeuvres Complètes, (Paris: The MacMillan Company, Editions du Seuil, 1963), p. 388.

¹¹ Blaise Pascal, "Projet de Mandement contre 'L'Apologie pour les Casuistes,'" Blaise Pascal, Oeuvres Complètes, (Paris: The MacMillan Company, Editions du Seuil, 1963), p. 485.

¹² Pascal, Projet de Mandement, p. 485.

¹³ Pascal, Projet, p. 486.

¹⁴ In this fragment he compares them to the Pharisees of the time of Christ. They are the new Pharisees, the doctors of the New Law: "Deux sortes d'hommes en chaque religion.... Parmi les juifs les charnels et les spirituels qui étaient les chrétiens de la loi ancienne. / Parmi les chrétiens les grossiers qui sont les juifs de la loi nouvelle. / Les juifs charnels attendaient un Messie charnel et les chrétiens grossiers croient que le Messie les a dispensés d'aimer Dieu. Les vrais Juifs et les vrais chrétiens adorent un Messie qui leur fait aimer Dieu."

15 pascal, "Cinquième Ecrit," p. 480.

16 pascal, "Sixième Ecrit," p. 488.

CHAPTER III
PASCAL AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES
IN THE LIGHT OF CHRISTIAN TRADITION

ROLE OF THE JEWS IN WRITINGS OF CONTEMPORARIES

Pascal's statements and understanding of Judaism are often dismissed on the grounds that they merely reflect stock Christian polemics of his time. Lionel Cohn writes in his article, "Pascal et le Judaïsme" published in Pascal: Textes du Tricentenaire: "Une fresque générale pour ne pas dire originale de l'histoire juive, une étude de la religion juive, dans une perspective traditionnelle: tel nous semble être le tableau qui se dégage des divers et nombreux fragments dans lesquels Pascal analyse et juge les Juifs et leur loi."¹

When we examine more closely the writings of Pascal's contemporaries as well as the long tradition of Christian polemics against the Jews, we shall first begin to understand that Cohn's judgment is too facile. Later chapters will reinforce our view that while it is true that Pascal like his contemporaries draws from St. Augustine and the Church Fathers; nevertheless, he is also original in his thinking and style.

Pascal's contemporaries range in attitude from Garasse, the most negative toward the Jews, insulting them in the

basest terms, to Macé, Morel, Gamaches, and de la Serre, who like Pascal emphasize the writings of the Prophets of the Old Testament, to Isaac de la Peyrère who emphasizes the Jewishness of Christ, a fact completely ignored by Pascal.²

Let us begin with Garasse who resorts to the most primitive and standard anti-Semitic accusations and characterizations of the Jews: 1) Money. Jews have fallen so low, he writes, that the proverb "riche comme un juif" no longer applies. The government has taken all away from them including home and property. 2) Blood accusations. These are not of the traditional variety wherein Jews were accused of using Christian blood for ritual purposes. Instead, Garasse explains that Jewish children are born with a large blood clot on their heads: "... que leurs enfants naissent avec une grosse bosse de sang sur la tête et que tous les Vendredis de la Semaine Sainte ils saignent par tous les conduits de leurs corps."³ This, he explains, is a self punishment for having taken the blood of Christ. The Jews punish themselves further to atone for those among them who are the direct descendants of the people who killed Jesus by placing oil on their bones, "...des chastimens particuliers et personnels, qui sont attachez à leur familles; comme une teigne enragée et comme une huyle bouillante sur leur os."⁴ 3) Rejection. The Jews are rejected as illustrated by their banishment from all lands, their lack of

property and their being hated by the public at large. Thus, they are deprived of all communication on earth as well as in heaven: ". . . car ils ne sont ny du Ciel, ny de la terre, mais comme parricides, ils sont privez de la communication de tous les elemens."⁵ In addition, Garasse accuses the Jews of smelling like carcasses: "Ils sont puans comme charogne."⁶ Pascal does not share Garasse's extreme view of the Jews except perhaps for one reference which hints at the extermination of the Jews. However, he does accept the idea of the rejection of the Jews. Both of these will be discussed later. It is no wonder that he shares so little with the Jesuit Garasse who was known for his grossness, insults, and lies.⁷ Garasse wrote against Charron and Theophile de Viau and his Somme Théologique was condemned by the Sorbonne because of falsification of certain passages of Scripture.⁸

At the other extreme is Isaac de la Peyrère who in his Du Rappel des Juifs, published in 1643, emphasized the Jewish roots of Christianity, especially those of Jesus Christ. He claims that once these roots are recognized and accepted, the Christian must realize that persecution of the Jews means persecution of the residue of which the Prophets spoke. The Jews of the present are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to whom the promise of salvation is eternal. Salvation of the Gentiles comes from the Jews. Furthermore, the Jewish Law must be treated with respect even though Jesus

Christ abolished it, because the blessings of the Gentiles and the promise of salvation are contained in it: ". . . Que cette Ancienne Loy Judaïque, quoy qu'abolie par Jésus Christ ne doit pourtant pas être moquée; puisque par elle, comme par un saint canal, sont dérivés les Bénédiction, des Gentiles et des Promesses faites aux Pères des Juifs."⁹

Peyrère introduces the idea of the brotherhood of all Jews, perhaps the source for Pascal's "peuple composé de frères" (frag. 451-620). Unlike Pascal though, he points to all Jews as the brother of Jesus Christ. There are few negative statements in Peyrère's treatment of the Jews, and this may be due to the probability of his Jewish extraction. Peyrère was at first a Protestant and then a Catholic, but upon his death he refused the last rites of the Church.¹⁰

Between the two extremes of Garasse and La Peyrère, we find a number of contemporaries of Pascal who used some of the traditional stock comments about the Jews which Pascal also uses: 1) The Jews as reliable and non suspect witnesses to the truth of Christianity. They are reliable and non suspect because their own writings attest to their transgressions and calamities. 2) Dispersion of the Jews. This is a sign of the Providence of God who saw to it that they were to be dispersed throughout the world. This punishment would attest to the truth of Christianity. Morel writes,

C'est ici qu'il faut admirer l'admirable providence de Dieu qui a voulu disperser les

Juifs dans toutes les provinces du monde, afin qu'il rendissent partout témoignage à la vérité des Ecritures Saintes ... qu'on peut les croire comme des témoins non suspects, quand ils parlent contre eux-mêmes et quand ils publient les prophéties qui les ont menacés des maux où ils se trouvent enveloppés et de tous les malheurs qui leur sont arrivés.¹¹

Morel uses the same verb, "admirer" and the same adjective, "admirable" as Pascal does in speaking of the Jews, but his admiration is for God. Pascal as we shall see uses the verb in relation to the Jews themselves and the verb thus takes on a completely different connotation.

Macé, another contemporary, takes up the Pauline concept of the Jewish law as shadow and typos of the New Law, and he carries the metaphor one step further by viewing the Jews as representing one primitive stage in the history of humanity which reaches its perfection with Christ and the New Law. The time of Moses, he writes, is the adolescent stage of the world, "laquelle estoit tout en ombres, figures, crayons, et cérémonies éclatantes. C'est en ce sens que la loy de Moïse n'a pu rien amener au comble de la perfection."¹² God becomes the great Pedagogue who leads humanity through different stages of maturity. The sacrifices of the Old Law become diverting amusements until the age of maturity when the people are ready for the spirit of the New Law: "Il les amuse dans la multitude et la diversité des sacrifices, dans la pompe des sacrifices, dans les promesses d'une félicité temporelle."¹³

We must not neglect to mention Père Jean Boucher. In his work Triomphes de la religion chrétienne published in 1628, he invokes the authority of the Prophets to prove that Jesus is the Messiah. Like Pascal, he also mentions the prophecy of the destruction of the Temple and the dispersion of the Jews.¹⁴ In one section, Boucher allows the Jews a word in their defense although he refutes it immediately. If the Jews defend themselves by claiming that they are the "justes" among the suffering and persecuted, writes Boucher, they must be told that those in this category received consolations and favors following their persecutions, but not so with the Jews.¹⁵ We make note of the term "ennemis capitaux"¹⁶ used by Boucher which may have been borrowed by Pascal who speaks of the Jews as "nos ennemis irréconciliables." (frag. 431-560).

A major source of Pascal's discussion of the Jews and their religion comes from the Dutchman Hugo Grotius and his work, De veritate religionis christianae published in Latin in 1627 and in French in 1636. Grotius ranks with Richard Simon and Spinoza in his philological and historical method in the study of Scripture. Without doubt, he knew Hebrew, Aramaic, and Syriac. He cites the Talmud, the Aramaic translation of the Bible, the Syriac of the Gospel of St. Matthew, Maimonides, and the Biblical commentator Rashi.¹⁷ From Grotius Pascal takes: 1) the idea of the perpetuity of Judaism as a proof of the truth of Christianity in Book I,

2) From Book II, the various means of establishing the authority of the Old and New Testament, 3) From Book V, that true Jews and true Christians have the same religion and 4) From Book VI, he draws some arguments refuting Mohammedanism.¹⁸

On the question of the value of the Talmud, Pascal and Grotius differ. While Grotius negatively labels the Talmud as a book filled with "low fables and ridiculous opinions,"¹⁹ Pascal characterizes the discussions of the Talmud as "subtiles, agréables, historiques et théologiques." (frag. 277-635). He is the first Christian polemicist to pay compliment to the Talmud, but only because he wants to show that the Talmud itself accepts the coming of Christ as written in the prophecies. This compliment is indicative of other seemingly positive attitudes and designations of the Jews and their tradition. Let us examine these more closely.

JULES ISAAC'S INTERPRETATION OF CHRISTIAN ANTI-SEMITISM

We have already clarified that Pascal like his contemporaries was of course influenced by a long tradition of Christian anti-Semitism. Jules Isaac in his writings explains this tradition as being the result of two historical problems or facts: Firstly, that of Jesus and the Jewish people. Isaac shows that Jesus found opponents and disciples as well as the sympathies of the masses among the Jewish people.²⁰ There was no rejection of Jesus by the Jewish people nor a rejection

of them by Jesus. Secondly, there is the problem of Judaism versus Christianity. Isaac claims that after Jesus there was a strong surge of conversions which the Jewish people reacted to by regrouping behind their doctors in an attempt to resist Christian preaching. It was not Jesus or his Messiahship that they rejected but rather the faith of the Church. According to Isaac, there was a parallel and mutual rebuff of both Judaism and Christianity. When the Church began to consider primitive Christianity, Judaeo-Christian, an inferior group, and demanded that it cast off the holy Law which it believed to be God given, the Jews found this untenable. A growing mutual hostility of the doctors both Christian and Jewish developed. These two problems or historical facts, the Messiahship of Jesus and the rejection of the Church were confused. The result can be seen in the rise of "certain stylistic practices in the Gospels, certain equivocal, tendentious formulations." Added to this and the on going Judaeo-Christian disputes, "a new even more tendentious tradition was born in which the Gospels were emptied as it were of their historic substance and substituted the myth of rejection, of reprobation, of deicide an entirely different reality."²¹ Even when Jewish proselytism, the conversion of Christians to Judaism, ceased late in the Middle Ages, the weapons of rejection were too entrenched to be abandoned. As Isaac writes, "The myth of Crime had engendered the myth of Punishment; together they

explained, covered, if not justified Israel's martyrdom."²²

INFLUENCE OF TRADITIONAL ANTI-JEWISH POLEMICS ON PASCAL

Pascal is heir to these myths of "Crime" and "Punishment." On the subject of rejection, he holds the view that the Jews rejected Jesus and that he also rejected them. Fragment 502-571 expresses this viewpoint: "De sorte que ceux qui ont rejeté et crucifié Jésus Christ ... sont ceux qui portent les livres qui témoignent de lui et qui disent qu'il sera rejeté et en scandale...." We may also note the traditional charge of deicide. Fragment 311-460 accounts for Jewish suffering and misery as punishment for the killing of Christ: ". . . le voir toujours misérable, étant nécessaire pour la preuve de J.-C. et qu'il subsiste pour le prouver et qu'il soit misérable, puis qu'ils l'ont crucifié."²³ It is interesting that in the Abrégé de la vie de Jésus Christ Pascal places more emphasis on Pontius Pilate's decision to crucify Jesus than on the Jews.²⁴ What may account for the difference, is the fact that in the Pensées it is important to convince the "libertin" that the existence of the Jews is a proof of the truth of Christ and Christianity whereas in the Abrégé there is no apparent polemical purpose. Actually Pascal places more emphasis on the abandonment and rejection of the Jews than on their role in deicide. This may be due to two factors: one, his personal obsession with abandonment and

rejection and two, the need to show that the Jews were rejected and abandoned because they were to be replaced by the new true Israel and the New Law.

Pascal recalls the privileged place of the Jews in the history of the ancient world among the pagans; however, unlike Peyrère, he does not go one step further in reminding his reader that from this people were born Mary, the apostles, the first pope Peter, and Jesus according to the flesh. He finds it necessary to maintain the superiority of the Jews and their law over the Greek and the Romans, because he must ultimately preserve the superiority of Christianity which was derived from Judaism. This, of course, is what Bossuet set out to do in his Histoire Universelle where he explained the laws and customs of the ancients showing the superiority of the Jews over the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans. This was Bossuet's answer to Spinoza who viewed the Jews and their laws as inferior to ancient religions.²⁵ Spinoza is however not the chief perpetrator of this image of the Jews but independently of him, the English Deists such as Herbert of Cherbury, John Spencer, and later Anthony Collins proclaimed the superiority of the Greeks over the Jews. Matthew Tindall constantly contrasted natural religion with the superstitions and barbarity of the Jews.²⁶ Voltaire's biblical criticism especially after 1760 derives mainly from Pierre Bayle and the English Deists and less from Spinoza. Voltaire, of course, asserted that the Jews had borrowed everything from

the Greeks and other ancient peoples. He even went so far as to claim in Dieu et les Hommes that the Jews were "plagiarizers and their writings were stolen mostly from Homer."²⁷

However, Pascal's admiration betrays a twist which is the mark of his rhetoric. The Jews are to be admired for laying the foundations of a great religion, but following that admission, one should follow the teachings of Christianity. Pascal begins with admiration; but, using the word "ainsi" (frag. 793-426) as a rhetorical device to show the logical continuity of his admiration, he ends with Christ the liberator: "J'admire une première et auguste religion toute divine dans son autorité, dans sa durée, dans sa perpétuité, dans sa morale ... Ainsi je tends les bras à mon Libérateur."

Indeed, Cayrou in Le Français Classique explains that the verb "admirer" does have an ironic connotation: "Admirer: regarder avec étonnement ou stupeur quelque chose de surprenant ou dont on ignore les causes. N.B. Il comporte le plus souvent une intention ironique. Les mots dérivés "admiration," "admirable," expriment les mêmes nuances."²⁸ Thus, when Pascal praises Josephus for having recognized the superiority of Jewish Law over the Greek and Roman Law, we understand that this emphasis on the greatness of the Jewish Law and tradition is only for the purpose of detracting from it later by quoting from its own prophets

who prophesy the abrogation of that very law (frag. 451-620) ". . . la plus ancienne loi du monde, la plus parfaite et la seule qui ait toujours été gardée sans interruption dans un Etat. C'est ce que Joseph montre admirablement contre Appion et Philon Juif...."

Since Pascal accepted Christianity as the true religion, the Jews could no longer retain the same place they did in the Old Testament. However, we are in doubt as to what Pascal considered the place of the Jews in the present world. Were they allowed the right to exist? the right to have a land and the right to be a nation among nations? It seems difficult to believe that Pascal would agree with a contemporary Catholic theologian and historian Jean Daniélou who, while recognizing the admirable and august Jewish roots of Christianity like Pascal, insists upon the Jews present historical reality:

Il y a une continuité d'Israel qu'un chrétien accepte pleinement, celle d'Israel constituant un type humain particulier, un type humain qui a absolument le droit d'exister et de persister dans l'existence . . . Ce peuple a le droit d'avoir, une terre, le droit d'être un peuple parmi les peuples.²⁹

Pascal's labeling of the Jews as faithful and sincere belies the same polemical purpose as his admiration of them. The Jews' fidelity to their "book" is fidelity to a book which speaks of their ungratefulness to God and their ultimate replacement by the new true Israel. Their sincerity, shown by their willingness to die for their religion,

is thought of as extraordinary and not a part of the natural order of things: (492-630): "La sincérité des Juifs ... Sincères contre leur honneur et mourant pour cela. Cela n'a point d'exemple dans le monde ni sa racine dans la nature." This statement may best be understood in the light of Richard Rubinstein's statement in After Auschwitz that if Jesus is to be considered more than human it is necessary that the Jews be considered extraordinary and not part of the natural order.³⁰

We noted earlier that in explaining Pascal's supposed positive attitude toward the Jews, many Pascalisants have pointed to the use of this word "sincérité." However, if we study this word more closely, we see that "sincerity" has a negative connotation. The Jew is sincere because he carries the book which testifies to his ungratefulness to God. Sincerity is thus superseded by the Jew's ungratefulness and transgression. Pascal chooses this word carefully, for sincerity is a very deceiving quality. The word is often used to describe the illusion of life and people as in fragment 978-100:

. . . Ainsi la vie humaine n'est qu'une illusion perpétuelle; on ne fait que s'entre-tromper et s'entre-flatter. Personne ne parle de nous en notre présence comme il en parle en notre absence. L'union qui est entre les hommes n'est fondée que sur cette mutuelle tromperie; et peu d'amitiés subsisteraient, si chacun savait ce que son ami dit de lui lorsqu'il n'y est pas, quoi qu'il en parle alors sincèrement et sans passion.

Man's natural state is rather an illusion of sincerity. He either tries to appear sincere, consciously deceiving his fellow man as portrayed in fragment 978-100, or else he is so far removed from his original union with God that he actually believes that he is acting sincerely when in reality he is not. In the famous fragment of the "divertissement," Pascal writes,

Le gentilhomme croit sincèrément que la chasse est un plaisir grand et un plaisir royal, mais son piqueur n'est pas de ce sentiment-là. Ils s'imaginent que s'ils avaient obtenu cette charge, ils se reposeraient ensuite avec plaisir et ne sentent pas la nature insatiable de la cupidité. Ils croient chercher sincèrément le repos et ne cherchent en effect que l'agitation.

Thus by using the word "sincère" Pascal brings an array of negative associations: human relationships as illusion and man as vain and insincere. More importantly, the apparent quality of sincerity masks man's alienation from God. The truly sincere man finds God, the true God, Jesus Christ. Yet, the Jews have not found Him. Their only role as "sincère" is to preserve the book which witnesses their rejection. Redemption can only be realized through annulment of their identity and the adoption of a new one as the "true Israel." They alone play a mythical role among men, "actors and participants in the drama of sin and innocence, guilt and salvation, perdition and redemption...."³¹

Moreover, sincerity's opposite, "concupiscence" often gives the appearance of a quality. It is difficult to

recognize because it often manifests itself as a positive quality. It is a synonym for original sin. In fragment 211-453 Pascal names it "figmentum malum." It is of such a nature that it often appears to resemble a virtuous quality: (frag. 210-451):

Tous les hommes se haïssent naturellement l'un l'autre. On s'est servi comme on a pu de la concupiscence pour la faire servir au bien public. Mais ce n'est que feindre et une fausse image de la charité, car au fond ce n'est que haine.

In this pensée, he refers to mankind in general, however in another pensée we find the same vocabulary with the word "Jews" replacing man: (614-664) "Dieu s'est servi de la concupiscence des Juifs pour les faire servir à J.-C." "Concupiscence" manifests itself in behavior and attitudes later attributed specifically to the Jews as in fragment 149-430 where it attaches man to the earth, "terre." We have already noted Pascal's insistence on the Jews' attachment to material wealth, terrestrial holdings and not to spiritual ones: "Vos maladies principales sont l'orgueil qui vous soustrait de Dieu, la concupiscence qui vous attache à la terre; ..." This is stated more clearly in fragment 269-692 where "concupiscence" turns man from God causing him to forget that true good lies in Him and not in rich, earthly possessions: "Il y en a qui voient bien qu'il n'y a pas d'autre ennemi de l'homme que la concupiscence qui les détourne de Dieu et non pas des (ennemis) ni d'autre

bien que Dieu, et non pas une terre grasse."

A comparison of Pascal and his contemporaries in the light of the Christian tradition has revealed Pascal's originality which we shall continue to note in the succeeding chapters. His originality is found in the rhetoric of his polemics which, inspite of various complimentary designations of the Jews and their religion, reveals a subtle underlying rejection of them. The rejection is reinforced by Pascal's christocentricity which views man, with the Jew as prototype, as alienated from God and incapable of distinguishing the true good from the false, "sincérité" from "concupiscence".

In addition to the Christian tradition, Pascal drew upon Scriptures, particularly the Old Testament, as the immediate source for his concept of the Jews and their religion. It is this source which we shall now discuss.

Notes

¹ Lionel Cohn, "Pascal et le Judaïsme," Pascal: Textes du Tricentenaire, (Paris: Le Signe, Librairie Arthème, 1963), p. 217.

² The name of Jean Bodin (1530-1596) should be mentioned among those French thinkers who truly tolerated Jews and Judaism and who totally demythologized their existence. In his work on religious philosophy, the Heptaplomeres, where he presents men of different religions, the Jew is portrayed with more positive traits than the representatives of the other religions. Bodin claims that the persecution of the Jews was rooted in politics and not in religion. Jews, he believed, served as civilizing agents in the many lands of dispersion where they dwelled. He went so far as to negate original sin, the virgin birth, and the divinity of Christ while claiming that all that is morally useful and true in the New Testament derives from Judaism. Opinions such as these were not to be heard in France for more than a century. (Hertzberg, Arthur, The French Enlightenment and the Jews, p. 31).

³ Le R.P. Francois Garasse, La Somme théologique des veritez capitales de la religion chrestienne, (Paris: S. Chappelet, 1625,), p. 581.

⁴ Garasse, p. 581.

⁵ Garasse, p. 581.

⁶ Garasse, p. 581.

⁷ "Garasse," La Grande Encyclopédie Inventaire Raisonné des Sciences, Des Lettres et Des Arts, tome dix-huitième, 1886-1902.

⁸ Pascal, however, labels Garasse as "grand" in the ninth Provincial Letter.

⁹ Isaac de la Peyrère, Du Rappel des Juifs, (n.p.: n.p., 1643), p. 159.

¹⁰ Arthur Hertzberg, The French Enlightenment and the Jews: The Origins of Modern Anti-Semitism, (New York: Schocken, 1968), P. 15.

¹¹ Claude Morel, Démonstration de la vérité de la Religion chrestienne, (Paris: P. Ricolet, 1661), p. 99.

¹² J. Macé, L'Oeconomie de la vraye religion chrestienne ..., (Paris: A. Bertier, 1652), pp. 196-7.

¹³ Macé, p. 195.

¹⁴ J. Dedieu, "Survivances et Influences de l'apologétique traditionnelles dans les Pensées," Revue d'Histoire de la Littérature française, (1931), p. 12.

¹⁵ Le P. Jean Boucher, Les Triomphes de la religion chrestienne, contenans des résolutions de trois cent soixante et six questions, (Paris: L. Sonnier, 1628), p. 489.

16 "... Et qui plus est, nous avons pris ces Ecritures de la main des Juifs qui sont nos ennemis capitaux." (Dedieu, p. 16).

17 Sister Marie Louise Hubert, Pascal's Unfinished Apology: a study of his plan, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), pp. 76-7.

18 Patricia Topliss, The Rhetoric of Pascal, (Leicester: University Press, 1966), p. 141.

19 Hugo Grotius, The Truth of the Christian Religion in Six Books, trans. John Clarke, corrected and illustrated by Mr. Le Clerc, To which is added a Seventh Book concerning, (Oxford: W. Baxter, 1818), p. 242.

20 Jules Isaac, Jesus and Israel, ed. Claire Huchet Bishop, trans. Sally Gran, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), p. 398.

21 Isaac, Jesus, p. 399.

22 Isaac, Jesus, p. 399.

23 The Dialogue with Trypho of St. Justin Martyr (100-165) is the first recording of Jewish tribulations due to the murder of Jesus (Talmadge, Disputation and Dialogue, p.89).

24 Abrégé-(Lafuma, p. 306) 239. 240. "Pilate demande aux Juifs de quoi ils accusent Jesus. Les Prêtres qui s'en étaient rendus Juges, ne voulurent pas s'en rendre parties. Et Pilate ne voulait point le condamner sans connaissance de cause. 240. Enfin ils furent contraints de l'accuser et lui imposent plusieurs crimes, comme d'avoir voulu émouvoir

le peuple, se disant Roi soi-même."

²⁵ Hertzberg, p. 37.

²⁶ Hertzberg, p. 38.

²⁷ Hertzberg, p. 303.

²⁸ Gaston Cayrou, Le Français Classique: Lexique de la Langue du Dix-Septième Siècle (Paris: Didier, 1948), p. 13.

²⁹ Jean Danièlou et André Chouraqui, Les Juifs: Dialogue entre Jean Danièlou et André Chouraqui, (Paris: Beauchesne, 1966), pp. 94-95.

³⁰ Richard Rubinstein, After Auschwitz: Radical Theology and Contemporary Judaism, (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing, 1966), p. 56.

³¹ Rubinstein, p. 56.

CHAPTER IV
PASCAL AND THE OLD TESTAMENT:
APPROACH AND ROLE OF BIBLICAL PERSONAGES

APPROACH TO SCRIPTURE

In order to show the influence of Scripture,¹ particularly the Old Testament, on Pascal, we must first answer the question, how did Pascal approach Scripture, particularly the Pentateuch which recounts the origins of the Jewish people and their religion?

Some French critics like Lanson view Pascal as a precursor of the historical method in the study of Scripture.² Lhermet in his Pascal et la Bible also labels him a precursor of modern exegesis.³ We must agree with Gouhier that these assertions are exaggerated and that Pascal left the historical scholarly investigations to the experts, preferring to continue where they left off. We shall, however, see that there is a curious modernity to his specific religious approach to the Bible.

Pascal is not concerned with establishing the historicity of the Pentateuch involving philological methods which

establish and date a text. For dating purposes, he rather depends upon the type of appendix found in the "abrégé de la chronologie Sainte" of L'Histoire du Vieux et Nouveau Testament by the Sieur de Royaumont published in 1670.⁴ This appendix lists chronological tables which showed that because of the longevity of the Patriarchs and other biblical personages, the time between these biblical figures was minimal.

Pascal was clearly not less advanced in his approach to the Bible than the majority of his contemporaries. His main concern was of course to preserve the authority of Moses and revelation. The books he used reflect his traditional and Jansenist point of view as well as his interest in proving it rationally. His major source is the Vulgate; however, he also used the polygot Bible of the sixteenth century Hebrew scholar Vatable. This was not the original but rather the Biblia Polyglotta vulgo dicta Vatabli which appeared in Heidelberg in 1586. A page of this Bible consists of four columns: 1. the Greek text of the Septuagint, 2. the version of the Vulgate, 3. a new translation based on the Hebrew by Sante Pagnino and, 4. the Hebrew text.⁵ Pascal chose Vatable because this text specifies the dogma of the Fall in the Jansenist spirit.⁶ Because of his use of Vatable, Strowski believes that Pascal learned Hebrew. To support this, he claims that Port Royal was preparing a translation of the Bible by Lemaistre who

was a Hebrew scholar.⁷

Pascal was not interested in exegesis. He used biblical verses the way the Jewish Rabbis of the Midrash or the Church Fathers used them, by quoting from different biblical books as if they were one contemporary, homogeneous text. This is why he also felt comfortable in using the Pugio Fidei, a medieval polemic text which attempted to prove that the Talmud accepted the divinity of Jesus. Yet, there are instances when the exegete in Pascal appears, showing a philological concern for word meanings and syntax. Examples may be found in fragment 959-636 where he discusses the value of the conjunction "si,"⁸ and in fragment 571-775 where he discusses the meaning of the word "omnes".⁹ A final example may be found in fragment 857-819 where he discusses the word "miracles" explaining that it does not always signify "miracle" but rather "crainte."

When we compare Pascal to some of his contemporaries, that Lanson labeled him as a precursor of the historical method appears unfounded. The oratorian Jean Marin and the Protestants Louis Cappel and La Peyrère are far more advanced in the historical method than Pascal.¹⁰ La Peyrère, for instance, claimed that the Pentateuch although originating from Moses, was edited and rearranged by someone else. These views as outlined in his Systema theologicum in 1655 became so widespread that some of Spinoza's enemies considered his view a rehash of La Peyrère.¹¹ Spinoza, of

course, in his Theological Political Tractus was the first to approach systemically and analyze the Bible as a secular text. Not only did he reject miracles but also the Jews as the bearers of divine revealed truth. Even preceding Spinoza, many historians rank Richard Simon's Histoire critique du Vieux Testament as one of the foundations of biblical criticism. Simon held the view that Moses was not the sole author of Scriptures but that the Old Testament had been organized by scribes.¹² Actually, even in the sixteenth century, works which questioned the authenticity of the Pentateuch were published. In 1594, B. Perereus in his Prior tomus commentariorum concluded that the Pentateuch was retouched after Moses and restored by Ezra.¹³ The Jesuit J. Bonfrère showed that Moses composed the Pentateuch but that some passages were added afterwards. The philosopher Hobbes also studied the question in 1651 and attributed the Pentateuch to Ezra.¹⁴

Along with this rationalist current there existed a movement in defense of the authenticity of the Pentateuch. Among its supporters were Ph. Guadagnolus who ardently defended the intact form of the Pentateuch and Jansenius who affirmed the Pentateuch as the work of Moses but admitted that certain facts were posterior to Moses. In order to justify this assertion, Jansenius claimed along with the rationalists that firstly, Ezra or another writer added details and secondly, that Moses had perhaps prophesied

certain details.¹⁵

Pascal also stood in the tradition of those who defended the authenticity of the Pentateuch. He posited a simple criterion of "witness," a biblical concept, which we shall see later plays an important part in Pascal's theology of the truth of Christ and Christianity. The Jewish people, who were witness to the giving of the Law preserved it zealously and, unlike the other peoples of the earth, continued to exist and to serve as witness to its authenticity.¹⁶ The witness of the Jews is therefore contemporary, and all true history must be contemporary for Pascal: (frag. 436-628): "Toute histoire qui n'est pas contemporaine est suspecte." In contrast, he points to the histories of the Egyptians and the Chinese where the authors are not contemporary with the places and people they write about. As far as the Greeks are concerned, Pascal points out that all witnesses to Homer's tales of Troy have disappeared.

Pascal posited that the authenticity of a fact depends on the number of generations involved and not the length of years: (fragment 474-622): "Ce n'est pas la longueur des années mais la multitude des générations qui rendent les choses obscures. Car la vérité ne s'altère que par le changement des hommes." It is for this reason that he accepted the truth of the biblical account, because the time between the Patriarchs and Moses was minimal: (frag. 296-625): "Sem qui a vu Lamech qui a vu Adam a vu aussi

Jacob qui a vu ceux qui ont vu Moïse: donc le déluge et la Création sont vrais. Cela conclut entre de certains gens qui l'entendent bien." Pascal reinforces this reason with a psychological and human explanation. When people lived as long as the Patriarchs did, they spoke to one another and recounted the past for want of better things to do especially since there were no arts and sciences (frag. 290-626): "Or, de quoi les eussent-ils entretenus, sinon de l'histoire de leurs ancêtres, puisque toute l'histoire était réduite à celle-là, qu'ils n'avait point d'études, ni de sciences, ni d'arts, qui occupent une grande partie des discours de la vie?"¹⁷ Obviously, Pascal did not know of the great advances in the arts and sciences in the ancient Near East. Furthermore, he adds, that the people of that time seemed particularly concerned about keeping their genealogies: (frag. 290-626) "Aussi l'on voit qu'en ce temps les peuples avaient un soin particulier de conserver leurs généalogies." This particularly human aspect is indicative of Pascal's human and psychological orientation. While it is true that a contemporary like Desmarets de Saint-Sorlin also speaks of the Jews as witnesses who conserved their writings zealously, passing them on from father to son,¹⁸ it is Pascal who brings the argument down to the level of family fatherings and discussions. He specifically used the words "famille" and "frères" to describe the history of the Jewish people (451-620).

Pascal takes the traditional concept of witness from Christian apologetics and makes it uniquely his own. He personalizes it by adding the human element, the relationship of a group of people to the divine. Moreover, it is his form of expression, his style in this description, which sets him apart from his contemporaries.

The whole of fragment 451-620 is not only rhetorically designed to be convincing in terms of Pascal's reasoning but in his choice of words. As so often with Pascal, as we shall see later in the magnificent fragment of the "Trois Ordres," there is a combination of the logical, reasoning, mathematical presentation, and a rhythmical flow which is at once personal and poetic. The apparent logical reasoning derives from such words as "recherche," (et principalement dans la recherche que nous faisons ...c'est à ceux-ci qu'il faut recourir pour en savoir la tradition) and the emphatic, "ce peuple n'est pas seulement . . . car au lieu que les peuples de Grèce ... et comme il est aisé de le juger."

Pascal adds to the rigor of his reasoning by quoting reliable sources such as Josephus: "C'est ce que Josèphe montre admirablement...." The repetition of such words as "tout," "tous" ("un peuple tout composé ... tous les autres sont formés de l'assemblage d'une infinité de familles, celui-ci est tout sorti ... étant ainsi tous une même chair..."), and the use of superlatives create a unity and a flow while persuasively convincing the reader: "admirables

et singuliers," "le plus ancien," "vénération particulière," "si longtemps," "un si long espace d'années," "la plus ancienne loi," "la plus parfaite et la seule qui ait toujours été gardée," "si ancienne," "tant de sagesse," "tant d'équité et tant de jugement que les plus anciens législateurs," "loi est en même temps la plus sévère et la plus rigoureuse de toutes." The personal tone of the sentence on the passage and unity of time is reinforced by the compact yet flowing phrases: "Et s'étendant depuis les premiers temps jusques aux derniers, leur histoire enferme dans sa durée, celle de toutes nos histoires."

Thus, like his traditionalist contemporaries, Pascal's chief concern is to preserve the authority of Moses and his revelation. Like them he presents rational arguments and even ventures into some scattered exegetical analysis, but, as we have noted, he never reaches the depth of a La Peyrère. His originality and contribution appear rather to lie in his concept of witness, the poetry of his phrasing and his vocabulary of "famille," "frères," and "generations." All of these reflect an approach to history as religious history unlike either the traditionalists or the exegetes. While the traditionalist approach tended to eliminate the human and personal element, the exegetes viewed history and historical facts as the expressions of historical trends or periods of culture. This means that for the exegetes history dealt with the general and the universal and not with the

unique and the particular.¹⁹ Even a traditionalist like Bossuet devoted much writing to the discussion of other religions and people in order to establish the superiority of Christianity over Judaism and Mohammedanism. Pascal, unlike either group, was concerned with the human and the personal, the particular and the unique experience of the Jewish people. He viewed the Jewish people as witness to God's revelation, "preserving it as such in the memory of generations."²⁰ Therefore, he believed that the record of these experiences, the Bible itself, gave substance and form to the people. The people are defined in relationship to the Bible, the record of their experiences. In modern terms we would call this an existential relationship. This is what Pascal expresses in fragment 481-594: "Différence d'un livre reçu d'un peuple, ou qui forme un peuple." Pascal is more concerned with this relationship and the relationship between man and God as related in the Bible than in exegesis. Thus his first step was to convince the "libertin" that the Jewish people and their Bible are unique. Once this had been demonstrated, the biblical prophecies, which he believed spoke of the coming of Christ, could have meaning for the "libertin."

ROLE OF BIBLICAL PERSONAGES

Having clarified Pascal's approach to the Bible and its unique importance in his apologetics it is worthwhile to study the major biblical personages and their role in the Pensées.

Because of the centrality of original sin and the Fall, one would expect Adam to be the chief biblical figure of the Pensées; however, it is Moses and not Adam who assumes this role. Without Moses, there is no Adam, for it is only through the writings attributed to Moses that we learn of Adam and all the basic teachings of the Christian religion: the Trinity, original sin, and the Messiah (frag. 315-752): "Moïse d'abord enseigne la Trinité, le péché originel, le Messie." The books of Moses or the Pentateuch are, for Pascal, along with the book of Job the most ancient books in the world. Both hold Christ as their center: (811-741) "Les deux plus anciens livres du monde sont Moïse et Job, l'un juif, l'autre païen qui tous deux regardent J.-C. comme leur centre commun et leur objet. Moïse en rapportant les promesses de Dieu à Abraham, Jacob, etc. et ses prophéties et Job."

It is Moses who reveals the promise of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to the world. This promise is the thread of revelation telling of the coming of Christ which continues throughout the history of mankind. It is what Pascal calls

"perpétuité:" (frag. 390-617)

Perpétuité. Qu'on considère que depuis le commencement du monde, l'attente ou l'adoration du Messie subsiste sans interruption, qu'il s'est trouvé des hommes qui ont dit que Dieu leur avait révélé qu'il devait naître un rédempteur qui sauverait son peuple.

Pascal traces all those biblical personalities who foretold the coming of Christ, from Adam to such "saints" as Enoch and Lamech, and to Noah who hoped in the Messiah and who was himself a prefiguration of Him: (281-613) "Noé a vu la malice des hommes au plus haut degré et il a mérité de sauver le monde en sa personne par l'espérance du Messie, dont il a été la figure." He notes the continuation of this belief with the Patriarchs, Moses, and the Prophets. Even while the Greeks and Romans proclaimed their false deities, a group of men, the Prophets in Judea foretold the coming of Christ: "Les Grecs et les Latins ensuite ont fait régner les fausses déités . . . Et cependant il y avait toujours au coeur de la Judée des hommes choisis qui prédisaient la venue de ce Messie qui n'était connu que d'eux." Pascal believed that this historical tradition culminated finally in the coming of Christ. From Christ onward, all revelation is through His grace. This is essentially why he confronts the Jewish people and their religion. He is overwhelmed by this perpetual revelation: (390-617) "Cela est admirable."

For Pascal, revelation is the essential experience

between God and man. This is again expressed in the "Mémorial" where we find the opening word of "feu." In its stark simplicity, this single word takes us back to the personal revelation of God to Moses through the burning bush. There, Moses learned what the next passage of the "Mémorial" presents, that the true God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and not the God of the philosophers: "Dieu d'Abraham, Dieu d'Isaac, Dieu de Jacob, non des philosophes et des savants." For Pascal,

Religion is then not mere abstract doctrine, the outcome of which is the meditation of certain choice spirits; it is union with God resting on the experience of the emotions of people and on the message of history. Its justification is therefore not in metaphysical speculation (philosophes et savants) but in religious disposition of men and in facts of the history of religion.²¹

Moses' experience in the burning bush and throughout the Pentateuch is then primary. It is he who tells of the promises as revealed to the Patriarchs and fulfilled by Christ. He himself is a figure of Christ in his killing of the Egyptian; (frag. 246-657): "Figures. Les peuples juif et égyptien visiblement prédits ... que Moïse rencontra: l'égyptien battant le juif, Moïse le vengeant et tuant l'égyptien et le juif en étant ingrat); in his giving of manna (frag. 270-670): "figures. Les Juifs avai(en)t vieilli dans ces pensées terrestres ... que Dieu ... les nourrit de la manne dans le désert ... Après sa mort saint Paul est venu apprendre aux hommes que toutes ces choses

étaient arrivées en figures ... que Moïse ne leur avait pas donné le pain du ciel, etc;"), and as a giver of the law. The law which Moses revealed is to be abrogated and replaced by the law of Christ which makes men truly free: (frag. 818-782) "Moïse ne vous a point donné le pain du ciel. Moïse ne vous a point tirés de captivité et ne vous a pas rendus véritablement libres."

Moses is also portrayed as a leader who became weary of the Jewish people and their transgressions just as the Prophets were to be later (295-629): "Il était las du peuple." This refers to the sin of the Golden Calf, when Moses asked God to relieve him of his duties. Since the Jews did not follow his teachings, (452-631: "Ce livre où Moïse déclare qu'ils ont été ingrats) they could not be expected to believe the miracles and teachings of Jesus Christ: (846-808) "S'ils ne croient point Moïse, ils ne croiront pas un ressuscité." The miracles of Moses become the prototype of the miracles which the Jews experienced and which prevented them from accepting the miracles of Christ. Pascal again uses the word "admirable," but this time in an ironic sense to describe his bewilderment at the refusal of the Jews to accept the miracles of Jesus: (frag. 840-843) "J.-C. guérit l'aveugle-né ... Nous avons Moïse, mais celui-là nous ne savons d'où il est....C'est ce qui est admirable que vous ne savez et cependant il fait de tels miracles....J.-C. ne parlait ni contre Dieu, ni contre Moïse."

Thus Moses in his many roles as prime biblical figure represents for Pascal the biblical experience itself, God's revelation to man. In the "Mystère de Jesus" and in the "Mémorial," Pascal himself participates in this act of revelation. The story of God's revelation to Moses and the agony of Christ on the cross become an immediate reality for him: "Je pensais à toi dans mon agonie. J'ai versé telles gouttes de sang pour toi." This experience of revelation is well defined by the great twentieth century Jewish theologian, Martin Buber, who writes:

Revelation is the supreme meeting of the people or the individual with God. It is dialogical, hence essentially divine-human. It is neither experience nor knowledge [non des philosophes et des savants] and comes not with a specific content of any sort, but as the self-communication of 'presence as power,' which embraces the whole fullness of mutual action,' the inexpressible confirmation of meaning' and the call to confirm (make true) this meaning....²²

It is this personal experience of revelation which distinguishes Pascal from his contemporaries such as Lemaistre de Sacy who also used the word "perpétuité" and the phrase "God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."²³

This is also why the book of Job assumes such importance for Pascal. The final word of God to Job is not a mystery, but rather revelation itself.²⁴ It is the supreme favor of God to Job, the grace of revelation: 42:5 (not cited by Pascal): "Mon oreille avait entendu parler de toi, / Mais maintenant mon oeil t'a vu." God's answer is the beginning

of Job's restoration: "C'est pourquoi je me condamne et je me repens. / Sur la poussière et sur la cendre."

The revelation of God to Job carries special content and hope. For Pascal, it is the faith in Christ the Messiah: (frag. 811-741) "Quis mihi det ut etc. Scio enim quod redemptor meus vivit, etc."²⁵

Job himself through his suffering prefigures Christ in whom he places his hope for salvation. Job represents the human aspect of Christ's dual nature-His humanity characterized by His suffering. Job suffers alone, estranged from friends and God, just as Christ was to suffer in Gethsemani: "Il souffre cette peine et cet abandon dans l'horreur de la nuit." The Pascalian vocabulary of "nuit," "abandon," "ténèbres," is also repeated throughout the book of Job. Through his suffering, Job realizes his human lowliness in the face of the Almighty God, what Pascal would call "bassesse de l'homme:" (Job 39:37 not quoted by Pascal): "Job répondit à l'Éternel et dit: Voici je suis trop peu de chose: que te répliquerais-je? Je mets la main sur ma bouche.") Job recognizes that God is his only source of hope. These verses recall Pascal in the Prière pour le bon usage des maladies:

. . . je ne puis m'adresser qu'à l'auteur et au maître tout-puissant de la nature et de mon coeur. A qui crierai-je, Seigneur, à qui aurai-je recours, si ce n'est à vous? Tout ce qui n'est pas Dieu ne peut pas remplir mon attente. C'est Dieu même que je demande et que je cherche; et c'est à vous

seul, mon Dieu, que je m'adresse pour vous obtenir.²⁶

The biblical figure of Solomon is paired with Job by Pascal as exemplar of misery and suffering: (695-41)
 "Misère. Job et Salomon." Solomon learned of suffering through the realization of the vanity of the pleasures of life or what Pascal would call "divertissement:" (frag. 403-174): "Misère. Salomon et Job ont le mieux connu et le mieux parlé de la misère de l'homme, l'un le plus heureux et l'autre le plus malheureux. L'un connaissant la vanité des plaisirs par expérience, l'autre la réalité des maux." Solomon, ruler of a rich kingdom, wrote of the futility of "divertissement" in Ecclesiastes: (1:1) "Vanité des vanités...vanité des vanités, tout est vanité." Pascal like Solomon takes a survey of human action and endeavor of man at work and at play and concludes that without God there is no meaning to life: (frag. 75-389) "L'Ecclésiaste montre que l'homme sans Dieu est dans l'ignorance de tout et dans un malheur inévitable, car c'est être malheureux que de vouloir et ne pouvoir." Both the Pensées and Ecclesiastes share the same vocabulary of "vanité" (used thirty-four times in Pascal)²⁷ and "ténèbres" (used eighteen times in Pascal).²⁸

Thus, it was the Bible, particularly the Old Testament, with its array of personages who participated in the unique history of the Jewish people that influenced both Pascal's

thinking and style. Furthermore, the Bible was the key to Jesus Christ: (frag. 417-548):

Ainsi sans l'Ecriture qui n'a que J.-C. pour objet nous ne connaissons rien et ne voyons qu'obscurité et confusion dans la nature de Dieu et dans la propre nature.

We shall now discuss the influence of the Prophets on Pascal, because he believed that it was they above all who foretold the coming of Christ.

Notes

¹ According to Lhermet there are 193 biblical citations in the Pensées, and thirty-two in Pascal's other writings, four of which are in the letters, one in the fragment on L'Esprit Géométrique, three in Ecrits Intimes, fourteen in the Provinciales and ten in the Factums-Curés.

² Gouhier, Pascal, p. 220.

³ Gouhier, p. 220.

⁴ Gouhier, p. 221.

⁵ Lhermet, p. 211.

⁶ Lhermet, p. 214.

⁷ Patricia Topliss, The Rhetoric of Pascal: A Study of His Art of Persuasion in the Provinciales and the Pensées, (Leicester: Leicester University Press), pp. 149.

⁸ "'Si' ne marque pas l'indifférence. Malach. Isaie. Isa. si volueri etc. In quacumque die."

⁹ "Il y a hérésie à expliquer toujours, omnes, de tous. Et hérésie à ne le pas expliquer quelquefois de tous, bibite ex hoc omnes." Pascal explains that the heretic Huguenots interpret "omnes" as "de tous." In order to avoid heresy, Pascal cautions that one should follow the Church Fathers and tradition.

¹⁰ Gouhier, p. 221.

¹¹ Hertzberg, pp. 32-33.

¹² Hertzberg, p. 40.

¹³ Geneviève Delassault, Le Maître de Sacy et son temps.
(Paris: Librairie Nizet, 1957), pp. 197-8.

¹⁴ Delassault, p. 198.

¹⁵ Delassault, p. 200.

¹⁶ Simon believed it necessary to consult not only texts conserved by the Jews, but also those of Jewish commentators since they would have had more authentic texts (Yardeni, *La Vision de Juifs et du judaïsme dans l'oeuvre de R. Simon*," REJ, CXXIX, p. 192).

¹⁷ It is interesting to note that Pascal attributes the Jews' zealousness to the Torah to their lack of art and sciences, for later Voltaire was to use this as an example of the Greeks' superiority over the Jews. Voltaire claims that the source for this opinion is in Josephus' writings; however, Josephus was refuting Apion who was repeating an earlier argument of Apollonios Molon, a writer of the 1st century B.C. The fact remains that Hellenist Jews like Philo were teachers of the Greeks. This embarrassed many of them like Molon who then insisted that the Greeks were the superior ones. (Hertzberg, p. 304).

¹⁸ Delassault, p. 201.

¹⁹ Our distinction is based on Maurice Friedman's discussion of Buber's distinction between the universal and the particular in Maurice Friedman, Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), p. 235.

²⁰ Will Herberg, The Writings of Martin Buber, (New York: Meridian Books, 1960), p. 246.

²¹ Isaak Heinemann, Jehuda Halevi: Kuzari: The Book of Proof and Argument, Introduction and commentary by Heinemann, (Oxford: Phaidon Press, MCMXLVII), p. 22.

²² Herberg, Buber, p. 29.

²³ "...il a voulu jeter longtemps auparavant les fondements de cette merveille qui devait être le rétablissement de sa gloire . . . C'est pour cette raison qu'il a choisi Abraham deux mille avns l'incarnation....Il a fait naître de ce Patriarche, Isaac, Joacob et Levi....Cinq cents as après Moïse et mille as J.C. il a fait naître David Roi et Prophètes...."

²⁴ Kaufmann, Religion of Israel, p. 337.

²⁵ "Car je sais que mon Rédempteur vit, et que je dois me relever de la terre au dernier jour."

²⁶ Blaise Pascal, "Prière pour le bon usage des maladies," p. 363.

²⁷ Hugh M. Davidson and Pierre H. Dubé, A Concordance to Pascal's Pensées, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), p. 1339.

28 Davidson, p. 1339.

CHAPTER V

PASCAL AND THE OLD TESTAMENT:

PROPHETS, JEWISH LAW AND THE PUGIO FIDEI

INFLUENCE OF THE PROPHETS

Inspiration in Theme and Style

We have already seen how the books of Job and Ecclesiastes inspired Pascal, but it is from the Prophets, particularly from Isaiah and Jeremiah, that he drew his greatest inspiration both in terms of theme and style.

Pascal felt that the words of God Himself through the Prophets would be most effective in converting the "libertin:" (frag. 303-799) "le riche parle bien des richesses, le roi parle froidement d'un grand don qu'il vient de faire, et Dieu parle bien de Dieu." In order for God to speak for Himself, Pascal wrote fragments made up completely of quotes from the Prophets as seen in fragments 486-682 and 489-713.

It is no wonder that Pascal was attracted to the Prophets, because when they spoke of God, it was not in philosophical abstractions. As A.J. Heschel writes in The Prophets: "They (the prophets) did not try to depict Him; they tried to present Him, to make Him present. In such an effort only

words of grade and intensity not abstractions can be of any end."¹ The Prophets do not use the language of essence but rather of presence, and this, Pascal realized, would be their efficacy in an apology: (frag. 329-734) "Prophétiser, c'est parler de Dieu, non par preuves de dehors, mais par sentiment intérieur et immédiat." Furthermore, for his polemical purposes, Pascal knew that, as many apologists and polemicists before him, the Prophets were the greatest critics and most rigorous belittlers of the Jewish people. Pascal used quotes from the Prophets in order to prove God's abandonment of the Jews and their replacement by the new Israel and the new religion of Christianity.

Fragments 486-682 and 489-713 are made up almost completely of direct quotes from the Prophets. These citations tell first, of the rejection and destruction of the people by a wrathful God, then, of the promise of hope and redemption, then again of vengeance and destruction, and finally, of the coming of the Messiah. The effect created by these direct quotes from the various prophets is that of the medieval passion play with its procession of prophets who set forth their prophecy of Christ, each one evoking a tone and mood unique to his message.² Jansenius also sensed this "play" element in the prophets of the Old Testament, for when he proclaimed that the Old Testament was figurative, he compared it to a great comedy, a play: "Nisi aliud fuisse Testamentum...nisi magne quasi comoediam...

praefigurando serviebat."³

The various dialogues presented by Pascal in these fragments capture the reader's attention because of the intensity of feeling expressed. Turning first to fragment 486-682 and the words of the prophet Jeremiah, we note a series of dialogues with a range of feeling. There is God's anger at His people and His oscillation concerning their fate: "Numquid super his non visitabo dicit dominus, aut super gentem hujuscemodi non ulciscetur anima mea. Jer. 5.29."⁴ There is Jeremiah's suffering for his people and God's restraining him: Jer. 7:16: "Tu ergo noli orare pro populo hoc."⁵ Jeremiah's identification and empathy for his people are poignant: Jer. 17:17: "Non sis tu mihi formidini, tu spes mea in die afflictionum."⁶ The final effect of these powerful quotes suits Pascal's purpose which is to show the rejection of the people of Israel by their God.

Pascal also drew upon the pathos of this dialogue form in the "Mystère de Jesus," in the dialogue between the speaker and Jesus: "Je te suis présent par ma parole dans l'Écriture, par mon esprit dans l'Église et par les inspirations, par ma puissance dans les prêtres, par ma prière dans les fidèles." The tone is one of "intimate relatedness"⁷ between God and man which Pascal found in the Prophets of the Old Testament: "Console-toi. Tu ne me chercherais pas si tu ne m'avais pas trouvé. Je pensais à toi dans mon agonie; j'ai versé telles

gouttes de sang pour toi." This is the prophetic experience which Pascal understood so well in the "Mystère," "an experiencing of a divine experience, or a realization of having been experienced by God."⁸ The "je pensais à toi" represents Christ's turning to man, or, as in the biblical experience of the Old Testament, God's awareness of man. According to A.J. Heschel in The Prophets, this is a specific aspect of prophetic religion or of the religious phenomenon in general:

. . . man's knowledge of God is transcended in God's knowledge of man, the subject man becomes object, and the object God becomes subject. Not a reciprocal succession of acts, not a distinguishable alternation of sound and echo, but rather in every event of the religious consciousness it is a question of a dual mutual operation, a twofold mutual initiative.⁹

Jeremiah

Theme of Abandonment

To return to our discussion of Jeremiah in fragment 486-682, we may note that Jeremiah and Pascal share many of the same themes: personal abandonment, human affliction, God's abandonment of man, and the concept of "coeur."

Pascal's mother having died early in his life made him

particularly sensitive to the theme of abandonment. It is first found in the "Mémorial" where Pascal quotes directly from the prophet Jeremiah in a passage which expresses God's anguish over Israel's abandonment of Him: "Dereliquerunt me fontem aquae vivae (ils m'ont abandonné, moi, source d'eau vive). This theme reappears in fragment 198-693, preceding the famous fragment of the "deux infinis":

En voyant l'aveuglement et la misère de l'homme,
en regardant tout l'univers muet et l'homme sans
lumière abandonné à lui-même, et comme égaré dans
ce recoin de l'univers....

In fragment 622-131, man's abandonment is again recalled,

Rien n'est si insupportable à l'homme que
d'être dans un plein repos, sans passions, sans
affaires, sans divertissement, sans application.
Il sent alors sont néant, son abandon, son
insuffisance, sa dépendance, son impuissance,
son vide.

This theme reaches its culmination in the "Mystère" where Jesus is depicted alone, abandoned by God and man: "Jésus est seul dans la terre non seulement qui ressent et partage sa peine, mais qui la sache...Il souffre cette peine et cet abandon dans l'horreur de la nuit."

Jeremiah, more than any other prophet evokes the wrath of God and the destruction awaiting the people of Israel, and Pascal capitalizes on this in order to emphasize the rejection of Israel (486-682):

Aspexi terram et ecce vacua erat, et nihili, et
caelos et non erat lux in eis. / Vidi montes et
ecce movebantur et omnes colles conturbati sunt;
intuitus sum et non erat homo et omne volatile
caeli recessit. Aspexi et ecce Carmelus desertus
et omnes urbes ejus destructae sunt a facie
domini et a facie viae furoris ejus.¹⁰

Pascal does not hesitate to bombard his reader with this fury in order to emphasize the rejection of Israel who was to be replaced by the new Israel. There is not only rejection and abandonment of the people of Israel but of their law and sacrifice: (453-610)

Moïse même leur a dit que Dieu n'acceptera point les personnes....Deut. 10.17. Dieu dit: Je n'accepte point les personnes ni les sacrifices....Le sabbat n'était qu'un signe. ex. 31.13 et en mémoire de la sortie d'Egypte. deut 15.19 dont il n'est plus nécessaire puisqu'il faut oublier l'Egypte. ...La circoncision n'était qu'un signe. gen. 17.11....Et de là vient qu'étant dans le desert, ils ne furent point circoncis parce qu'ils ne pouvaient se confondre avec les autres peuples. Et qu'après que J.-C. est venu elle n'est plus nécessaire....Que la circoncision du coeur est ordonnée....Que l'extérieur ne sert à rien sans l'intérieur.

There is a build up until the quotes become shorter and shorter as if eliminating one by one the essentials of the Jewish religion, each of the essentials mentioned previously--the paternity of Abraham, the circumcision, the sacrifices, the ceremonies, the arc, the temple in Jerusalem and finally the law and the alliance with Moses: "Que [emphasis added] les Juifs manquent de cet amour....Que les sacrifices des Juifs déplaisent à Dieu...Que les sacrifices des païens....Et que Dieu retirera sa volonté des sacrifices des Juifs. The culmination of the quotes is the message of Jeremiah:

Que Dieu fera une nouvelle alliance par le Messie et que l'ancienne sera rejetée. Jer. 31:31. Que les anciennes choses seront oubliées... Qu'on ne se souviendra plus...Que le temple serait rejeté...Que les sacrifices seraient rejetés... Que cette sacrificature serait éternelle. Que Jérusalem serait réprouvée et Rome admise.

Earlier in fragment 451-620, Pascal won over our admiration for the law, by first praising its perfection and its ability to endure throughout history, "la plus parfaite et la seule qui ait toujours été gardée sans interruption dans un état," then, in a transitional paragraph, he notes the severity and rigor of the law guarded zealously by an impatient and rebellious people, "un peuple rebelle et impatient." He then declares this same law to be a witness against them, and then, finally, completely denies its validity. With a personal emphatic "je" he affirms that sacrifice is not the essential but rather love of God: "Je dis qu'elle ne consistait en aucune de ces choses, mais seulement en l'amour de Dieu et Dieu réproverait toutes les autres choses." Once again with a barrage of quotes introduced by the word "que" which gives the semblance of proof, Pascal shows how the biblical text through the Prophets rejects sacrifice. In fragment 486-682, he picks up the word "extérieur" already quoted in 451-620 and combines it directly with sacrifice: "L'essentiel n'est pas le sacrifice extérieur." This is a key word which will later be contrasted to "intérieur." In fact, the

understanding and love of God is an interior act.¹¹ Outside form and ritual are rejected in favor of what comes from the interior, the heart.

Concept of "coeur"

The word "coeur" is used fifteen times in Jeremiah, six of these quotes appear in Pascal. "Coeur" is a key word in the Pensées appearing a total of 124 times, coming after Dieu, 687 times, nature and raison, 218 times, miracles and esprit, 174 times, and "église" and "juifs," used 129 times.¹²

The heart as the seat of true reality and not exterior appearances is a biblical concept. Its most common meaning is "the inner man, the soul, the inner self in contrast to the outward bodily appearance of men."¹³ When God searches the heart" (Jer. 17:10), He discovers the true meaning of man's behavior. When Ezekiel (18:31) speaks of "a new heart," he specifically defines it as conversion to a new standard of moral behavior: "Convertissez-vous donc, et vivez."

The biblical sources of "coeur" are the books of Deuteronomy and Jeremiah. These two books are themselves very closely related. Phrases and whole passages of Deuteronomy are interwoven into nearly every chapter of Jeremiah. Deuteronomy is cited more than two hundred times.¹⁴ Jeremiah's promise to the exiles that if they repent with all their heart, God will give them a new heart (24:7) is drawn

from Moses' complaint that Israel does not have the heart to understand God's words, and from his later promises to the people that if they repent God will be compassionate in the exile and "will circumcise the heart of their seed to love the Lord with all their heart and soul" (Deut. 30:1 ff). Pascal adopts this same phrase in fragment 427-429: "...ceux qui servent Dieu de tout leur coeur...." or in the same fragment and others where he speaks of seeking God sincerely: "que Dieu a établi des marques dans l'église pour se faire reconnaître à ceux qu le chercheraient sincèrement."

As a serious reader of the Bible, Pascal is sensitive to the influence of Deuteronomy on Jeremiah. This can be seen in his combining passages from each as in fragment 453-461: "Que la circoncision du coeur est ordonnée. Deut. 10:17. Jer. 43 Soyez circoncis de coeur, retranchez les superfluités de votre coeur et ne vous endurez plus...." He summarizes the theme of "coeur" in Deuteronomy in this same fragment: "L'amour de Dieu est recommandé en tout le deutéronome."

When the heart is circumcised, man realizes that the interior is more important than the exterior: (frag. 453-610) "Que l'extérieur ne sert à rien sans l'intérieur." This is immediately followed by a Latin quote from the prophet Joel wherein the children of Israel are asked to tear the heart and not their clothes "Joel. 2:13 scindite

corda vestra, etc."

"Coeur" is thus the capacity which enables man to love, but only when the heart is circumcised. Circumcision in the biblical sense symbolizes man's submission to God's will through the covenant: (frag. 288-689) "Moïse, Deut. 30....promet que Dieu circonciera leur coeur pour les rendre capables de l'aimer." Submission to God's will is not only expressed by circumcising the heart but by breaking it or breaking the hardness of the heart: Psalms 51:19: "Les sacrifices qui sont agréables à Dieu, c'est un esprit brisé. O Dieu! Tu ne dédaignes pas un coeur brisé et contrit (not quoted by Pascal)." Appearances, images, figures are not what God desires (frag. 364-249): "c'est être superstitieux, de mettre son espérance dans les formalités".... (944-250): ". . . Attendre de cet extérieur le secours est être superstitieux."

Because the Jews are concerned with appearances and the image of things, their hearts are described as uncircumcised. True circumcision was introduced by the teaching of Christ (frag. 503-675): "Il nous a donc appris enfin que toutes ces choses n'étaient que figures et ce que c'est que vraiment libre, vrai Israélite, vraie circoncision, vrai pain du ciel, etc." Inspired by Deuteronomy 30:6, Jeremiah instituted the idea of the New Covenant when man will do no evil, and when he will at last know true goodness. This covenant will be instilled in the heart, not on tablets of stone. The ark which housed these tablets will no longer be necessary:

Jer. 31:33: "Je l'écrirai dans leur coeur." (not quoted by Pascal) Pascal writes, (frag. 453-610) "Que l'extérieur ne sert à rien sans l'intérieur." Unlike the Old Covenant, this one will be eternal, never to be forgotten or violated. Pascal, in accordance with Christian tradition, regards Christianity as the fulfillment of this covenant. By nullifying the laws and commandments and basing itself on goodness and love, Christianity is the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy and that of the other prophets who taught that God demands love and not sacrifice.

"Coeur" is used synonymously with "charité." "Charité," however, implies also the generous gift of the heart to others, fraternity, "agape." "Coeur" stands in opposition to "esprit" (frag. 298-283): "Le coeur a son ordre, l'esprit a le sien...Le coeur en a un autre....J.-C., saint Paul ont l'ordre de la charité, non de l'esprit...." This is again repeated in the famous fragment of the "Trois Ordres." The uncircumcised heart represents a figural understanding of circumcision and cannot therefore lead to "charité." (frag. 270-670): "Tout ce qui ne va point à la charité est figure." In fact, this is the unique goal of the Scriptures, and all its passages should be interpreted in this light. Its truth can be deciphered from obscurity only by those who are endowed with a pure heart, a "straight heart." Madame Périer, in speaking of her brother Blaise, explained that the man of faith has a clear vision with all

obscurities removed:

Il disait que l'Écriture Sainte n'était pas une science de l'esprit, mais la science du coeur, qu'elle n'était intelligible que pour ceux qui avaient le coeur droit, et que tous les autres n'y trouvaient que les obscurités.¹⁵

The heart which is capable of faith in God is also described as being endowed with eyes (308-793): "les yeux du coeur qui voyent la sagesse." In our discussion of Isaiah's influence on Pascal we will also note this language of vision to describe the man of faith in contrast to the blind carnal Jew. The believer is one who sees. The man possessed of hardness of heart does not see God: (Is. 26:11 not quoted by Pascal): "Eternel, ta main est puissante: Ils ne l'aperçoivent pas."

For Pascal the heart is also the organ of knowledge:¹⁶ (frag. 110-76): "Nous connaissons la vérité non seulement par la raison mais encore par le coeur." This has biblical roots also as noted in passages from the Psalms (18:15, 4:5), Jeremiah (19:15, 3:16), and Ezekiel (38:10).¹⁷

"Coeur" is not contrary to "raison" as many readers of Pascal have thought. It is rather of a different order. Only the "coeur" can lead to salvation, for it is touched by grace. Reason can be an instrument of faith, but it is "humaine" and "inutile pour le salut" (frag. 110-282). Only the "sentiment de coeur" can lead to salvation.¹⁸

Faith is of a different order: (frag. 414-278) "C'est le coeur qui sent Dieu et non la raison. Voilà ce que c'est que la foi. Dieu sensible au coeur, non à la raison."

"Coeur" is also interchangeable with "volonté." Both have a natural tendency to love¹⁹ (frag. 661-390): "L'esprit croit naturellement, selon qu'il s'y adonne, et il se durcit contre l'un ou l'autre à son choix." As in the Bible, "coeur" is the seat of conscious resolve, direction, and determination of the will.²⁰ However, since the Fall, man's will tends more to "concupiscence" and self-love than toward God. The "concupiscence" which fills the heart and obstructs it from love is described in much stronger terms than "hardness of heart and the "uncircumcised heart" derived from Deuteronomy and Jeremiah. Pascal turns to the book of Job for more powerful images. When he exclaims, (919-553) "Que le coeur de l'homme est creux et plein d'ordures," we are clearly in a Jobian world of dung, physical evil, and infection. This can also be seen in a letter on the death of his father: "L'âme quittant véritablement tous les vices et l'amour de....dont la contagion l'infecte toujours dans cette vie."²¹ "Coeur" becomes christianized with its emphasis on evil, original sin, and the disparagement of life on earth. Pascal also uses somber images from the world of vegetation to describe the evil and sin which infect man's "coeur."²²

In the Pensées, the metaphor "racine" describes the evil which has implanted itself in man's heart as illustrated in fragments 978-100 and 432-194: "Toutes ces dispositions, si éloignées de la justice et de la raison, ont une racine naturelle dans son coeur." "Tout cela a des racines si vives en nous que notre raison ne nous en peut défendre."²³ Although there are at least four negative uses of the word "racine" in Job and many others throughout the Prophets of the Old Testament, this word as well as "fruit" and "semence" were widely used in the Jansenist writings of Port Royal. In the Fréquente Communion of Arnauld forty-four metaphors can be found utilizing the terms "racine," "semence," or "fruit" out of a possible 443. Saint Cyran's, Lettres chrétiennes et spirituelles uses images from the world of vegetation more frequently than any others.²⁴

In the last three Provinciales, the word "semence" is associated with the calumnies that the Jesuits have inflicted on the Jansenists of Port Royal. Pascal repeats this association with the Jesuits later in the Pensées where he characterizes the "bonnes maximes" of the Jesuits as a "tige sauvage" (916-906). However, vegetal images are first used more precisely as the salacious blemish of original sin in a letter to Mlle de Roannez where we find the term "malheureuse racine,"²⁵ and then in the Ecrits sur la grâce as "un fruit sortant d'une mauvaise semence."²⁶ It is interesting to note that in the New Testament plants and

seeds as well as fruits symbolize good rather than evil.

Apart from metaphors having to do with water, mostly derived from Montaigne, these vegetal metaphors are Pascal's only use of images from the world of nature. This is surprising since his great source, the Bible, is replete with images drawn from nature. It is worthwhile then for us to examine Pascal's concept of nature and its relationship to biblical sources.

Concept of Nature and the Book of Psalms

Non Traditional View of Nature

The traditional source for descriptions of nature was the book of Psalms. The Psalms praise God and the wonders of nature, the work of His creation. Pascal neglects this aspect of the Psalms, and in this neglect, he sets forth some of his most important fragments in terms of style and thought.

The seventeenth century in general is not known for its great exaltation of nature. It is a century which focuses on man and not nature. Nature serves rather as a decor for life in society, and it is for this reason that one finds very few descriptions of a savage and grandiose nature. However, in the period from 1600 to 1660, a true love for nature appears among the writers inspired by religion such as Racan, Godeau, and Desmarets de Saint-Sorlin. Nature for them is man's dwelling place and his field of labor. The

hand of God and the beauties of His creation are described.²⁷ Pascal, however, in spite of his great religious preoccupations, does not follow in the footsteps of these writers, but rather aligns himself with the writers of the classical theater who ignore nature. He is closer to them in his emphasis on man, his passions, conflicts, and suffering.²⁸ It is not, as we shall see, that he denies the natural wonders of God but rather that he finds them useless for his apology of Christianity. In fact, he praises David and other canonical authors for not using nature in order to prove God (frag. 463-243): "C'est une chose admirable que jamais auteur canonique ne s'est servi de la nature pour prouver Dieu. Tous tendent à le faire croire. David, Salomon, etc. jamais n'ont dit...." For him, as for Baudelaire and others after him, nature is corrupt, full of snares, luring man to lust and to forgetting God.

As a scientist, he knows that with the advent of a new science, the old concept of nature will not convince the "libertin." He cannot follow in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi nor of his mentor St. Augustine who sang the praises of nature. When Augustine speaks to nature in the Confessions, nature listens and responds: "J'ai interrogé la terre, et elle m'a répondu....J'ai interrogé les souffles aériens et le royaume de l'air....m'a répondu....Et ils m'ont crié de leur voix puissante-c'est Lui qui nous fit."²⁹

However, Pascal receives no response in the modern universe. God is silent and man is frightened: (201-206) "Le silence éternel de ces espaces infinis m'effraie." There is only mystery: "Toutes choses couvrent quelque mystère; toutes choses sont des voiles qui couvrent Dieu (lettre à Mlle de Roannez, fin d'octobre 1656)." ³⁰ The world is incomprehensible and must be deciphered just as Scripture must be deciphered. There is a curious mixture here of Platonic and biblical thought and language. In Plato, there is a consciousness of unseen, eternal ideas, of which the visible world is but a copy. In biblical thought, there was a consciousness of an unseen eternal God of whose will the visible world is but a creation. ³¹ Pascal, of course, rejects the concept of eternal ideas, affirming God instead, but unlike the biblical thinkers, he emphasizes the visible world as a copy rather than the visible world as a creation (frag. 275-643): "Comme la nature est une image de la grâce il a fait dans les biens de la nature ce qu'il devait faire dans ceux de la grâce, afin qu'on jugeât qu'il pouvait faire l'invisible puisqu'il faisait bien le visible."

There is no nature in the sense of a totality which assigns a place to each and every living thing but rather a world which assigns its value according to a double finality both internal and external: ³² (199-72) "Car enfin qu'est-ce que l'homme dans la nature? un néant à l'égard de l'infini, un tout à l'égard du néant, un milieu entre rien et tout,

infiniment éloigné de comprendre les extrêmes." Nature is rather an "absence," a vestige of original man before the Fall.³³ Because man is "disproportionné" in relation to everything, living with an "instinct impuissant du bonheur," (149-430) his only hope is in Jesus Christ who can redeem him. Men may be "misérables, corrompus, séparés de Dieu," but ". . . rachetés par Jésus Christ." (430-560).

The theme of "grandeur et misère" of man presented above is derived from the Psalms. Throughout the Psalms man's overwhelming baseness in relation to the Creator is emphasized (8:4-5)

Quand je contemple les cieux, ouvrage de tes
mains,
La lune et les étoiles que tu as créées:
Qu'est-ce que l'homme, pour que tu souviennes
de lui?
Et le fils de l'homme, pour que tu prennes
garde à lui?"

The entire series of piercing questions of fragment 131-434 recalls this Psalm as well as Psalms 49:13 and 92:6:

Quelle chimère est-ce donc que l'homme? Quelle nouveauté, quel monstre, quel chaos, quel sujet de contradictions, quel prodige? Juge de toutes choses, imbécile ver de terre (Psalm 22:6 sic) dépositaire du vrai, cloaque d'incertitude et d'erreur, gloire et rebut de l'univers?"

In fact, the "grandeur et misère de l'homme" symbolized by man's resembling the beasts and angels is derived from the Psalms. Pascal himself refers directly to the Psalms in fragment 131-434:

L'homme . . . de la grâce est élevé au-dessus de toute la nature, rendu comme semblable à Dieu . . . L'autre qu'en l'état de la corruption . . . il est

déchu de cet état et rendu semblable aux bêtes....
 L'Écriture nous les déclare manifestement....dii
 estis....homo assimilatus est jumentis insipient-
 ibus....

Jésus Christ is the only one who can reconcile the
 "grandeur et misère" because of His dual nature, the divine
 "grandeur" and the human "misère."

Unlike the Psalms and traditional religious philosophy,
 Pascal does not focus on the wonders of Creation. He
 accepts them as given but moves on to persuade his listener
 of the mystery and incomprehensibility of the universe and
 man's place in it. This is well illustrated in fragment
 199-72: "Que l'homme contemple donc la nature entière
 dans sa haute et pleine majesté,...." The phrase "haute et
 pleine majesté" is traditional biblical language as is the
 image of the sun in the following phrase: "Qu'il regarde
 cette éclatante lumière mise comme une lampe éternelle
 pour éclairer l'univers...." It is a given that man is incapable
 of understanding nature. Still, he could laud nature,
 declare it good, as God in Genesis. Pascal continues with
 a very subtle insertion to remind man that God is the author
 of this overwhelming and vast nature: "Enfin, c'est le plus
 grand caractère sensible de la toute-puissance de Dieu que
 notre imagination se perde dans cette pensée." Unlike the
 Psalms which would focus on the omnipotence of God, Pascal
 immediately shifts the focus to man and continues to remain
 there throughout the fragment: "Que l'homme étant revenu
 à soi...."

Pascal does not focus on God and His creation, because in creation man has a definite place in the universe. Pascal sees man as abandoned, "abandonné," lost, "égaré," and even imprisoned in the universe, "ce petit cachot où il se trouve logé." Pascal is more interested in man's redemption than in this world, "cette misérable terre." He is more interested in Christ the redeemer than God the creator: (449-556) "Jésus Christ est l'objet de tout, et le centre où tout tend." God's creation and Adam were only images of the future advent of Christ (frag. 590-656) "Adam forma futuri. Les six jours pour former (l')un, les six âges pour former l'autre....ne sont que la peinture des six âges pour former Jésus Christ et l'église." Because Pascal is not interested in creation, he is not interested in the works of creation and in praising them. It is for this reason that he tends to give a christocentric interpretation to God's working in nature. The rain which makes the earth fertile becomes an image of the grace of Christ in his interpretation of Psalm 64:19³⁴ "Tu visites la terre, et tu lui donnes de l'abondance, Tu la combles de richesses....Mais, seigneur, que ferais-je pour vous obliger à répandre votre Esprit sur cette misérable terre?" We note the use of the adjective "misérable." This is what concerns Pascal about the earth, not its fecundity or its beauty, but the human suffering.

Themes of Suffering and Empathy for Poor in Psalms

More than nature itself, Pascal draws the theme of the suffering and downtrodden poor from the Psalms. It is Christ's poverty, personal suffering and empathy for the poor which bring forth the lyrical outburst from Pascal, "J'aime la pauvreté parce qu'il l'a aimée." (931-550). Because of His poor and humble condition, Jesus was not recognized by the Jews. They awaited the literal fulfillment of the Messiah as a rich and glorious king. They did not realize that the literal translation is worse than the false because it kills (frag. 268-683): "La lettre tue." True meaning is spiritual, a suffering Christ: "Il fallait que le Christ souffrît, that he be "un Dieu humilié." It is from Christ that man and Pascal learn to deal and accept suffering with joy (frag. 793-737): "je vis cependant avec joie, soit dans les biens qu'il lui plaît de me donner soit dans les maux qu'il m'envoie pour mon bien et qu'il m'a appris à souffrir par son exemple." The Psalmist also teaches that suffering is learning, and Pascal draws upon this for the composition of his Prière pour le bon usage des maladies. We have already noted the roots of Pascal's relationship to suffering, the loss of his mother at an early age, his physical suffering and the feelings of loneliness and solitude which the controversies of his milieu aroused in him.

The many dialogues between man and God which we have noted in the influence of Jeremiah on Pascal are also found

in the Psalms. Many of them center around the themes which Pascal developed: God's abandonment of man, God hiding Himself from man and from his misery: Psalm 42:10-12: "Pourquoi m'oublies-tu? / Pourquoi dois-je marcher dans la tristesse? / Psalm 44:24-25: "Réveille-toi! Pourquoi dors-tu, Seigneur? / Réveille-toi! ne nous repousse pas à jamais! / Pourquoi caches-tu ta face? / Pourquoi oublies-tu notre misère et notre oppression?" The vocabulary of "ténèbres" and "abîmes" is also characteristic of the Psalms as in 88:7 and 71:20.³⁵

The Art of Prayer

Besides the many stylistic devices which Pascal adopted from the Psalms which we will examine in a later chapter on style, it is the art of prayer found in the Psalms that inspired him the most. Again, more than praise for the Creator and His works, the focus is on man's turning to God and asking Him to bestow His grace on him. Prayer is man's initiative in the realm of nature. It bridges the gap between the "misère" and "grandeur" of man. Because it derives from man, contrite and humbling Himself before God, it derives from his "misère," but it is also an expression of his dignity, "grandeur" because man initiates.³⁶ The Prière pour le bon usage des maladies captures most fully the tone of the Psalms with its supplications and apostrophes

to God: "I. Seigneur, dont l'esprit est si bon....je vous reconnaisse pour mon père et pour mon Dieu....VI. Achevez, o mon Dieu les bons mouvements que vous me donnez." It is here that Pascal praises God, but, again, not as the creator but as the One who inflicts man with suffering to make him realize that he can only be saved through God's grace:

III. Je vous loue, mon Dieu, je vous bénis tous les jours de ma vie....

XV. Faites donc, Seigneur, que tel que je sois je me conforme à votre volonté; et qu'étant malade comme je suis, je vous glorifie dans mes souffrances.

The prayer ends on a variation of the Psalmic phrases "de génération en génération" and "amen," when Pascal writes, "siècles des siècles. Ainsi soit-il."³⁷

Isaiah

Theme of Overwhelming Transcendence of God

Isaiah is the prophet who influenced Pascal the most. There are sixty one direct or indirect references to Isaiah. Of these sixteen are in fragment 489-713 and ten in fragment 486-682.

Chief concepts inspired by Isaiah which we will discuss are the sense of dread and awareness of the transcendent mystery and exclusiveness of God which includes the concept of the "Dieu caché," and the concept of the Jewish people

as witness. In addition, the Isaianic vocabulary of "néant," "vanité," and "orgueil" and their related themes, which we have already noted in the influence of Ecclesiastes and Job, play a major role in the Pensées.

Looking first at fragment 489-713, we note that it contains the largest number of direct quotes from Isaiah. The overwhelming transcendence of God is immediately evoked: "Is. 5:8. Sanctifiez le Seigneur avec crainte et tremblement." The word "sanctifiez" recalls the "saint" of Isaiah 6:3: (not quoted by Pascal) "Saint, saint, saint est l'éternel des Armées" which describes the glory of God in the vision of Isaiah at the time of his initiation as prophet of Israel. However, this word, "saint," in its threefold repetitive liturgical rhythm, is used in fragment 308-793 to describe the uniqueness of Jesus: "Il n'a point régné, mais il a été, humble, patient, saint, saint, saint à Dieu...."

The overwhelming transcendence and glory of God is also evoked in a passage from Isaiah 33:10 and Isaiah 44:24: (Latin quotes in Pascal's 486-682)³⁸ "Maintenant je me lèverai, dit le Seigneur, maintenant je serai exalté...." "Voici ce que dit le Seigneur, faisant toutes choses, seul étendant les dieux, affermissant la terre et nul n'est avec moi."³⁹

Fragment 489-713 continues with God's recounting of His glorious deeds: the miracle of creation, the destruction of the Babylonians as well as His words to the people that they

should forget the past and look forward to a new way of life: "Voici je prépare de nouvelles choses qui vont bientôt paraître. Vous les connaîtrez. Je rendrai les déserts habitables et délicieux." This past will serve as a reminder that God's word is reliable and that His predictions will be realized: Is. 42:9: "Les premières choses sont arrivées comme elles avaient été prédites et voici maintenant j'en prédis de nouvelles et vous les annonce avant qu'elles soient arrivées."

The theme of the transcendence of God developed in fragment 489-713 is later to be contrasted with man's pride in the face of the Almighty God. This Isaianic theme⁴⁰ finds its echo in the Pensées. Both the words "orgueil" and "abaissé" of this verse and their accompanying themes are familiar to Pascal. The word "orgueil" is found thirty-four times in the Pensées.⁴¹ Along with idleness, it is the source of all vice since it leads man to forget his fragility and corruption which date back to the Fall: (frag. 477-406) "L'orgueil contrepèse et emporte toutes les misères. Voilà un étrange monstre, et un égarement bien visible, le voilà tombé de sa place, il la cherche avec inquiétude." Whereas most philosophies of life have either exalted man as the Stoics or reduced him to the pleasure principle of the beasts as the Epicureans have done, Pascal claims that it is the Christian religion which is unique in its ability to let man realize his dual

nature--his greatness and his lowliness: "qu'elle élève infiniment plus que l'orgueil de la nature, mais sans enfler, et que faisant bien voir par là qu'étant seule exempte d'erreur et de vice il n'appartient qu'à elle et d'instruire et de corriger les hommes." (208-435).

In the style of biblical parallelism, Pascal repeats this theme in fragment 130-420:

S'il se vante, je l'abaisse
 S'il s'abaisse, je le vante
 Et le contredis toujours.
 Jusqu'à ce qu'il comprenne
 Qu'il est un monstre incompréhensible.

This passage calls to mind fragment 430-431 with its Jobian images of beasts and worms:

. . . les autres, qui ont bien connu combien cette bassesse est effective ont traité d'un superbe ridicule ces sentiments de grandeur....
 'Baissez vos yeux vers la terre, chétif ver que vous êtes, et regardez les bêtes dont vous êtes le compagnon.'

Concept of Witness

Fragment 489-713 also introduces the concept of witness which plays an important role in the Pensées. In this fragment the Prophets are seen as witnesses who predict and prepare for the coming of Christ: "Is. 42: Vous êtes mes témoins, dit le Seigneur, vous et mon serviteur que j'ai élu, afin que vous me connaissiez, que vous croyiez que c'est moi qui suisJ'ai prédit, j'ai sauvé, j'ai fait moi seul ces merveilles à vos yeux; vous êtes mes témoins de ma divinité...."

The concept of witness is important as the measure of a true religion. (frag. 204-592) "Fausseté des autres religions. Ils n'ont point de témoins. Ceux-ci en ont. Dieu défie les autres religions de produire de telles marques." Is.43.9-44.8. The Moslem religion is rejected on the grounds that Mohammed had no witnesses (1-596). Unlike Jesus Christ, his coming is not predicted (209-599). The reference to Isaiah in fragment 204-592 is to remind those who do not believe, that there is an ancient tradition which has not ceased and in which God declares the people of Israel to be His eternal witness.

Not only the prophets but the entire Jewish people serves as witness to the divinity of Christ. The Jewish people remains forever as witness to the truth of Christ and Christianity. This concept of witness dates back to the time of St. Augustine who called the Jews "witnesses of their iniquity and our truth, "testes iniquitatis suae et veritatis nostrae."⁴² Augustine's concept of the Jew as witness is defined in Deuteronomy 32 which is the text of the Pentateuch which Pascal used most frequently. In this chapter, God recounts His love for Israel, Israel's abandonment of Him, God's rejection of Israel by hiding His face in anger from His people. The concept of witness is presented there in a twofold manner: 1) To prove the rejection of Israel, Moses calls upon nature, specifically the heavens,

to serve as witness to God's word, and 2) Israel itself must be a witness to the truth by preserving and carrying out all the precepts of the law. Therefore, for Augustine, the book which the Jews carry is witness to their rejection and the truth of Christ and Christianity. Pascal accepts this interpretation of Deuteronomy 32: (frag. 452-631):

Sincérité des Juifs. Ils portent avec amour et fidélité ce livre, où Moïse déclare qu'ils ont été ingrats envers Dieu toute leur vie, qu'il sait qu'ils le seront encore plus après sa mort, mais qu'il appelle le ciel et la terre à témoin contre eux, qu'il le leur a (enseigné) assez....

This is the *raison d'être* of the Jews according to Pascal, "un peuple fait exprès...." (495-641). With all its frightening implications, Pascal declares that the suffering and vagabond Jews would have been exterminated were it not for their role as witnesses to the divinity of Christ: (frag. 592-750) "si les Juifs eussent été tous convertis par J.-C. nous n'aurions point du tout." They are witnesses of the highest order, above suspicion and beyond reproach. By killing Jesus and by continuing to deny his divinity they prove his divinity: (frag. 593-760) "Et en le tuant et continuant à le renier ils ont accompli les prophéties."

We may conclude that the concept of witness was more than a vision of the Jews and their history for Pascal. It was a method of apologetics. Pascal accepting the full historical reality of the Bible saw it as witness to the

truth of Christ like the New Testament writers themselves who used proof texts from the Old Testament to witness the truth of Christ and Christianity. In fact, from the time of Augustine up to the time of Pascal, Christian writers or specifically polemicists pointed to certain texts which historians have since labeled proof texts, those texts which purportedly witness the truth of Christ and Christianity.⁴³ Pascal is heir to this tradition, and he also uses proof texts from the Bible as witness to persuade the "libertin" of the long and ancient tradition of Jesus as the Messiah.

Theme of Man's Vanity

Another example of Isaiah's influence on Pascal is their mutual concern with man's turning away from God only to occupy himself with vanity and illusion.

Isaiah is particularly hard on royalty and its riches which is again an example of man's confidence in himself rather than trust in God (2:7): "Le pays est rempli d'argent et d'or, / Et il y a des trésors sans fin, / Le pays est rempli de chevaux, / Et il y a des chars sans nombre." The "chevaux" and "chars" of Isaiah recall the "gardes" and "tambours" of fragment 25-308: "La coutume de voir les rois accompagnés de gardes, de tambours, d'officiers et de toutes les choses qui ploient la machine vers le respect...."

Although Isaiah is concerned with the false might and military

power of men, and Pascal is more concerned with false appearance and illusion of custom and costume, they both speak of man's turning away from God.

Isaiah's satirical portrait of the "filles orgueilleuses" who adorn themselves with clothing, perfume and jewelry (Is. 3:18)⁴⁴ recalls Pascal's satirical comments on the vanity and illusion of man's preoccupation with uniform and clothing in order to command the respect and attention of others: (frag. 18-955) "Un bout de capuchon arme 25,000 moines," and fragment 44-82:

Nos magistrats ont bien connu ce mystère, leurs robes rouges, leur hermines dont ils s'emmailotent en chaffourés, les palais où ils jugent, les fleurs de lys, tout cet appareil auguste était fort nécessaire, et si les médecins n'avaient des soutanes et des mules, et que les docteurs n'eussent de bonnets carrés....

The style of both passages is the same, an accumulation of clothing in a list which creates the effect of an overwhelming preoccupation with things and appearances rather than essences.⁴⁵

Concept of "Dieu Caché"

By far the most important concept borrowed from Isaiah is that of the Hidden God or the "deus absconditus." The text in question is from Isaiah 45:15 which reads: "Mais tu es un Dieu qui te caches, / Dieu d'Israël, sauveur!" This text is cited by Pascal once literally in a French translation,

fragment 781-242 and three times in the version of the Vulgate, fragments 781-242, 242-585, and 427-194. Finally there is a fragment not registered by the final copy which contains the "deus absconditus." (frag. 921-518).

Although the Latin term "absconditus" is an adjective, when Pascal writes in fragment 427-194, "qu'il s'est caché à leur connaissance," he interprets it according to the Hebrew which uses the verb form, "to hide" (mehabeh). Indeed, the tradition of Judaic interpretation of the "dieu caché" refers to an act of volition on God's part. His hiding is not part of His essence. God chooses to hide from man when He is forsaken by him, when the covenant is broken:⁴⁶ Deut. 31:16-17: (not quoted by Pascal) "L'Eternel dit à Moïse.... / Il m'abandonne et il violera mon alliance, que j'ai traitée avec lui. /Je les abandonnerai et je leur cacherai ma face..." The Book of Job repeats this theme again when Job bargains with God to accord him two things, to be free from terror and fear whereupon he, Job, will no longer hide from God: (Job 13:20-22). Job continues to plead with God and asks Him why He hides His face from him: 13:24: "Pourquoi caches-tu ton visage, / Et me prends-tu pour ton ennemi?" Although Pascal does not refer to God's hiding from man as a reaction to man's having forsaken Him, Pascal also believes that God has deliberately hidden Himself from man.

Pascal is amused by those who try to prove God by pointing to His presence in the works of nature. Aware of the new science which reveals a complex nature, Pascal knows that nature can only reveal "obscurité et ténèbres" (781-242). Proofs from nature cannot arouse belief in God and may even create an attitude of scorn: ". . . c'est leur donner sujet de croire que les preuves de notre religion sont bien faibles et je vois par raison et par expérience que rien n'est plus propre à leur en faire naître le mépris." (781-242).

On the contrary, Christianity never declared itself to be a religion in which God was made clear and manifest to man. The Prophets tell us that God deliberately hides Himself: (228-751) ". . . qu'il est un Dieu véritablement caché, qu'il sera reconnu, qu'on ne pensera point que ce soit lui, qu'il sera une pierre d'achoppement, à laquelle plusieurs heurteront, etc."

God's hiddenness is seen both as an act of justice and grace on His part. If God were to make Himself manifest to all men, He would be reinforcing man's pride and laziness. Man would no longer continue his perpetual quest for God. On the other hand, if He had remained completely hidden, it would justify those who do not believe in Him. Only those who sincerely search for God will pierce the veil of His obscurity, for God has endowed them with a special grace (frag. 444-557):

Mais il est vrai tout ensemble qu'il se cache à ceux qui le tentent, et qu'il se découvre à ceux qui le cherchent, parce que les hommes sont tout ensemble indignes de Dieu et capables de Dieu: indignes par leur corruption, capables par leur première nature.

Everything depends therefore on the concept of the Fall of man. It was at this point that non-communication set in which made man "indigne de Dieu." (frag. 781-242): "Elle [l'"Ecriture"] dit au contraire que Dieu est un Dieu caché et que depuis la corruption de la nature il les a laissés dans un aveuglement.... Aussi elle nous dit ailleurs: 'vere tu es deus absconditus.'"

However, because of his "première nature," man is also capable of receiving God. The reconciliation can only be brought about by Jesus Christ who in his own duality as Man-God bridges the gap between man's worthiness and unworthiness in the face of God.

Whether Concept Implies Tragic Vision. Our discussion of the concept of the "dieu caché" inevitably raises the question of whether this concept implies that Pascal held a tragic vision of the world. The arch proponent of this view is Lucien Goldmann in his study Le Dieu Caché. Pascal's vision is a tragic one, he argues, for God exists, but He never reveals Himself: "Dieu est toujours et ne paraît jamais."⁴⁷ A. Gounelle in his La Bible selon Pascal refutes Goldmann's claim asserting that God's absence does

not necessarily imply that He cannot be found or that He never reveals Himself clearly. Evidence of this point of view, he maintains, can be found in the miracle of the Sainte Epine after which Pascal had a seal made upon which was written, "Scio cui credidi" a motto which is quite the opposite of the "dieu caché."⁴⁸

In order to clarify and to understand the question of Pascal's tragic vision of the world, it is essential to examine Pascal's view of the concept of God in the Jewish religion which he derives from the Bible. Gounelle is correct in pointing to Goldmann's negligence in not treating Pascal's understanding of the Bible,⁴⁹ for it is in his understanding of the Bible that we may understand his vision of man's condition. This vision is based upon a clear differentiation between the God of the Old Testament and the God of the New Testament. For Pascal, it is clearly the God of the Old Testament who is rejecting and angry and who hides Himself from man.

Abandoned in the universe, man fears falling into the hands of this angry God (frag. 427-194):

Comme je ne sais d'où je viens, aussi je ne
sais où je vais; et je sais seulement qu'en
sortant de ce monde... je tombe pour jamais ou
dans le néant ou dans les mains d'un Dieu irrité,
sans savoir à laquelle de ces deux conditions
je dois être éternellement partagé.

It is only Christ who can redeem man from this horrible Fall, give meaning to life, and save him from God's wrath

(frag. 608-766) "Il devait lui seul produire un grand peuple, élu, saint et choisi; le conduire, le nourrir... le sauver de la colère de Dieu..." Because Christ Himself in His human aspect experienced this same abandonment by a wrathful God, He is capable of redeeming man as we read in "Le Mystère de Jesus:"

Jesus cherche quelque consolation au moins sans ses plus chers amis et ils dorment... ils le laissent avec une négligence entière ayant si peu de compassion qu'elle ne pouvait seulement les empêcher de dormir un moment. Et ainsi Jésus était délaissé seul à la colère de Dieu.

In contrast, the God of the New Testament in His human aspect ("sang de mon humanité") is present in the world: "Je te suis présent par ma parole dans l'Ecriture, par mon esprit dans l'Eglise et par les inspirations, par ma puissance dans les prêtres, par ma prière dans les fideles."

Furthermore, the world which accepts Jesus as the Messiah is a world of hope and redemption (frag. 449-556): "Mais le Dieu d'Abraham, d'Isaac, le Dieu de Jacob, le Dieu des chrétiens, est un Dieu d'amour et de consolation."

In a letter of September or October 1656 to the Roannez, he repeats the same concept, "C'est une parole bien consolante que celle de Jesus-Christ: 'Il sera donné à ceux qui ont déjà' (Mt, XIII,12)."⁵⁰ In contrast, it is the Jewish religion which offers no consolation. In the Prière pour le bon usage des maladies, Pascal prays that he will not be subject to the fate of the Jews who are without consolation:

...mais je demande de n'être pas abandonné aux douleurs de la nature sans les consolations de votre Esprit; car c'est la malédiction des Juifs et des Païens...Je ne demande pas aussi d'être dans une plénitude de maux sans consolation, car c'est un état de Judaïsme.

He clearly differentiates between the state of the world before Christ and after His coming: "Car, Seigneur, vous avez laissé languir le monde dans les souffrances naturelles sans consolation, avant la venue de votre Fils unique...."⁵¹

Thus, the tragedy which is implied in the concept of the "dieu caché" is averted through faith in Christ. The accompanying concepts of the Incarnation and the Eucharist reinforce the conviction that faith in Christ opens up communication and averts tragedy. The Eucharist is another aspect of the hidden presence of Christ which the concept of the "deus absconditus" entails. Just as the unbeliever questions the existence of God because He is hidden, the belief in the Eucharist also raises doubt in his mind: (frag. 181-255) "Impiété de ne pas croire l'Eucharistie sur ce qu'on ne la voit pas." It is a question of things not being what they seem to be. We return to a favorite theme of Pascal, that of appearance vs. essence. God appears hidden but He is present for those whose vision allows them to believe and experience Him. The Eucharist appears to be common bread, but it is the flesh of Christ: (225-789): "Comme J.-C. est demeuré inconnu parmi les hommes; ainsi la vérité demeure parmi les opinions communes

sans différence à l'extérieur. Ainsi l'Eucharistie parmi le pain commun."⁵² Jesus appears to be a common man among common men, but He is more than that. This is the great mistake of the Jews, for they did not see beyond His commonness and simple ways. They waited for all the pomp and circumstance of a Messiah king. In fact, the Jews themselves are not what they appear to be, for they are merely figures for the true Israel: (letter to the Roannez, end of October, 1656)

...et comme les Juifs, voyant un homme parfait en Jésus-Christ, n'ont pas pensé à y chercher une autre nature: 'Nous n'avons pas pensé que ce fût lui,' dit encore Isaïe (LIII,3); et de même enfin que les hérétiques, voyant les apparences parfaites du pain, ne pensent pas y chercher une autre substance. Toutes choses couvrent quelque mystère, toutes choses sont des voiles qui couvrent Dieu.⁵³

Those who can see beyond appearances will understand the Incarnation and the Eucharist and thus communicate with Christ thereby averting the tragedy of the angry God of the Old Testament. This mode of thinking wherein the appearance covers a deeper reality leads directly to the "figuratifs," a corollary of the concept of the Hidden God, which we shall examine later.

Why Pascal Ignored Loving Aspects of Old Testament. The question may be raised, "Why did Pascal choose to ignore the loving aspects of the Old Testament? These aspects may be found, for example in the anger of God which is preceded

as well as followed by compassion (Jer. 12:15, not quoted by Pascal),⁵⁴ in the love and mercy which God must suppress when He wishes to punish Israel in anger (Jer. 16:5, not quoted by Pascal)⁵⁵ or in the love of God present in moments of anger as in Jeremiah 3:12 or 31:20.⁵⁶

The answer to this lies first, in the influence of the Christian tradition itself upon which Pascal was nurtured, and second, in his need for a wrathful God for apologetic and polemical purposes, and last in its importance for him psychologically.

In his view of the God of the Old Testament as distant, Pascal shows the influence of Paul who did not accept the biblical concept of the kingship of God and the immediacy between God and man. For him, faith in Christ is the only road to salvation.⁵⁷ Further distance was created by Paul's separating God's anger from His mercy,⁵⁸ and so the same holds true for Pascal where in the "Mystère de Jesus" only the crucifixion and the resurrection of Christ bring mercy and redemption to calm the "colère de Dieu."

The image of the vengeful deity was further reinforced by Marcion who characterized the God of the Old Testament as the "author of evils" who takes "delight in war," and who is "infirm in purpose and....contrary to himself."⁵⁹ Marcion rejected all of Judaism and emphasized the total opposition between the Hebrew Bible and the Gospels. Although there

were other viewpoints as well as refutations of Marcion, his view of the God of the Old Testament as a God of wrath has prevailed throughout the history of Christianity. Pascal and others inherited this viewpoint.

Pascal apologist and polemicist also needed to maintain the view of the God of the Old Testament as wrathful and vengeful in order for him to preserve the category of the Jews as reliable witnesses to the truth of the divinity of Christ. For Pascal the suffering and wandering of the Jews was a visible sign of God's wrath and judgment. Consolation only comes with the new religion inaugurated by Jesus Christ. Only those who repent and accept the new alliance of the heart are consoled. If the God of the Old Testament is seen as angry and vengeful, then the originality of Christianity and the unique change brought about by Christ and his teachings are maintained. Pascal knew that if the God of the Old Testament was seen as judgmental and wrathful then the Christ of humanity would achieve greater poignancy and His teaching of love greater efficacy.

If we examine Pascal's life, we see that, because of his own personal physical and psychological suffering, he was forced to set up a dichotomy between the God of the Old Testament and the God of the New Testament. An all powerful God would be much more difficult for him to identify with than the suffering Christ. As M. Nédoncelle writes in

Réflexions sur la psychanalyse, "Nous ne nous élevons aux idées les plus hautes qu'à partir des réalités familières et en nous servant des cadres naturels de notre expérience. Or il est incontestable que la famille offre des images privilégiées pour comprendre le monde spirituel."⁶⁰ Having been deprived early in life of his mother who died when he was three years old, Pascal was left to be consoled and raised by a highly intellectual father with whom he experienced little emotional involvement. In his turning to Christ and in his negative view of the God of the Jewish religion, we may see Pascal's search for consolation, the quest for motherly love, and the rejection of the distant father represented by the powerful father of the Old Testament.

This view is further supported by the story that is related by both his niece Marguerite and his sister Gilberte. Gilberte writes that Pascal at the age of two (Marguerite, at the age of one) was unable to watch any display of affection between his parents without going into a rage: "souffrir de voir son père et sa mère proches l'un de l'autre."⁶¹ All the more reason for him to reject the Father religion of the Old Testament and to turn to the Mother religion of the New Testament in which the Son, while not actually supplanting the Father, yet holds an equal place with Him, and in which the Mother is closer to the Son than to the Father. Thus

Pascal's excessive christocentricity may be clarified by the psychoanalytic interpretation of Christianity. This interpretation suggests that by loving and edifying Jesus, the Christian feels relieved of guilt feelings common to all mankind which arise from the death wishes against one's father. These feelings explain the ambivalence of Christianity to Judaism wherein there is both an attachment and obligation to Judaism, and resentment and revolt on the other. In Pascal's case, there is the profound admiration for the Jews and their religion ("sincérité des juifs") and hatred for their refusal to accept Christ ("ennemis irréconciliables"). On an individual level, these feelings are those every son experiences toward the father. On the one hand, he owes him his very existence, profoundly true in the case of Pascal who having lost his mother, was completely dependent on his father. On the other hand, the son also sees the father as a rival from whom he must emancipate himself as he grows older.⁶²

This interpretation would also help explain why we find an absence of devotion to the Virgin Mary in Pascal. Unlike the teachings of Port Royal and the seventeenth century in general where theological works on divine maternity and the Immaculate Conception were very numerous, Pascal is almost devoid of references to the mother of Christ. Sellier in his Pascal et la Liturgie points to this as one

indication of Pascal's attachment to the Christianity of the early centuries. The New Testament mentions Mary only seven times, praising her only for her faith in God.⁶³ The "Mystère de Jesus" evokes this same image: "Vois comme j'ai bien conduit la Vierge et les saints qui m'ont laissé agir en eux." Pascal thus remains fixed at the early stages of Christianity--the time of the birth of a new religion having its roots in the old religion of Judaism and establishing its own right independent of the parent religion. Too great an emphasis on the Virgin would provoke strong anxiety at a stage when one was just learning to free oneself of God the Father.

"Figuratifs"

Thus, Pascal's main emphasis is on Christ of the New Testament who does reveal Himself to those who have received grace. He may be discovered by man through his understanding of the hidden meaning of Scripture. This hidden meaning is known as the concept of the "figuratifs," a corollary of the concept of the "dieu caché." The figuratifs are also a way of interpreting Scripture which involves Pascal's attitude toward Jewish law and history which prove the truth of Christ and Christianity.

Just as we noted in the concept of the "dieu caché" that God is hidden from man in order to distinguish the just from

the wicked, so Pascal also believed that the Scriptures, particularly the Prophets, have an apparent and hidden meaning which only true believers can distinguish.

Il a été couvert sous le temporel en la foule des passages et a été découvert si clairement en quelqu'uns...et ce sens spirituel est si clairement expliqué par quelques endroits qu'il fallait un aveuglement pareil à celui que la chair jette dans l'esprit quand il lui est assujetti, pour ne le pas reconnaître. (502-571).

This hidden meaning which views personages and events of the Old Testament as prefigurations of prophecies of Christ and the Gospel is defined as "le spirituel."⁶⁴ It is opposed to the carnal or literal sense understood by the Jews. Carnal⁶⁵ refers to the Jews' love of temporal goods, "bien temporels," their preoccupation with recovering their temple, their goods, and the desire to be recompensed here on earth.

This term "carnal" to describe the Jews was first used by St. Augustine who wrote:

That proud people being carnal minded...were not filled with blessings from the open hand of Christ...The carnal multitude which worshipped God for the sake of visible benefits....The carnal people of Israel which was afterward called Jewsa carnal people living a carnal life eagerly desired, of the Lord, carnal awards.⁶⁷

Although Pascal planned to present six proofs to show that the Scriptures have a double meaning, he presents only three (frag. 274-642). His first argument is that many of the ceremonies and sacrifices of the Old Testament are "sottises" that is to say, that they only make sense if they

are taken figuratively and not literally. We would not expect God to be capable of such "sottises" so these passages must be figurative.⁶⁷ The only conclusion for Pascal is (276-691): "Le Vieux Testament est un chiffre." The second proof is from the Prophets themselves who admit that God's word is hidden and obscure (frag. 489-713): "Is.8 Voilez mes paroles....Daniel 12. Les méchants ne l'entendront point,Et les visions de toutes les prophéties seront à votre égard comme un livre scellé...." (frag. 501-659): "... on ne l'entendra qu'à la fin des temps. Jer. 33.ult." The third proof points to the fact that there are too many contradictions in the words of the Prophets themselves. The only way to reconcile these discrepancies is through assigning a figural meaning. Examples may be found in the Prophets' declaration that on the one hand, the law is eternal and, on the other hand, that the law is to be changed and a New Alliance is to be inaugurated. In some biblical passages the laws and sacrifices are declared to be what God seeks and in other prophecies God finds them displeasing (fragments 250-667, 260-678, 263-686).

Pascal tries to show that the Jews themselves believed that Scriptures have a meaning beyond the literal. To prove this, he quotes from the rabbis of the Talmud using as his source, the Pugio Fidei, a medieval polemic which attempts to prove that the Talmud itself declares the divinity of

Jesus: (frag. 270-670): "Les Rabbins prennent pour figure les mamelles de l'épouse et tout ce qui n'exprime pas l'unique but qu'ils ont des biens temporels."

Pascal's entire discussion of the figuratives is not new. It dates back to the time of St. Paul who spoke of the letter and spirit of the law.⁶⁸ Pascal himself refers to St. Paul's figurative interpretations when he gives the example that the enemies of men are not the Babylonians but rather the passions of men: (frag. 270-670): "...saint Paul est venu apprendre aux hommes que toutes ces choses étaient arrivées en figures, que le royaume de Dieu ne consistait pas en la chair, mais en l'esprit, que les ennemis des hommes n'étaient pas les Babyloniens, mais leurs passions...." The figurative tradition continued beyond St. Paul through all the Church Fathers until it was clearly formulated by St. Augustine.

At one point in the history of Christian biblical exegesis, in the 12th century, there was some awareness of the relevance of a traditional Jewish exegesis, but still Christian exegesis could for the most part not accept the idea that an exegesis that was not christological could be spiritual. Therefore, they were led to "lump together all Jewish interpretations of the Bible as 'literal' in a pejorative sense."⁶⁹ The exegesis of the simple plain meaning of Scripture became known as "more judaico." This was

further reinforced by the fact that one feature of Hebrew linguistic psychology was that Hebrew, unlike Latin or Greek, avoided abstract terms. Thus Jewish exegesis was seen as literal or childish.⁷⁰

Although Augustine saw the Old Testament as essentially figurative, for him it also had pedagogical intentions vis-à-vis the Jews. The prescriptions of the law were to place fear in the religious conscience and the cultic ceremonies were certain concessions made to the "cupiditas" in the promise of temporal goods. They were a means of preparing the "old man," "le vieil homme," the Jew, to the new life and new testament brought about by Christ and His teachings.⁷¹ This approach was accepted by the contemporaries of Pascal. Jansenius himself accepts this concept of divine pedagogy in his Terateuchus.⁷²

PASCAL ON JEWISH LAW

History of Criticism on Pascal's Attitude Toward Jewish Law

If Pascal, unlike St. Augustine, did not see any pedagogical intentions in the law of the Jews, we may ask, What was his attitude toward Jewish law? In the history of Pascal criticism, there appear to be basically two schools of thought, one led by Havet and Mesnard who see Pascal as

completely refuting the literal meaning of the law and another school comprising J. Russier, La Grange, and Du Barle. As we noted earlier in our discussion of Pascal's view of the God of the Old Testament as a God of wrath, we shall see that it is his christocentricity which is the chief factor in his rejection of Jewish law. We shall better understand this viewpoint if we first examine the schools of thought mentioned above. We also present these positions more clearly and the problems inherent in them by referring to Lacombe's Apologetique de Pascal.

Mesnard differentiates between the figurative interpretation of messianic prophecies and those of the Jewish law. For him, only the prophecies have no literal value. However, Lacombe is quick to point out problems inherent in Mesnard's distinction. First of all, Pascal consistently associates and uses the same arguments for both the messianic prophecies and the precepts of the law. Secondly, if we admit that the law has some literal value, then the prophecies have some literal value--a subordinate value but in a preparatory role which precedes the realization of the spiritual promises and the abolition of temporal cares leading to an era of justice. If so, then Pascal's arguments fall apart.

Havet views Pascal as completely rejecting the law, and he supports this thesis by citing the passages where Pascal declares the law and sacrifices to be only figurative: (frag.

257-684): "Il faut donc par nécessité qu'ils ne soient que figures and (501-659): "L'Ancien Testament n'est que figurative; and 453-610: "La religion des Juifs consiste.... Je dis qu'elle ne consistait en aucune de ces choses."

J. Russier refutes the emphasis of Havet on the word "que". This word, she claims, does not necessarily imply that it is only a "figure." To support this she cites Pascal on grace: (frag. 275-643): "...la grâce n'est que la figure de la gloire. Car elle n'est pas la dernière fin. Elle a été figurée par la loi et figure elle-même la grâce, mais elle en est la figure et le principe ou la cause."⁷⁴

Lacombe further refutes Havet by pointing to the continuation of fragment 453-610 which seems to confirm the interpretation that the Jewish religion consists "essentially" but not exclusively in sacrifices and law. In this fragment Pascal does accord reality to the Sabbath and circumcision although it is secondary to the "love of God." Even the passage "que l'extérieur ne sert à rien sans l'intérieur" appears to accord validity to the "extérieur." Lacombe raises a further objection to Havet by asking how Pascal can accept the material precepts of the Christian religion if he cannot accept them in the Jewish religion. This refers to the fasts, the "eau bénite," and the "généflexion" all emphasized by Pascal in fragments 944-250, 219-251, and 936-698. In fragment 219-251, Pascal emphasizes the importance of both the "extérieur" and the "intérieur:"

La seule religion chrétienne est proportionnée à tous, étant mêlée d'extérieur et d'intérieur. Elle élève le peuple à l'intérieur, abaisse les superbes à l'extérieur, et n'est pas parfaite sans les deux, car il faut que le peuple entende l'esprit de la lettre et que les habiles soumettent leur esprit à la lettre.

Other difficulties in Pascal's figurative interpretation of prophecy are raised by Lacombe. Since Pascal believes that the material and temporal prophecies of the Old Testament are figures of spiritual prophecies, he also believes that material miracles are images of the spiritual, (503-675) "les miracles visibles sont les images des invisibles," but this creates another difficulty since Pascal does not deny the reality and validity of material miracles. Lacombe suggests that perhaps the solution lies in viewing the temporal prophecies in the same way as miracles. Temporal prophecies could be realized in order to demonstrate that spiritual prophecies would be also. Pascal does introduce the concept of "prophéties des choses particulières (484-711) which refers to certain prophecies realized in the course of the history of the Jewish people.

Contributions of Modern Biblical Criticism

Apart from these conceptual difficulties there exist a number of difficulties which modern biblical criticism clarifies. The texts which Pascal cites to show contradictions which according to him can only be resolved by the

figural interpretation belong to different authors and different historical periods. Pascal fails to account for evolution of thought even in quotations from the same author as in fragment 257-684.⁷⁵ Furthermore, some of the textual contradictions that Pascal cites are not apparent, as in the case of sacrifices being displeasing to God. If one looks carefully at the context of Pascal's quotations, one notes that sacrifice is usually condemned when it is not accompanied by proper moral conduct. It is not totally rejected as he would lead us to believe.⁷⁶

As far as Pascal's emphasis on the prophetic predictions of the coming of the Messiah, we may note that, although the personage of the Messiah plays an important role in the Prophets, some hardly mention him at all. When he is mentioned, it is always as a human being and not a divine one. More than the personage of the Messiah, the emphasis is on an era of justice and happiness and the liberation of the Jewish people. It should be mentioned that Pascal's belief that the Jews have always awaited a redeemer (fragments 617-390, 618-456, and 644-392) is certainly not true historically.

More complications of Pascal's misreadings of the prophets arise when we examine what is the focus of his Christian messianism, i.e., the sufferings of Christ. The majority of prophecies envision a glorious Messiah. There

are only a small number of texts which portray a suffering Messiah. The famous servant of the Lord in Isaiah describes the Messiah as one to bring about the ingathering of the exiles, a light unto the nations, and one who proclaims justice over all the earth causing kings and princes to bow down before him. These famous suffering servant passages have been widely disputed by scholars. Many interpret the suffering servant as referring to the collective people of Israel and not to an individual. There is only one passage where the suffering for the sins of humanity is found, but its *raison d'être* is not traced to the fall of Adam.

Further objections may be raised upon examination of the results of Christ's coming, whereupon we see that the Prophets' prediction of a moral transformation and total peace and perfect justice have not been realized. As Lacombe explains, it is for this reason that Christianity introduced the concept of the Second Coming. Pascal was aware of this discrepancy between prophecies and the Messianic coming as seen in fragments 260-678, 253-679 which is why he introduced the figural interpretation. However, he did not in any way attempt to prove the existence of two comings in the Old Testament: (frag. 260-678):

Ils [les prophètes] nous ont appris pour cela que les ennemis de l'homme sont ses passions, que le rédempteur serait spirituel et son règne spirituel, qu'il y aurait deux avènements, l'un de misère pour abaisser l'homme superbe, l'autre de gloire pour élever l'homme humilié,

que J.-C. serait Dieu et homme.

and fragment 253-679: "Figures....Il a fallu que le Christ ait souffert pour entrer en sa gloire, qu'il vaincrait la mort par sa mort-deux avènements."

Jeanne Russier's additional argument that we cannot view Pascal as refuting the literal sense of the law because that would eventually mean his viewing Jewish history and the entire Old Testament as symbolic⁷⁷ does not hold, because Pascal posits separate rules and interpretations when it comes to the religion and history of the Jewish people. The history of the Jews is both real and symbolic. This appears to be true when we examine the image of the Jews in other theological writings as well as "récits de voyage" of the seventeenth century: as M. Yardeni writes in her article, "Religion, Race et Code Moral: Les juifs dans les récits de voyage du XVII^e siècle:" "Ils vivent aussi, en dehors du temps et en dehors de l'espace. Leur existence est à la fois physique et métaphysique, ils vivent dans l'histoire et échappent aux lois de l'histoire."⁷⁸ Indeed, they play only a mythical role in the world with no real identity of their own. Even if Jewish history and law are not symbolic, they are invalidated once Christ arrives.⁷⁹

This attitude of Pascal toward Jewish Law is derived from St. Paul who posited "a dualism between faith and action based on a belief in the impossibility of the fulfillment

of the law.⁸⁰ Law is what is external what Pascal calls "l'extérieur," and it makes us sinners in the eyes of God. Salvation from this state comes only through faith in Christ. However, Pascal does not seem to go as far as St. Paul for he accords some value to the "extérieur" as in the "eau bénite," "généfluxion," etc.

PUBIO FIDEI

Interest In It Because of Christocentricity

It is because of this emphasis on the coming of Christ that he also turned to and cited the Pugio Fidei, a very unique text in the history of medieval Jewish-Christian polemics. Unlike other books which cited the Old Testament to prove the divinity of Jesus from the writings of the Old Testament, this text was the first to attempt to prove that the Talmud accepts the divinity of Christ. Although limited in his critical approach to the Bible and history, in turning to the Pugio Fidei and its accompanying commentary by Joseph de Voisin,⁸¹ Pascal drew upon the latest and best resource of his time.

The full title of the text is Pugio Fidei, adversus Mauros et Judaeos by Raymundi Martini or Ramon Martinez of the Dominican order, born in Catalonia between 1225-1230.⁸²

The aim and method of the Pugio Fidei which consists of 700 folio pages in addition to Voisin's notes at the end of the chapter is to convert, based on St. Paul in Thessaloniens I 1;9.⁸³

The Pugio Fidei opens with a "proemium" or preamble where a chronological study of rabbinic texts and an analysis of their content is presented as well as the circumstances under which they were composed. Following this, the book is divided into three parts. There are twenty six chapters where philosophical problems of the thirteenth century are discussed. In Part II the author demonstrates that Jesus was the Messiah by proving that the Jewish interpretation of the Bible is not good, especially the interpretation of the Book of Daniel. Part III is divided into three sections. In the first section the notion of the unity of God is discussed according to the Jewish and Christian perspectives. In section two, the creation of man, original sin and the tradition of original sin according to the Jews is presented. In section three, Hebrew texts are cited to show that Jesus was the descendant of David. The view is held that the redemption of humanity can come only through Jesus Christ. The Jews will remain in ignorance of the true God until the end of time, and they alone will not be saved.⁸⁴

The Pugio Fidei provided a good source for the over-exaggerated use of "figure" as well as the direct application

of prophecy to Jesus Christ. Pascal also discovered a good source for the theory of original sin. This was important since his entire structure rested upon the concept of original sin.

There are two explicit references to the Pugio Fidei in the Pensées.⁸⁵ The first of these is in fragment 278-446 where Pascal introduces a series of quotes from the Talmud which show that the Rabbis themselves interpreted Genesis 8 to mean that original sin is part of man. He also concludes this fragment with: "Principes des Rabbins, deux Messies." Fragment 281-613 explains this to mean that the belief in the Messiah always existed. The second is found in fragment 483-726 which Pascal quotes as follows: "Prophéties. (En Egypte, Pugio Fidei), p.659) Talmud. C'est une tradition entre nous que, quand le Messie arrivera, la Maison de Dieu...sera pleine d'ordure et d'impureté...." This text is derived from the Tractate Sanhedrin of the Talmud where a verse of the Psalms, 22:17 is being discussed. Fragment 483-726 also consists of a series of traditional proof texts meant to show when the coming of the Messiah will occur. The prophecy of Jacob which foretells the descent of the Messiah from the tribe of Judah is cited here as well as in the Pugio, Part II, chapter 4, section 1. Other influences of the Pugio Fidei on Pascal's thinking may be seen in his discussion of the law. Although we have no explicit references to the Pugio Fidei in Pascal's discussion of the law, we find this title,

"De cerimonialibus observandis ad litteras" (Céramonies juives qu'il ne faut pas entendre au sens littéral) in the Pugio Fidei. Furthermore, in Part III, chapter 12, paragraphs 10-21 explain the authority of the prophets to abrogate precepts and the Messiah's right to revoke the precepts of the Torah. Paragraph 16 contains a quote of a Rabbi Pinchas who commenting on Psalms 6:12 in the tradition of his predecessors, declares that the sacrifice will come to an end but that praise of God will remain forever." Thus, the Pugio Fidei points to a tradition among the Rabbis of the Talmud wherein the law is to be abrogated.

We should not neglect to point out that Pascal's spelling of the Jewish hero Bar Kochba who organized an uprising against the Romans in 135 B.C. and who was believed by many at that time to be the Messiah, matches that of the Pugio Fidei, "Barcosba" (337-753). It is likely that he preserved this spelling because the discussion in the Pugio (II, chapter 4, paragraph 17) points out that this spelling means "Son of lies or falsity" which if the Jews "had any sense" would have led them to see that he was not the true Messiah.

There is, however, one time when Pascal refutes the interpretations of the Pugio or rather when he refutes the arguments of the Rabbis rather than Raymundo Martini himself. This concerns the Rabbinic explanation of the "mem ferme" of Chapter 9, verse 6 of Isaiah which Pascal considers

to be contrary to the spirit of Scriptures. He cannot in any way accept the literal exegesis of Scripture which such an explanation would involve (fragments 272-687 and 476-688).⁸⁶

Isaianic Vocabulary

We may note furthermore that the Isaianic vocabulary which characterizes the Jews in the "figuratifs" as well as in the concept of the "Dieu caché" also characterizes them in the Pugio Fidei. In fragment 347-735, Pascal uses the same Isaianic quote as in the Pugio Fidei to describe the punishment of the Jews: "Que les Juifs réproveraient J.-C. et qu'ils seraient réprouvés de Dieu par cette raison...que le peuple choisi serait infidèle, ingrat, et incrédule. Populum non credentem et contradiction. Que Dieu les frappera d'aveuglement et qu'ils tâtonneront en plein midi comme des aveugles." While it is true that this vocabulary of blindness dates back to early Church writings and the iconography of the Middle Ages as exemplified in the "Blindfolded Synagogue" of the Cathedral of Strasbourg, and that the biblical quote was part of the historic arsenal of proof texts against the Jews, Pascal's direct source may have been the Pugio Fidei. The theme of the blindness of the Jews is found throughout the Pugio Fidei where it appears in much stronger language than in Pascal. The blindness of the Jews is usually

accompanied by accusations of their insanity or lack of decency as in P.F., Part II, chapter 3, paragraph 11: "Unhappy and pitiable, they become blind, so anxious are they to deny that Jesus was the Messiah, with the result that they consider it praiseworthy to shamelessly lie against him, without any regard for decency."⁸⁷ Pascal, the polemicist, is much more subtle in his accusations, never losing sight of the fact that his main goal is to persuade and convert the "libertin." This he realized could best be accomplished by making the "libertins" feel that they resembled the Jew. Moreover, Pascal had to guard against writing in such a way as to avoid arousing strong hatred for the Jew in the hearts of the "libertins." He felt that they would be more concerned with the Jew rather than in the importance of their own conversion.

Notes

¹ Abraham J. Heschel, The Prophets, Vol. II, (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), p. 55.

² See for example, "Mystère d'Adam," a twelfth century religious drama.

³ Gouhier, Pascal, p. 209, n. 1.

⁴ "Est-ce que je ne visiterai pas ces crimes? dit le Seigneur. Ou mon âme ne se vengera-t-elle pas d'une nation semblable."

⁵ "Toi donc, ne prie pas pour ce peuple...."

⁶ "Ne me soyez pas à effroi: mon espoir, c'est vous au jour de l'affliction."

⁷ Heschel, Prophets I, p. 219.

⁸ Heschel, Prophets II, p. 267.

⁹ Heschel, Prophets II, pp. 267-8.

¹⁰ "J'ai regardé la terre, et voici qu'elle était vide et de nulle valeur; j'ai regardé les montagnes et voici qu'elles étaient ébranlées; et toutes les collines ont été bouleversées. J'ai regardé attentivement et il n'y avait pas d'homme; et tout volatile du ciel s'était retiré. J'ai regardé et voici le Carmel était désert; et toutes ses villes ont été détruites devant la face du Seigneur, devant la face de la colère de sa fureur."

- 11 fragment 923-905: "Dieu ne regarde que l'intérieur....
Dieu absout aussitôt qu'il voit le pénitence dans le coeur."
- 12 Davidson, Concordance, p. 1461.
- 13 I. Cohen, "The Heart in Biblical Psychology," Essays presented to Chief Rabbi Israel Brodie on the occasion of his 70th Birthday, (London: Soncino Press, 1967), p. 42.
- 14 Kaufmann, Religion of Israel, p. 415.
- 15 Gilberte Périer, "La Vie de Monsieur Pascal", p. 23.
- 16 Jon Miel, Pascal and Theology, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), p. 158.
- 17 Philippe Sellier, Pascal et St. Augustin, (Paris: A. Colin, 1970), p. 118.
- 18 Miel, p. 159.
- 19 Jeanne Russier, La Foi Selon Pascal: Dieu Sensible au Coeur, (Paris: Presses Universitaires, 1949), p. 159.
- 20 Cohen, "Heart in Biblical Psychology," p. 53.
- 21 Sellier, Pascal et St. Augustin, p. 137.
- 22 Sellier, Pascal et St. Augustin, p. 139.
- 23 Michel Le Guern, L'image dans l'oeuvre de Pascal, (Paris: A. Colin, 1969), p. 136.
- 24 Le Guern, p. 138.
- 25 Le Guern, p. 135.
- 26 Le Guern, p. 136.
- 27 Grace Louise Morley (McCann), Le Sentiment de la nature en France dans la première moitié du dix-septième Siècle, (Nemours: Imprimée A. Lesot, 1926), p. 190.

- 28 Morley, p. 186.
- 29 Roger Bodart, "Le Dialogue Montaigne-Pascal," Revue Générale Belge, No. 28 (février 1948), p. 551.
- 30 Pascal, "Lettre à Mlle de Roannez, p. 267.
- 31 Heschel, Prophets II, p. 55.
- 32 Pierre Magnard, "Valeur critique et euristique de l'idée de nature chez Pascal," Textes du Tricentenaire, (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1962), p. 65.
- 33 Magnard, "Valeur critique...." p. 72.
- 34 Sellier, Pascal et St. Augustin, p. 59.
- 35 Ps. 88:7: Tu m'as jeté dans une fosse profonde, / Dans les ténèbres, dans les abîmes. Ps. 71:20: "Tu nous a fait éprouver bien des détresses et des malheurs; / Mais tu nous redonneras la vie, / Tu nous fera remonter des abîmes de la terre."
- 36 Jack Broome, Pascal, (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1966), p. 196.
- 37 Pascal, "Prière...." pp. 362-365.
- 38 "Nunc consurgam, dicit dominus, nunc exaltabor, nunc sublevabor."
- 39 "Haec dicit dominus redemptor tuus, et formator tuus ex utero, ego sum dominus, faciens omnia, extendens caelos solus, stabiliens terram, et nullus mecum."
- 40 Isaiah 2:12 (not quoted by Pascal): "Car il y a un jour l'Eternel des armées / Contre tout homme orgueilleux et hautain, / Contre quiconque s'élève afin qu'il soit

abaissé....L'homme orgueilleux sera humilié, / Et le hautain sera abaissé: / l'Eternel seul sera élevé ce jour-là."

⁴¹ Davidson, p. 989.

⁴² Frank Talmadge, "The Election of the Gentiles,"

Disputation and Dialogue: Readings in the Christian-Jewish Encounter, (New York: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1975), p.18.

⁴³ Arthur Lukyn Williams, Adversus Judaeos, (Cambridge: University Press, 1935), p. 12.

⁴⁴ Is.3:18"En ces jours, le Seigneur Ôtera les boucles qui servent d'ornement à leurs pieds, et les filets et les croissants; les pendants d'oreilles, les bracelets et les voiles; les diadèmes, les chaînettes des pieds et les ceintures; les boîtes de senteur et les amulettes; les bagues et les anneaux de nez; les vêtements précieux et les larges tuniques, les manteaux et les gibecières, les miroirs et les chemises fines, les turbans et les surtouts légers."

⁴⁵ Jungo in his Le Vocabulaire de Pascal lists the following words associated with lies and appearances in the Pensées: trompeur, faux, fausseté, mensonge, mentir, déguisent, déguiser, duperie, duper, imposteur, abuser, feindre, sembler-piperie, piper, dépiter, flatter, détourner, decevoir, méconnaître, se méprendre, illusion, cabale, prévariquer. (p. 113).

⁴⁶ Heschel, Man is Not Alone, (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Young, Inc., 1951), p. 153.

47 Lucien Goldmann, Le Dieu Caché, (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1955), p. 46.

48 André Gounelle, La Bible Selon Pascal, (Paris: Presses Universitaires, 1970), p. 43, note 97.

49 Gounelle, p. 43.

50 Pascal, "Lettre au Roannez," p. 266.

51 Pascal, "Prière pour le...." p. 364.

52 It is no wonder that Pascal held the Eucharist as a symbol of the hidden nature of God, for Port Royal held it in high esteem. For Port Royal it was a "mémorial vivant qu'il a plu à J.-C. d'établir pour représenter une autre victoire plus excellente qu'il a obtenue sur l'enfer au jour de sa passion." It was also the prayer for initiation of a girl to the religious life at the monastery wherein the girls were encouraged to live "cachée" in imitation of Christ. (Sellier, Pascal et la Liturgie, pp. 104-105.)

53 Pascal, "Lettre au Roannez, fin octobre, 1656," p.267.

54 Mais après que je les aurai arrachés, / J'aurai de nouveau compassion d'eux. / Et je les ramènerai chacun dans son héritage, / Chacun dans son pays:

55 "N'entre pas dans une maison de deuil, N'y va pas pleurer, te lamenter avec eux; Car j'ai retiré à ce peuple ma paix, dit l'Eternel, ma bonté et ma miséricorde."

56 Jer. 3:12: "... Reviens, infidèle Israël! dit l'Eternel. / Je ne jetterai pas sur vous un regard sévère; / Car je suis miséricordieux, dit l'Eternel, / Je ne garde pas ma colère à

toujours."

31:20 Ephraïm est-il donc pour moi un fils chéri, / Un enfant qui fait mes délices? / Car plus je parle de lui, plus encore son souvenir est en moi; / Aussi mes entrailles sont émues en sa faveur: / J'aurai pitié de lui, dit l'Eternel.--

57 Friedman, Buber, p. 277.

58 Martin Buber points to Kafka's Paulinism of the unredeemed but points out that, unlike Paul, Kafka is aware of God's hiddenness. As a Jew, he knows that God's hiding Himself does not require a mediator. There can be an immediacy between God and man and "in the immediacy He remains the Savior and the contradiction of existence becomes for us a theophany."

59 Heschel, Prophets II, p. 80.

60 Lucien Jerphagnon, Pascal et la souffrance, (Paris: Les Editions Ouvrières, 1956), p. 99.

61 Baudouin, Pascal, p. 10.

62 Lowenstein, Christians and Jews, pp. 94-98.

63 Philippe Sellier, Pascal et la Liturgie, (Paris: Presses Universitaires, 1966), p. 101.

64 The figural interpretation of Scriptures was very common at Port Royal. A special work by Fontaine entitled Bible de Royaumont or Figures de la Bible was published in Paris after Pascal in 1674. Pascal, however, was able to directly consult the following works of Port Royal: Isagoge in sacras Litteras, Isagoge ad mysticus Scripturae sensus of

S. Pagnino and Ars interpretandi sacras scripturas of Sixte of Sienna. (Lhermet, pp. 385 and 404.).

⁶⁵ This term is used ninety-one times in the letters of St. Paul.

⁶⁶ Malcolm Hay, The Prejudices of Pascal, Concerning in Particular the Jesuit Order and the Jewish People, (London: Neville Spearman, 1962), pp. 88-9.

⁶⁷ "De deux personnes qui disent de sots contes, si ensuite dans le reste du discours, l'un dit des choses angéliques et l'autre toujours des choses plates et communes, il jugera que l'un parlait avec mystère, et non pas l'autre: l'un ayant assez montré qu'il est incapable de sottise."

⁶⁸ The Church Fathers justified figural interpretation by citing passages from the Pauline Epistles: Gal. 4:21-31, Cor. 2:16 f. Rom. 5:12 ff. I Cor 15:21, II Cor 3:14, Heb. 9:11 ff. (Erich Auerbach, "Figura," Scenes from the Drama of European Literature, pp. 49-50).

⁶⁹ R. Loewe, "The Jewish Midrashim and Patristic and Scholastic Exegesis of the Bible," Studia Patristica, vol. I, Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 1955 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1957), p. 502.

⁷⁰ Loewe, p. 507.

⁷¹ Gouhier, p. 209.

⁷² "Cur bona tantum carnalia promisit? Respondetur: Rudi et carnali populo, et carnalibus bonis addictissimo, ad

tempus correctionis cultum illum aptavit, ut ad fidem Christi, verumque cultum, et vera bona a Deo expetenda erudiretur."

73 The references to Havet and Russier on the following pages are indebted to R.E.Lacombe, L'Apologétique de Pascal, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1958), pp. 247-256. All other references are as indicated.

74 "Tout auteur a un sens auquel tous les passages contraires s'accordent ou il n'a point de sens du tout."

75 Russier, Dieu Sensible, p. 136.

76 In fragment 453-610 the texts which Pascal cites from Isaiah 1:2, 67:3, Amos. 6:21 ff, Hosea 6:6, Micah. 6:6-8, Jeremiah 6:20, 7:21-23, to show that God only requires moral peity and not sacrifice, may be interpreted as simply indicating a strong emotional emphasis on moral piety and not the total rejection of sacrifice. The same holds true for the passages in the Psalms which he cites in fragment 453-610 as well as passages in fragment 489-713.

77 Russier, p. 138.

78 Myriam Yardeni, "Religion, Race et Code Moral, Les juifs dans les récits de voyage du XVII^e siècle," Le Point Théologique: Les Chrétiens Devant Le Fait Juif, (Beauchesne, 1979), p. 135.

79 Nicole expresses this same attitude; however, he is more human in showing some sensitivity toward the tragic condition of the Jews: "Il est vrai que le sens humain

porterait à croire que c'aurait été traiter plus favorablement ces juifs, de ne leur donner point du tout de grâces, que leur en donner dont Dieu prévoyait qu'ils abuseraient...."

⁸⁰ Friedman, Buber, p. 277.

⁸¹ The manuscript of the Pugio Fidei was unknown in the seventeenth century until the future bishop of Lodève, Francois Bousquet discovered it at the College of Foix in Toulouse. Because he wanted to publish it, he turned to Joseph de Voisin, a specialist in Oriental languages. It was published with Voisin's commentaries in 1651. Voisin is listed among the number of Jansenist writers in a literary history of Port Royal (Williams, Adversus Judaeos, p. 249).

⁸² Lionel Cohn, "Pascal et le Judaïsme," p. L.

⁸³ "On raconte, à notre sujet, quel accès nous avons eu auprès de vous, et comment vous vous êtes convertis à Dieu, en abandonnant les idoles pour servir le Dieu vivant et vrai."

⁸⁴ All references to the Pugio Fidei are based on the 1687 Leipzig edition Raimundo Martini, Pugio fidei adversus Mauros et Judaeos, cum observationibus Josephi de Voisin, et introductione Jo. Benedecti Parpzovi, (Lipsiae: sumptibus haeredum F. Lenckisi, 1687, Farnborough, Hants., England: Gregg Press, 1967). All translations of the Latin are by Father Francis Cosgrove of the St. Ignatius Loyola Rectory in New York and Father Charles Loughran of Fordham University, New York unless otherwise indicated.

85 Cohen, p. Li.

86 Fragment 272-687: "Il n'est pas permis d'attribuer à l'écriture des sens qu'elle ne nous a pas révélés qu'elle a. Ainsi de dire que le (mem) d'Isaïe signifie 600 cela n'est pas révélé. Il n'est pas dit que les (tsade) et les (he) déficientes signifieraient des mystères....Mais nous disons que le sens littéral n'est pas le vrai parce que les prophètes l'ont dit eux-mêmes.

fragment 476-688: "Je ne dis pas que le mem est mystérieux."

87 Raymundus Martini, Pugio Fidei, trans. Francis Cosgrove, (New York: St. Ignatius Loyola).

See also: Part II, chapter 3, paragraph 28: "But the unhappy Jews are blinded by their constant desire of misrepresenting and contradicting the Christian faith...." Part II, chapter 15, paragraph 15: "... they become lamentably blind to the light of the truth. May God, who illumines the blind, open their eyes."

CHAPTER VI

INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE ON PASCAL'S STYLE

HISTORY OF APPRECIATION OF BIBLICAL STYLE

The two most important influences of the Bible on Pascal were the understanding of the relationship between God and the prophet and God and man, and biblical style. Both of these clearly separate him from his contemporaries and, perhaps except for Bossuet, account for his eclipsing them in the history of seventeenth century thought and literature.

We have focused mainly on the concepts he derived from the Prophets, Job, Ecclesiastes and the Psalms with some emphasis on the influence of vocabulary and phraseology; however, it is worthwhile to examine now in more detail the biblical style and its influence on Pascal.

In contrast to his contemporaries who composed treatises whether demonstrative or psychological, some one thousand pages in length, often employing scholastic language and scholastic methods, Pascal's method is more literary. Even if the literary method was used, it was almost always in the form of a dialogue with a standard set of characters whose questions served to enlighten the unbeliever resulting in his conversion. Boucher's Triomphe de la religion

chrétienne (1628), Abbe Cotin's Théodée (1646), and Desmarets de Saint-Sorlin's Délices de l'esprit (1658) are the best examples of this. We shall see the mark of the Bible once again, specifically in poetic rhythm and imagery.

Before and contemporary with Pascal, D'Aubigné, Trenel, and Racine all show biblical influence in their styles. Before these writers, there were few who recognized the literary qualities of the Bible. The modern appreciation of the literary value of the Bible is a late development in history. The earliest recognition of the literary qualities of the Bible was in Longinus' treatise On the Sublime.² Both Philo and Josephus also spoke of the Bible's literary qualities:³ Rare are the essays on the aesthetic qualities of the Bible in the vast literature of medieval biblical exegesis.⁴ The church in the chanting of the Psalms was aware of the biblical parallelism in the arrangement of melody.⁵ In France in the sixteenth century, Henri Estienne divided the Bible into versets which corresponded to parallel members.⁶ It was not until the eighteenth century in England that the Bible was appreciated as literature with the publication of Lowth's great and influential work De Sacra poesi Hebraeorum in 1753 which recognized the rhythmic

qualities of Hebrew poetry.⁷ This new focus was a result of the Enlightenment which disparaged the inspired character of the Bible. Beginning with Spinoza who declared that the Bible should be read like any other book, there were those who read the Bible for an historical exegesis and others who called for an aesthetic understanding. Both rejected divine inspiration.⁸

We have seen in our examination of the role of the biblical personages in Pascal, as well as in the influence of the Prophets, that the Bible was well suited to Pascal's dialectic thinking and his vision of man, God, and the universe. Let us now turn to a more detailed examination of the influence of biblical style on Pascal.

MOTIVATION IN TURNING TO BIBLE

We shall note that Pascal turned naturally to the Bible for his stylistic inspiration for three reasons: 1) His devotional reading of Scripture, 2) the influence of the Augustinian tradition, and 3) his mental structure.

Gilberte, Pascal's sister, in her La Vie de Monsieur Pascal writes that Pascal meditated upon Scripture while praying. He was especially skillful in reciting passages of Scripture and in being able to spot any quote from Scriptures: "...il s'y était si fort appliqué, qu'il la savait quasi toute par coeur, en sorte qu'on ne pouvait

la lui citer à faux et qu'il disait positivement: 'cela n'est pas de l'Ecriture ou cela en est....'"⁹ She continues with a discussion of his great gifts of eloquence and his ability to write persuasively to any audience. We shall see that this biblical reading influenced his style.

His biblical style may also be attributed to the Augustinian tradition, for in his De Doctrina Christiana, St. Augustine writes that the sublime and great rhetoric used in the smallness of words are found in biblical syntax. Pascal, according to the interpretation of Jules Brody, based his "le corps, l'esprit, and la charité" on the three styles of traditional rhetoric: "le simple," "l'agréable," "le grand"; however, in typical Pascalian fashion there is a "renversement du pour au contre," "c'est la grandeur de l'expression biblique dans sa simplicité verbale qui s'accommode de la charité, à pensée grande, style petit."¹⁰ This interpretation is in line with Augustine's view.

The "esprit de finesse" which posits immediate grasp without transitional steps of reasoning is best illustrated in the style of the Bible which also lacks transitions. Furthermore, the entire concept of biblical revelation and understanding between man and God, and God and prophet is one of immediate grasp, intuition, the moment, the encounter to use the words of Martin Buber. This encounter, the prophetic experience, is not an act of reason and has nothing to do with proofs. It is an interior act (328-732):

"Prophétiser, c'est parler de Dieu, non par preuves de dehors, mais par sentiment intérieur et immédiat."

This encounter is brought about by the "cœur:" (frag. 424-242) "C'est le cœur qui sent Dieu." There exists a correlation between "cœur" and "esprit de finesse." Both have the element of "sentiment." The "principes" of the "esprit de finesse" are also felt: (frag. 512-1) On les voit à peine, on les sent plutôt qu'on ne les voit, on a des peines infinies à les faire sentir à ceux qui ne les sentent pas d'eux-mêmes."

The principles of "esprit de finesse" are those of common usage similar to the simplicity of biblical language which Pascal admired in Scripture (208-435): "la simplicité de l'Évangile." It is no wonder that Pascal points out that the simple among men are able to believe without proofs or reasoning (308-284): "Ne vous étonnez pas de voir des personnes simples croire sans raisonnement....Il incline leur cœur à croire."

PASCAL'S SENTENCE STRUCTURE AND BIBLICAL SENTENCE

Before we undertake an examination of the passages which show the influence of biblical style, the question may be raised as to the relationship between the structure of Pascal's sentences and the biblical sentence. This question assumes

greater import when we realize that Pascal probably did not know any Hebrew. He read the Bible in the Vulgate translation or in Vatable and not in the original Hebrew. There are, of course, deep differences between classical French style and the style of biblical Hebrew. The classical "style périodique" is characterized by a series of subordinate phrases linked by conjunctions and other linking words. Biblical style, on the other hand, as explained by Mgr. Plantier in his Etudes littéraires sur les poètes bibliques (1881),

... en poésie comme en prose n'a que de courtes incisives, point de périodes; elle rejette les longues suspensions de sens; les inversions, dans des phrases courtes, sont vite comprises et saisies; elle procède par sentences et portraits; elle accumule les pensées plutôt qu'elle ne les unit....c'est par le fond qu'elle lie les choses; les surfaces ont je ne sais quoi de disparate et de déchiré.¹¹

In spite of these differences, the language, thought, and style of the Bible do come through in French, even if it is only what Plantier calls a "pâle reflet" of the original text.¹²

The biblical style appears in two chief forms in Pascal, one, in the breaking rhythm, and two, in the use of parallelism. Once we turn from the Provinciales and the Opuscules the period style is left behind. Although this style can be found in the Pensées, it is not as developed as in the Provinciales.¹³ Moreover, the biblical device of antithesis

often provided the framework of the period as we note in fragment 978-100:

Mais que fera-t-il? Il ne saurait empêcher, que cet objet qu'il aime ne soit plein de défauts et de misère; il veut être grand, il se voit petit; il veut être heureux, et il se voit misérable; il veut être parfait, et il se voit plein d'imperfections; il veut être l'objet de l'amour et de l'estime des hommes, et il voit que ses défauts ne méritent que leur aversion et leur mépris.¹⁴

Sometimes three or more clauses are linked by the repetition of the conjunction "et," a construction which is very common in the Bible: (495-641) "C'est visiblement un peuple fait exprès pour servir de témoin au messie.... Il porte les livres et les aime et ne les entend point."

The simplicity of syntax is characteristic of biblical syntax: frag. 269-692:

Mais ceux qui cherchent Dieu de tout leur coeur, qui n'ont le déplaisir que d'être privés de sa vue, qui n'ont de désir que pour le posséder et d'ennemis que ceux qui les en détournent, qui s'affligent de se voir environnés et dominés de tels ennemis, qu'ils se consolent, je leur annonce une heureuse nouvelle....

Other examples may be found in fragments 957-512, 274-642, and 765-39.

Most of the time, as characteristic of biblical style, Pascal omits subordination but also conjunctions such as "car," "or," "donc," as for example in frag. 826-673:

Dans les Juifs, la vérité n'était que figurée. Dans le ciel elle est découverte. Dans l'Eglise elle est couverte et reconnue par le rapport à la figure. La figure a été faite sur la vérité et la vérité a été reconnue sur la figure.¹⁵

In examining Pascal's use of parallelism, we may follow Lowth who distinguishes three types of parallelism. The first and most frequent in the Bible is synonymous parallelism, when the same sentiment is repeated in different but equivalent terms as in Is. 53:7. Although Pascal does not quote this text directly, he was most certainly familiar with it because of its theme of the suffering Messiah and its Pascalian vocabulary of "éclat," "méprisé," "abandonné," and "humilié."

Il n'avait ni beauté, ni éclat,
 Pour attirer nos regards,
 Et son aspect n'avait rien pour nous plaire
 Méprisé et abandonné des hommes
 Homme de douleurs et habitué à la souffrance.¹⁶

An example of synonymous parallelism in Pascal is fragment 324-730 which is actually made up of expressions borrowed from the Bible:

Qu'alors l'idolatrie serait renversée,
 Que ce Messie abattrait toutes les idoles
 Et ferait entrer les hommes dans le culte
 du vrai Dieu.¹⁷

It can also appear in the interrogative form which gives more variety and movement to the expression:

Le seul qui connaît la nature
 Ne la connaîtra-t-il que pour être misérable?
 Le seul qui la connaît
 Sera-t-il le seul malheureux? (frag.449-556)¹⁸

Interrogation as well as exclamation are also part and parcel of the style which Pascal learned from the Prophets.

They not only serve to vary his style, but they are used as the Prophets used them to arouse their listeners, to create fear in them or to shock them into facing realities which they continued to ignore.

The second type of parallelism is called "synthetic" or "constructive," where sentences answer to each other, not by the iteration of the same image or sentiment but by form of construction. In speaking of the Messiah promised to the Jews, Pascal writes in fragment 793-737:

Un peuple entier le prédit avant sa venue,
Un peuple entier l'adore après sa venue;

Similar in its sweeping generalization and absolute statement is fragment 289-608, where use of the same terms forcefully characterizes Pascal's understanding of the pagan, Jewish, and Christian approaches:

Les païens ne connaissent point Dieu
Et n'aiment que la terre.
Les juifs connaissent le vrai Dieu
Et n'aiment que la terre.
Les Chrétiens connaissent le vrai Dieu
Et n'aiment point la terre.

The third type of parallelism is called "antithetical," when a thing is illustrated by its contrary being opposed to it, sentiments opposed, words to words.¹⁹ It is most favored by Pascal. As Bergerhoff so aptly states, "...antithesis dominates the psychological reality of the Pensées and it informs their aesthetic reality."²⁰ This is true both as to the 1) ideas: la chute / la redemption, la

charité / la concupiscence, le sens littéral / le sens figuratif, Dieu caché / Dieu manifeste; and 2) as to vocabulary: grandeur/misère, grandeur/bassesse, éclaircir/aveugler, lumière/ténèbres, lumière/obscurité. The best example of this type of parallelism is one in which Pascal himself arranged in parallel verses as seen in the manuscript:

S'il se vante, je l'abaisse
 S'il s'abaisse, je le vante
 Et le contredis toujours
 Jusqu'à ce qu'il comprenne
 Qu'il est un monstre incompréhensible.
 (frag. 130-420).

Pascal often combined antithesis with exclamation and interrogation to produce passages of great force:

Quelle chimère est-ce donc que l'homme?
 Quelle nouveauté? quel monstre, quel chaos,
 quel sujet de contradiction, quel prodige!
 juge de toutes choses, imbécile ver de terre,
 depositaire du vrai cloaque d'incertitude et
 d'erreur, gloire et rebut de l'univers. (131-434).

PIECES OF GREATEST BIBLICAL INFLUENCE

"Mémoire"

The three most important poetical pieces which bear the mark of biblical influence are clearly the "Mémoire," the "Mystère de Jesus," and the fragment known as the "Trois Ordres."

The "Mémoire" bears the strongest mark of the Old Testament since it is made up of a number of direct biblical

quotes. The first word "feu" which stands apart from the rest of the text takes the reader back to the burning bush when God revealed Himself to Moses. This appears to be the best association and one which abbé Louis Périer noted also, as we find written in the manuscript Lafuma has designated as the Manuscrit Périer: "...ses parents ont cru que c'était une vision ... Les mots coupés de l'écrit marquent les diverses impressions que la vision de la majesté divine faisait sur M. Pascal, à peu près semblables à celles que Dieu paraissant dans le buisson ardent fit sur Moïse."²¹

Throughout the Bible, fire has been associated with the spiritual or angelic world midway between the human and the divine. We note the imagery of light and fire which surround the angels in the Bible, the tongues of flame descending at Pentecost, and the coal of fire applied to the mouth of Isaiah by the seraph.²² This is the meaning of "feu"-revelation. Just as the prophets Moses and Isaiah received God's revelation preceded by fire, so Pascal experiences revelation through fire. The message of Pascal's experience of revelation is the understanding that God is real and that He acts in history. He is the "Dieu d'Abraham, d'Isaac et de Jacob." The three Patriarchs serve as witnesses to the Divine presence and revelation in history. The phrase is derived from the book of Exodus. The repetition of the word "Dieu," offset by the historical personages, accounts for

the stark poignancy of this phrase and its confessional tone. The simple negation which follows reinforces the affirmation. Pascal affirms the "perpétuité," the historical continuity of this revelation by next affirming that this same God is the "Dieu de Jésus Christ." This continuity is no accident since it has been prefigured in the story of Ruth who was the great grandmother of David, the progenitor of the Messiah who said to Naomi her mother-in-law, "Ton Dieu sera mon Dieu." This quote is preceded by a similar line, the words of Jesus to Marie-Madeleine when she discovers that Christ is no longer in his tomb. Mistaking him for the gardener, she asks if he is responsible. Christ then reveals Himself and proclaims, "Ne me touche point, car je ne suis point monté à mon Père, mais va à mes freres, et leur dis: 'Je monte à mon Père et à votre Père, à mon Dieu et à votre Dieu.'"²³ Acceptance of this God and His Son means full commitment to His teachings: "Il ne se trouve que par les voies enseignées dans l'Evangile." The brevity of the next line which pays homage to the human soul, "Grandeur de l'âme humaine," stands alone with no rapport to the preceding or following line. However, if we study the definition of "grandeur de l'âme humaine" given in fragment 518-378 the meaning of this phrase becomes clear. The greatness of the human soul lies in its ability to follow the ways of Scripture and to know God. The quotation which follows is derived from Chapter 17 of the Book of John, "Père juste,

le monde ne t'a point connu, mais je t'ai connu, et ceux-ci ont connu que tu m'as envoyé." Man's greatness consists in "connaissance," and in the ability to think as in fragment 620-146: "L'homme est visiblement fait pour penser; c'est toute sa dignité et tout son mérite; et tout son devoir est de penser comme il faut" or fragment 200-347: "Mais quand l'univers l'écraserait, l'homme serait encore plus noble de ce qui le tue, puis qu'il meurt, et l'avantage que l'univers a sur lui. L'univers n'en sait rien." In this famous fragment of the "roseau pensant" we see that this is what distinguishes man from the rest of nature, the knowledge that he is mortal.

This knowledge brings joy. The repetitious "joie, joie, joie," recalls the biblical and liturgical, "saint, saint, saint" of the "Trois Ordres." The "pleurs de joie" is characteristic of the biblical style in which two substantives are dependent upon each other, with the second assuming the role of a qualifier since Hebrew is poor in adjectives, eg. couronne de gloire, jardin de délices, enfants de la promesse, masse de perdition, voie de perdition.²⁴

However, at the point of greatest communication and joy, the oft recurring Pascalian theme of abandonment reappears in the "Je m'en suis séparé" which follows. From a psychoanalytic point of view, this is to be expected.

Someone who has experienced the abandonment that Pascal did would always experience the greatest anxiety at a moment of closeness because of the fear that the close one would be taken away just as the mother had been. The theme of abandonment continues with a quote from Jeremiah, with the prophet recalling God's abandonment when the people no longer followed his way: "Derlinquerunt me fontem aquae vivae." This quote from the Old Testament is once again followed by one from the New Testament: "Mon Dieu, me quitterez-vous?" recalling the cry of Christ, "Eli, eli, lama sabachtani" of the Gospel of Mark²⁵ and Psalm 22.²⁶ There may, however, be a more personal note. Pascal fearing abandonment wants a guarantee, eternal, unconditional love, "Que je n'en sois pas séparé éternellement," like the mother love which he is always in fear of losing. The repetition of "Jésus Christ" which follows is like a litany found in the Psalms. Again the theme of abandonment returns followed by a quick succession of verbs which express the hope that separation will not occur again: "Je m'en suis séparé, je l'ai fui." The "Mémorial" ends with the quotation from Psalms 118:18 where commitment to God's way is expressed.

The question has often been raised whether Pascal may be termed a mystic and whether the "Mémorial" is a mystic document. The first phrases should dispel any designation of mystic for Pascal, above and beyond certain mystical elements found in every religious approach.

The experience of the "Mémorial" is not mystical, because it is first and foremost grounded in history, and revelation which is a dialogue and a confrontation between man and God. Whereas the mystic strives for a timeless reality, Pascal is rooted in time as his emphasis on the concept of "perpétuité" demonstrates. The continuity and perpetuity of the biblical tradition from the Patriarchs to Moses is the story of real people acting in history. There is a consciousness of time and a remembrance of events in the past. More than any of his contemporaries, Pascal understood this aspect of biblical revelation, particularly as illustrated in the relationship between prophet and God. Just as the prophet's identity did not melt away since he was free to observe and to respond, so Pascal in the "Mémorial" very poignantly expresses his fear of abandonment as well as his commitment to the "voie of the Evangile."

The "grandeur de l'âme humaine" is not a deprecation of consciousness which we find in mysticism, but rather praise for man's consciousness in his understanding of God and the universe.

The final phrase of the "Mémorial," "non obliviscar sermones tuos," shows that the important element is not the ecstasy which one finds in mysticism but rather the message, the content of revelation. Pascal assumes the role of prophet whose mission is to reveal and not to conceal like the mystic

whose message of revelation is ineffable.²⁷

The message of revelation is Scripture, the "voies ... dans l'Évangile" which means "charité," and not a withdrawal from the world as the mystic subscribes. True, there are mystic elements in Pascal's temporary withdrawal and ecstasy ("Oubli du monde et de tout, hormis Dieu).... Renonciation totale et douce"), but "charité" is the most important message of Scripture: "L'unique objet de l'Écriture est la charité (frag. 270-670)."²⁸ "Charité" is never defined by Pascal, but in its traditional Catholic sense it may be defined as "Dieu lui-même soit aimé et qu'il soit souverainement aimé comme fin dernière à qui l'on doit tout rapporter."²⁹ The sources for this definition are found in Deut. 6:5, 10:12, 11:13, Matt. 22:37, Mark 12:30, and Luke 10:27 where love of God, and its corollary of loving one's fellow man are declared to be the essence of religion. Pascal seems to understand the first part, love of God, as we may conclude from his definition of "charité"'s opposite, "cupidité:" (frag. 502-571) "...mais la cupidité use de Dieu et jouit du monde, et la charité au contraire." The emphasis is clearly on God and not on his fellow man as we note also in fragment 618-479, "...il y a un Dieu, ne jouissons donc pas des créatures,"³⁰ a passage which confirms Voltaire's labelling Pascal as "ce misanthrope sublime."³¹ More than fraternal "charité" we hear the call to renunciation of pleasure as in fragment 338-724 where Pascal describes

the "angelic life" (vie angélique) which the coming of Christ effected: "Les filles consacrent à Dieu leur virginité et leur vie, les hommes renoncent à tous plaisirs." In another fragment we read that man is not worthy of other people's love: (421-477) "Il est faux que nous soyons dignes que les autres nous aiment." However, there are stray passages that indicate that Pascal was interested in the human aspect of "charité" as in frag. 357-541: "Nul n'est heureux comme un vrai chrétien, ni raisonnable, ni vertueux, ni aimable." or the passage at the end of the "pari" where he describes the advantages of choosing God: "Vous serez fidèle, honnête, humble reconnaissant, bien-faisant, ami sincère, véritable." Moreover, Pascal's own personal life demonstrates his devotion from providing for the poor³² to his involvement in the issues of his times as seen in his attitude on the question of the signature. His behavior is far from a mystic withdrawal from the world.

However, we cannot ignore that some mystical elements are present in the "Mémorial." These may be viewed as tendencies which Pascal inherited from Catholic tradition. One such element is his concern for personal salvation. From a psychoanalytic point of view we may explain this concern as the search for the lost mother. As Otto Fenichel in his Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis explains, "The world does not seem to be empty and meaningless any longer

but instead particularly rich and full of new and indescribably grand meanings. Everything perceived has another meaning, sometimes a hidden, sometimes a clear one, but nearly always a prophetic and symbolic one."³³ Fenichel also emphasizes the narcissism of the subject. In Pascal we may note the personalized suffering Christ who spills His blood for Pascal, "J'ai versé telles gouttes de sang pour toi." The narcissistic "pour toi" is reinforced by the word "telles" as if Pascal needed a precise measurement in order to be reassured of Christ's love. This is further reinforced by the word "signe" (et ce que je te dis est un signe) which "connotes a materiality that would reduce the mysteries of Faith to certitude to be possessed here and now."³⁴ Pascal translated this longing for ever present maternal reassurance and certainty of love into personal salvation.

This concern for personal salvation would account for his neglect of the Prophets' message of social welfare and reform. The prophet was concerned with the people while the mystic is concerned with personal salvation. The concepts of social welfare and reform are related to the temporal, whereas Pascal was interested in the eternal. This is why he rejected the Jewish conception of God as formulated in Deuteronomy 11: 13-25, a providential God who rewards those who adore Him (449-556): "Il ne consiste pas seulement

en un Dieu qui exerce sa providence sur la vie et sur les biens des hommes, pour donner une heureuse suite d'années à ceux qui l'adorent; c'est la portion des Juifs." The two words "les biens" and "heureuse" are not generally characteristic of Pascal's vocabulary. They are rather to be contrasted with "misère," "souffrance," and "maladies pour le bon usage" found throughout his writings. The God of Christianity does not bestow "une heureuse suite d'années." On the contrary, he makes man conscious of his misery and forces him to participate in the suffering of Christ. In contrast to the "biens," Pascal signals the poverty of Christ: (931-550) "J'aime la pauvreté parce qu'il l'a aimée." The only value assigned to the "biens" is that they enable man to help the poor: (931-550) "J'aime les biens parce qu'ils me donnent le moyen d'en assister les misérables." The expression "une heureuse suite d'années" is rather the slogan of those who seek "divertissement." A man who would occupy himself with "biens temporels" would be unable to think about death and his salvation: (136-139)

Dire à un homme qu'il soit en repos, c'est lui dire qu'il vive heureux c'est lui conseiller.... d'avoir une condition toute heureuse....sans y trouver sujet d'affliction....

Pascal obsessed with death did not understand this temporal side of the Jewish religion. Concern for the temporal requires a confrontation with the present, with life and not death. In the Bible the temporal is linked

to the social reform which the Prophets demanded. As we have seen, Pascal is more concerned with rendering God personal through Jesus Christ which leads him to neglect the idea of community, the people, which is fundamental to biblical religion; as Martin Buber explains: "The individual Israelite approaches God in virtue of his membership in the holy people....in the whole of the Bible, there is no such thing as a private personal relationship between the individual and God apart from his membership in the covenant folk."³⁵ Unlike a Bossuet, Pascal was not concerned with people, nations, and their history; in fact, Pascal is rather disdainful toward the pagans and their history. Pascal conceived of the divine plan as focused on individuals, not nations, particularly the two groups of the "élus" and "pécheurs." Time and history are instead expressed through God's personal Providence as we see in a letter to Pascal's sister on the occasion of the death of their father:

....d'un arrêt dans sa Providence conçu de toute éternité pour être exécuté dans la plénitude de son temps, en telle année, en tel jour, en telle heure, en tel lieu, en telle manière; et enfin que tout ce qui est arrivé a été de tout temps prévu et préordonné en Dieu....³⁶

In this sense Beguin in his Pascal Par Lui-Même is justified in accusing Pascal of a lack of a sense of history.³⁷ However, as Miel points out, this accusation is not justified if we note Pascal's rejection of philosophy and his attempt to persuade his reader to accept a religion whose very essence

is historical. As Miel explains, secular history cannot be distinguished from the History of Salvation since the Augustinian doctrine which Pascal accepted "sees God's intentions as hidden and mysterious until the end of time."³⁸

Apart from one or two references to historical personages such as Herod or Caesar,³⁹ the only history Pascal focuses on is the history of Israel, and that is because this history leads to the coming of Christ. Unlike his mentor St. Augustine who viewed history as a progression with both the time before the Incarnation and the time after as revelations of the divine plan, Pascal viewed all history as leading to and ending with Christ's coming. In fact, he believed that each of the main personages of the Old Testament were aware of Christ's coming. He summarized this historical continuity and prefiguration in fragment 283-655: "Les six âges, les six pères des six âges, les six merveilles à l'entrée des six âges, les six orientes à l'entrée des six âges." This may best be understood in the light of St. Augustine's doctrine that the six days of creation culminating in Adam are the image of the six ages whose final end was Jesus Christ. Each age has a "father"-Adam, Noah, Abraham, David, the Jewish people in exile, and finally Jesus Christ Himself.⁴⁰

Christ's coming teaches two great lessons, that of His suffering for all the sins of mankind and that of "charité." Unlike the philosophers of his time such as Descartes and

Malebranche who saw God as the "auteur des vérités géométriques,"⁴¹ Pascal introduced the personal God who is concerned with man's suffering. The reality of man's suffering is what could convince the libertin and not talk of nations and the course of history.

Yet, Pascal did move beyond the individual and his salvation in Jesus Christ when he wrote about the Church. We even note hints of a great vision of mankind united under the holy aegis of the Church: (433-783) "...afin de faire d'eux tous une Eglise sainte, qu'il vient ramener dans cette Eglise les païens et les Juifs...." He emphasized the importance of a pure exemplar Church free from impurities which even the Synagogue of the Jews and philosophic sects would consider abhorrent (frag. 923-905).⁴² The Church's task is to see that its members are pious and that heretics be converted (991-952). We cannot know what role the Church would have played in a complete apology, but as it now stands Pascal was more concerned with the individual and his salvation. The main goal of his apology and the first step is to bring the libertin to faith in Jesus Christ. Good works, fraternal "charité" are not clearly defined, and Pascal did ignore the question of how one moves from the love of Christ to its fruits in specific ethical decisions, the very question which his enemies, the Jesuits, attempted to resolve. Perhaps, he felt that this had no place in an

apology, or more importantly, that it would follow naturally from this faith in Christ (frag. 189-547) "...En lui et par lui nous connaissons donc Dieu. Mais par J.-C. et en J.-C. on prouve Dieu et on enseigne la morale et la doctrine. J.-C. est donc le véritable Dieu des hommes."

"Mystère de Jésus"

If the power of the "Mémorial" is in the total independence of each line as if each line were a separate "pensée," then the force and beauty of the "Mystère de Jésus" derives from the flow of the lines, the unity in rhythm as well as in the unity of thought. Rather than tracing the states of man's soul in the process of conversion as in the "Mémorial," the "Mystère" is more of a drama. The scene is first set in the garden of Gethsemani although there is a flash back to the garden of Eden where disaster was first wrought, and then gradually, the "Mystère" moves inward from description to feelings of Christ on the cross as He speaks to God. Three personages are presented: God, Jesus, and Pascal or the narrator. Each line of the drama does not stand alone but is connected to the next, not only to complete the thought, but to continue the rhythmical flow. This may be seen in the repetition of the word "Jésus" which recalls the supplication in a prayer. The lines no longer resemble those of the "Mémorial" but present

instead a variety of rhythmical effects, and sometimes verse. We find assonance and interior rhyme: "délices, supplices, compagnie, toute sa vie," paronomasia: "main, non humain, les trouvant dormant, tes péchés cachés...., toi ver et terre" as well as verse: "Si tu connaissais tes péchés, tu perdrais coeur...."⁴³

Interspersed among these long verses are stark single phrases which derive their force from brevity and the force of the nouns: "Il souffre cette peine et cet abandon dans l'horreur de la nuit," or "Jésus sera en agonie jusqu'à la fin du monde. Il ne faut pas dormir pendant ce temps-là." A kind of zone of silence is created.

Pascal uses his favorite device of antithesis. There are several following close together, which increase the tension and intensity of the moment in Gethsemani. These are characterized by a statement and its antithesis: "Jésus est seul dans la terre, non seulement qui ressent et partage sa peine, mais qui la sache...." Jésus est dans un jardin non de délices comme le premier Adam où il se perdit et tout le genre humain mais dans un de supplices où il s'est sauvé et tout le genre humain."

The repetition and refrains so characteristic of the poetry of the Psalms follow. The alternation of past and present gives the illusion of retelling the biblical story while the preponderance of verbs in the present creates an

immediacy intended to involve the listener. This involvement is increased by the introduction of the plural noun "nous" which follows: "Jesus étant dans l'agonie et dans les plus grandes peines, prions pour longtemps." The repetition of the consonant "p" and the word "plus" as well as the imperative "prions" give the effect of duration and establish a bond between Jesus and the listener who is called upon to pray.⁴⁴ Once this is effected, the personages are ready to carry on a dialogue.

The dialogue opens with the sacrifice of Christ for all men which becomes highly personalized here. Pascal hears Christ tell him that He suffered and gave of His blood for him, "Je pensais à toi dans mon agonie, j'ai versé telles gouttes de sang pour toi." The "Mystère," both psychologically and theologically, is most personal. Pascal haunted by abandonment, separation, and physical suffering can easily identify with Christ. They become partners in suffering with Christ giving him the warmth and devotion he was unable to receive from either of his parents: "Le Père aime tout ce que je fais." Christ is most fully human in His misery. He is at first abandoned by God, but once He understands His mission and submits, "se remet tout entier à son père," he knows that He has received God's love and approval.

The culmination of the dialogue is Christ, full of

compassion, embracing the listener: "Console-toi! tu ne me chercherais pas si tu ne m'avais pas trouvé." Christ affirms that He is present and manifest in the world through Scripture, the Church, and the prayers of the faithful: "Je te suis présent...." The narrator understands in contrition and in a spirit of humility the glory of Christ and His lowliness, so he responds accordingly, "Seigneur je vous donne tout."

The "Mystère de Jésus" is Pascal's biblical poem par excellence. The sense of drama conveyed here is a legacy of the Bible. We have previously noted the sense of drama in his panoply of biblical figures and images in the concept of the figuratifs. In addition we have in the Pensées near personification of reason, imagination, charity, and Scriptures.⁴⁵ The elements of prayer were learned from the Psalms as we have previously noted. The dialogue between Jesus and God, and Jesus and Pascal, the narrator, represent Pascal's deep understanding of the intimate relationship between God and the prophet, the prophet and man, and man and God as found in the Prophets of the Old Testament. The use of antithesis is inherited from biblical parallelism, and the poignancy of the Passion is derived from the New Testament.

The next fragment worthy of our attention because of its elements of biblical style and thought is fragment 308-793 often called the "psalm of charity", otherwise known

as the "Trois Ordres."

Fragment of the "Trois Ordres"

The style of fragment 308-793 is a curious mixture of biblical and mathematical. There are sober statements presented like mathematical axioms or propositions offset by biblical vocabulary, concepts, and phrases. The first verse is very abstract with the mathematical notion of the infinite projected into a geometric space. The second verse moves into biblical vocabulary with words like "éclat," "grandeur," "lustre," followed in the third verse with "invisible chair." "Chair" is a very charged word derived mainly from St. Paul who opposed it to "spiritus."⁴⁷ We have already noted its use in describing the Jews who do not understand Scripture in a spiritual sense, i.e. as a prefiguration of Christ's coming.

After a description of each order, an axiom is put forth: "Ce sont trois ordres différents, de genre." The "de genre" sets off and brings into relief the idea that the three orders are distinct. The fifth verse describes the order of the mind or spirit and its disassociation from the carnal. The "grands génies" are not seen with the eyes that are concerned with appearances and exterior things like the carnally minded, but rather by the mind. The understated

"c'est assez" at the end of the stanza emphasizes their self sufficiency. The sixth and last abstract stanza describes the saints and their difference from the two former. Once again, the brevity of the final statements brings the entire stanza into relief, here all the more poignant because of the word "Dieu."

In the following six stanzas, the abstract is left aside and concrete personalities like Archimedes and Christ are introduced. Archimedes unlike the captains of the carnal order did not need to display visual and physical strengths through battle, but instead presented his inventions. In the style of biblical exclamation, Pascal proclaims, "O. qu'il a éclaté aux esprits."

Christ unlike the men of science invented nothing, nor did he rule like the carnal "rois," but in the words of Isaiah and the Magnificat of the liturgy, he was "saint, saint, saint." Like a king He came in great pomp and ceremony, not of the external kind normally seen by the eyes, but of the spirit, which could only be seen by the "yeux du coeur." This recalls fragment 256-662 where the Jews' rejection of Jesus as the Messiah is attributed to their not understanding that the lowliness of Christ was a spiritual grandeur and royalty: "que le Messie sera seigneur de David....ils l'ont méconnu....dans son abaissement et dans sa mort."

Continuing with the theme of king, rule, and pomp and circumstance Pascal writes that Archimedes also did not rule. His wisdom was to be found in great books of geometry. The last stanza summarizes dramatically the three orders in all inclusive statements resembling geometric propositions: "Tous les corps, les firmaments, les étoiles" is parallel to the first stanza where we find "les rois, les riches, les capitaines," themselves parallel to "l'empire, la gloire, l'éclat, and le lustre." In the second to the last paragraph the word "infiniment" takes us back to the first paragraph recalling "infini." In the last paragraph, the word "surnaturel" takes us back to the first, but this time the added word "vraie" adds emphasis to "charité," which is the theme of this fragment.⁴⁸

Fragment 545-408

The greatest threat to this order of "charité" is "concupiscence," the theme of fragment 545-408 which Pascal evokes in another example of magnificent prose. The fragment begins with the presentation of the three orders of "concupiscence" in a sober, factual-like statement as those which we saw in the "Trois Ordres." They are then repeated in Latin where the repetition of the word "libido," and the "o" and "i" sounds create a rhythm and lend force to the statement: "Libido sentiendi, libido sciendi, libido dominandi."

In the admonishing tones of the Prophets of the Old

Testament Pascal draws upon Psalm 137;⁴⁹ however, he transforms the lyrical and melancholy chant of this Psalm into a vision of violent nature⁵⁰ imbued in an atmosphere of Christian sin and pride: "Malheureuse la terre de malé-diction que ces trois fleuves de feu embrasent plutôt qu'ils n'arrosent." This transformation is due to the influence of Pascal's Jansenist heritage as we note also in Saint-Cyran who speaks of the three concupiscences as "trois sources de feu qui environnent sans cesse les âmes, et se répandent sur elle de tous côtés."⁵¹

The mark of Augustine is here also, for in his violent description of nature, Pascal translates Augustine's commentary on Psalm 137.⁵² However, although inspired by Augustine, the Pascalian vocabulary of "disproportion" (frag. 199-72) is used: "Nous brûlons du désir de trouver une assiette ferme, et une dernière base constante pour y édifier une tour...."

The particularly lyrical and christocentric Pascal comes through in the passage where we find the image of the hand extended to Christ, the redeemer: "tendent la main à celui qui les doit élever." This image was used previously in fragments 631-306 and 713-466 where the hand reaches out to Christ the liberator.⁵³

The final word of the fragment "exil" brings us back to Pascal's preoccupation with abandonment and separation.

It is rendered more forceful by the word "longueur" which itself reinforces the "souvenant sans cesse" which precedes it. The word "exil" also marks the passage of time which the word "écouler" evokes followed by the same "ou" sound in "toutes," and the word "périssables" all of which remind us of the fragility of human endeavor, another Pascalian theme.⁵⁴

BIBLICAL METAPHORS

In addition to the strong biblical influence present in the four poetical pieces we have analyzed, the power and beauty of Pascal's individual metaphors cannot be ignored. Pascalisants from Mesnard to Topliss have not always been in unanimous agreement as to the role of the Bible in the formation of these metaphors. Topliss, for instance, credits Montaigne's Essais as Pascal's chief source of imagery, and she expresses wonder that for a man who read the Bible so carefully, Pascal did not draw many images from the Bible.⁵⁵

The question of influence is a very complex one, and it is certainly in this case where we find many of Pascal's images in the writers of Port Royal, the early Platonists, and in earlier apologists.⁵⁶ Yet, if we do take another look at several of Pascal's metaphors and vocabulary, we

shall indeed find that there are apparent biblical influences both in concept and style which Pascalisants have neglected.

"Abîme"

Although "abîme" appears only five times in the Pensées, it becomes a dominant image because of the power of its presentation. It appears in two ways, both of which have their source in the Bible. It is presented in relation to the "infini" which has both vertical and horizontal dimensions. This image of "abîme" conceived of spatially is inspired by the book Job. In chapter thirty eight of the book of Job, where Job is made to realize the mystery of the universe, he is asked to reflect upon the depths of the "abîme" and the vastness of the earth: (38:16) "... T'es-tu promené dans les profondeurs de l'abîme? (38:18) As-tu embrassé du regard l'étendue de la terre?..." No rational or teleological explanation of nature is given, but instead, examples of the marvel and strangeness of nature are presented. There is a kind of intrinsic value attached to the incomprehensible. Pascal uses this same technique to arouse the "libertin." He calls upon him to marvel at the two poles of the universe, "l'infini and le néant" in which he, man, finds himself. Pascal tries to evoke a feeling of the incomprehensibility and mystery of the universe. The physical universe as well

as man is incomprehensible. Pascal attempts to persuade man that he is a "monstre incompréhensible."⁵⁷ "Monstre" has nothing to do with size or ugliness, but it is defined by Cayrou as "être anormal, étrange. Prodiges qui est contre l'ordre de la nature." The "monstre" inspires admiration or fear and is derived from the latin "monstrum," "un signe."⁵⁸ Man is "contre l'ordre de la nature." He is a "mystère" just as original sin is a mystery and incomprehensible, but without it, man is even more incomprehensible. Without it man is in an "abîme:" (frag. 131-434)

Certainement rien ne nous heurte plus rudement que cette doctrine. Et cependant, sans ce mystère, le plus incompréhensible de tous, nous sommes incompréhensibles à nous-mêmes. Le noeud de notre condition est plus inconcevable sans ce mystère, que ce mystère n'est inconcevable à l'homme.

"Abîme" is also presented in relation to "chute," "gouffre," and "précipice"⁵⁹ as well as to the themes of sorrow and abandonment. In the latter, Pascal is inspired by the book of Psalms. Man evokes God's name from the depth of his sorrow and his feeling of abandonment in the face of the wicked: Ps. 88:7: "Tu m'as jeté dans une fosse profonde, dans les ténèbres, dans les abîmes (not quoted by Pascal)." The pairing of "ténèbres" and "abîme" is first found in the Second Ecrit des curés de Paris: "ténèbres les plus épaisses qui soient jamais sorties du puits de l'abîme."⁶⁰

Pascal's personal feeling of abandonment and the theme of the Fall which represents God's abandonment of man are evoked in the image of the "abîme." Since the Fall, man's loss of grace and "bonheur" have left him with a "gouffre infini" (frag. 148-425) which can only be filled by God. Any attempts to rise above the abyss and to find a stable and secure place lead to a disastrous crash as if hell itself were opening up: (frag. 199-72) "Nous brûlons du désir de trouver une assiette ferme, et une dernière base constante pour y édifier, une tour qui s'élève à l'infini, mais tout notre fondement craque et la terre s'ouvre jusqu'aux abîmes." The "tour qui s'élève" recalls the tower of Babel, a symbol of man's "orgueil" and "présomption," and, indeed, this is another theme of the same fragment. It can only be presumptuous for man to purport to understand nature and the "précipice des choses," for it would require "une présomption aussi infinie que leur objet." The image of the earth opening up is derived from the Bible also, initially from the book of Numbers⁶¹ where Korah is swallowed up by the earth and later from the book of Psalms⁶² recalling that same event. In fact, the Psalmic source uses the word "engloutit" which brings us back to Pascal again in frag. 199-72 of the "disproportion de l'homme" where the word "engloutit" replaces that of "abîme" in describing man's precarious situation in face of

the "néant" and the "infini:" "Egalement--incapable de voir le néant d'où il est tiré et l'infini où il est englouti." Fragment 113-348 presents the same thought: "Par l'espace l'univers me comprend et m'engloutit comme un point...."

"Clair-obscur"

Images of darkness are derived from the Isaianic vocabulary of "aveuglement," "ténèbres," "voile," and "caché." We have already noted the Deuteronomic reference to blindness wherein God will smite with blindness those who turn from Him.⁶³ The New Testament also continues with this image as in Matthew 15 where the Pharisees are labelled as blind: "Laissez-les: ce sont des aveugles qui conduisent des aveugles; si un aveugle conduit un aveugle, ils tomberont, tous deux dans une fosse."

The blindness of the Jews in Pascal actually serves as a metaphor for the state of blindness and misery in which all of humanity finds itself without the grace of Christ: (198-693)

En voyant l'aveuglement et la misère de l'homme, en regardant tout l'univers muet et l'homme sans lumière abandonné à lui-même, et comme égaré dans ce recoin de l'univers sans savoir qui l'y a mis, ce qu'il y est venu faire, ce qu'il deviendra en mourant, incapable de toute connaissance, j'entre en effroi...."

The word "effroi" recalls the "ténèbres effroyables" of the Jews (793-737). The Jesuits like the Jews are also labelled

as blind: (frag. 964-953) "Aveuglement surnaturel....La *décadence des Jésuites*" and, indeed, at the end of the fragments which deal with them, they are compared to the Jews: "Comme les Juifs qui portent les livres, qui ne sont point suspects aux gentils, ils nous portent leurs Constitutions."

Thus, once again Pascal uses the Jews to show the "libertin" that both they and the Jesuits err, one for the lack of acceptance of Jesus, and the others for their fallacious moral presumptions.

This vocabulary of darkness and blindness has its opposite in the language of vision, "lumière," "yeux," "vision," and "voir." The word "voir" appears 114 times in the *Pensées* following such high frequency words as "dieu," 687 times, "nature," "raison," 218, "miracle," 174, "esprit," "église," "juifs," 129 and "coeur" 124.⁶⁴ It is light, "lumière," which allows man to recognize his duality which can only be reconciled in the dual being of Jesus Christ: (frag. 122-416) "...à mesure que les hommes ont de lumière ils trouvent et grandeur et misère en l'homme." In the famous fragment of the "Trois Ordres" those who are not blind have vision and are endowed with the "yeux du coeur" which allow them to see this wisdom, "qui voyent la sagesse." The entire fragment consists of images of light and vision:

Tout l'éclat des grandeurs n'a point de lustre pour les gens qui sont dans les recherches de l'esprit....Les grands génies ont leur empire, leur éclat, leur grandeur, leur victoire et leur lustre... Ils sont vus non des yeux mais des esprits. Les saints ont leur empire, leur éclat, leur grandeur, leur victoire et leur lustre....Ils sont vus...."

The biblical sources for this metaphor range from the "fiat lux" of Genesis to the Prologue of St. John where Jesus is described as the "true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world (1:18)." Pascal views the state of man before the Fall as one of light which only Christ can restore. In fragment 149-430, he describes that state of innocence using the Hugolian-like "oeil" instead of his usual "yeux" to describe man's vision of happiness: "L'oeil de l'homme voyait alors la majesté de Dieu. Il n'était pas alors dans les ténèbres qui l'aveuglent, ni dans la mortalité et dans les misères qui l'affligent."

It is an extraordinary vision which the grace of God bestows on man according to the Ecrit sur la conversion du pécheur:" "La première chose que Dieu inspire à l'âme qu'il daigne toucher véritablement, est une connaissance et une vue tout extraordinaire par laquelle l'âme considère les choses et elle-même d'une façon toute nouvelle,"⁶⁵ This depiction of knowledge as vision has its roots in Genesis and continues through Plato, Plotinus, Proclus and St. Augustine. The forbidden tree of knowledge in Genesis is described as "agréable à la vue" and the tree's power as "précieux pour

ouvrir l'intelligent...." When Adam and Eve eat of the fruit of the tree, the result is an opening of their eyes while receiving the knowledge of their nude state: (Genesis 3:7) "Les yeux de l'un et de l'autre s'ouvrirent, il connurent qu'ils étaient nus...."

In the allegory of Alcibiades Major Plato compares the process of knowledge with the vision of the human eye. This is, of course, also illustrated in the allegory of the cave in the Republic. The soul in Plato is modeled after the body which has eyes to see, but these eyes look upon the external forms. In Philo, Plotinus, Proclus and St. Augustine, we find the image of the "eyes of the mind"⁶⁶ which in Pascal becomes "les yeux du coeur" or "les yeux de la sagesse." The "feu" of the "Memorial" must also be mentioned as a metaphor of light.

Pascal, unlike his contemporaries who used these traditional images of light and darkness, interweaves them with each other and with the key concepts of his thinking. All of these create leit-motifs of man, blind, yet capable of receiving Christ's light through grace; God, hidden and veiled yet seen by those who possess "yeux du coeur;" and Scripture veiled and figure, yet revealed to those who understand its spiritual meaning.

BIBLICAL VOCABULARY

Our discussion of biblical traces in Pascal's style must take note of certain vocabulary. A case in example are the words "cri," "crier"⁶⁷ used by Pascal and derived from biblical vocabulary. These words imply something negative, an impotence, a lack (frag. 148-425): "Qu'est-ce donc que nous crie cette avidité et cette impuissance sinon qu'il y a eu autrefois dans l'homme un véritable bonheur" or useless effort (44:12) "La raison a beau crier, elle ne peut mettre le prix aux choses; or (141-509) "Philosophes. La belle chose de crier à un homme qui ne se connaît pas, qu'il aille de lui-même à Dieu." There may also be an element of despair in the verb "crier," for there are those who cry out that God is hidden and that they find nothing that points to the truth of religion: (427-194): "... ils crient que rien ne la leur montre, puisque cette obscurité où ils sont, et qu'ils objectent à l'Eglise, ne fait qu'établir une des choses.... Il faut qu'ils criassent...."

Reaction to this "obscurité" may take on a different form represented by the vocabulary of "silence," "étonnant," "effraie." The famous fragment 201-206, "Le silence éternel de ces espaces infinis m'effraie" has been much debated by Pascalisants. Some hold that it is Pascal himself who is speaking while others claim that it is the "libertin,"

especially in light of 199-72 where we read, "Enfin c'est le plus grand caractère sensible de la toute-puissance de Dieu, que notre imagination se perde dans cette pensée." These critics claim that a Pascal who believes in the omnipotence of God the creator would not be frightened by a mute world.⁶⁸ Our opinion is that Pascal himself is speaking just as he believes any man would in face of the new universe, "Qui se considérera de la sorte s'effraiera de soi-même." In contrast to Descartes' optimism, he does not believe that the machine known as the world can be totally and entirely understood. For Pascal, science extends rather than limits the scope of what man is capable of understanding. One answer gives rise to numerous questions. Therefore, the universe is incomprehensible and hidden: "... la fin des choses et leurs principes sont pour lui invinciblement ... secret impénétrable....l'auteur de ces merveilles les comprend. Tout autre ne le peut faire."⁶⁹ In light of these innumerable questions of science, man can only shudder: "s'effraiera de soi-même," and tremble, "tremblera dans la vue de ces merveilles...." This fear and trembling involves wonder, admiration, and silent contemplation: "s' curiosité se changeant en admiration il sera plus disposé à les contempler en silence qu'à les rechercher avec présomption." Thus, the key to understanding that in fragment 201-206 Pascal himself is

speaking lies in analyzing the biblical meanings associated with the word "effraie."

The intrinsic value of the incomprehensible is a biblical concept, although later it becomes Hellenic and mystic. It is the final "message" of the book of Job. The last chapters of the book of Job do not present teleological wisdom. There are no solutions or purpose but the message relies "on the sheer absolute wondrousness that transcends thought, on the mysterium presented in its pure, non-rational form."⁷⁰ The description of the animals presented in these last chapters are those of "strangeness and marvel: the eagle, the ostrich, the wild ass, and the unicorn. The very negation and lack of purpose in their behavior holds awe-some meaning. The monsters, behemoth, and leviathan of chapter 45 are just aspects of the mysterious in gross form. As a result of the absolute incomprehensible and inconceivable, God is justified and Job's soul is calmed. Job is struck dumb because there is "rather an intrinsic value in the incomprehensible--a value, inexpressible, positive, and fascinating."⁷¹ This meaning is also the meaning of "effraie" which Pascal mentions throughout the fragment "qu'il s'étonne...mais, pour lui présenter un autre prodige aussi étonnant qu'il recherche dans ce qu'il connaît....
.....
L'éternité des choses en elles-mêmes ou en Dieu doit encore étonner notre petite durée [emphasis added]."⁷²

Thus, by tracing the biblical sources of such words as "effraie," "silence," and "étonner," we have been able to understand better fragment 201-206, one of the most quoted passages of the Pensées.

Our discussion of the influence of the Bible on Pascal's style has also led us to a clearer comprehension of his use of parallelism and the breaking rhythm of biblical style. Pascal's most forceful and poignant metaphors are also derived from the Bible. Pascal himself already hinted at this influence when he laid down the principle for a good apology: (frag. 303-799) "... Dieu parle bien de Dieu." Unlike his contemporaries who wrote instructive treatises Pascal adopted the style of the biblical writers and Christ Himself who knew that it was more important to the reader than to instruct him: (298-283) L'ordre. Contre l'objection que l'Ecriture n'a pas d'ordre....Le coeur a son ordre.... J.-C., saint Paul ont l'ordre de la charité, non de l'esprit, car ils voulaient échauffer, non instruire...."⁷³

Notes

¹ Topliss, Rhetoric, p. 138.

² Heschel, Prophets II, p. 148.

³ Heschel, pp. 148-9.

⁴ Christian exegesis actually encouraged the disparagement of the literary qualities of the Bible since the word is considered to be mere flesh. Augustine, however, in defending the New Testament against those who disputed its inspiration on the grounds of its lack of eloquence and barbarous form, cited both from the Prophets and Pauline epistles as examples of artistic form. (Heschel, p. 149).

⁵ Lhermet, p. 339.

⁶ Lhermet, p. 339.

⁷ Heschel, p. 155.

⁸ Heschel, p. 151.

⁹ Périer, Vie de Pascal, p. 23.

¹⁰ Méthodes Chez Pascal: Actes du Colloque Tenu à Clermont-Ferrand 10-13 juin 1976 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1979), p. 388.

¹¹ Lhermet, pp. 335-6.

¹² Lhermet, p. 337.

¹³ Topliss, p. 306.

¹⁴ Topliss, p. 307.

¹⁵ Lhermet, p. 338.

- 16 Robert Lowth, Letters on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews, pp. 34-37.
- 17 Lhermet, p. 340.
- 18 Lhermet, p. 340.
- 19 Lowth, p. 45.
- 20 E.B.O. Borgerhoff, "The Reality of the Pensées: The Pensées as Rhetoric." Sewanee Review, 65 (1957), 2-33.
- 21 Gouhier, p. 36.
- 22 Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism: four essays, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 145.
- 23 Gouhier, p. 37.
- 24 Lhermet, p. 307.
- 25 Mark 15:34: "Et à la neuvième heure, Jésus s'écria d'une voix forte 'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachtani?' ce qui se traduit, 'Mon Dieu, mon Dieu, pourquoi m'as-tu abandonnée.'"
- 26 Psalm 22:2: "Mon Dieu! mon Dieu! Pourquoi m'as-tu abandonnée?"
- 27 Heschel, Prophets II, p. 141.
- 28 For Richard Simon, charity was the Jewish quality par excellence: "Les Juifs n'excellent pas seulement en prières, mais encore en charité: et il semble qu'on voit éclater dans la compassion qu'ils ont pour les pauvres, l'image de la charité des premiers Chrestiens pour leurs frères: on suivoit en cela ce qui se pratiquoit dans les Synagogues, et dont les Juifs ont retenu la pratique et

l'usage au lieu que presentant, nous en conservons à peine le souvenir." (Yardeni, "La Vision des Juifs et du Judaïsme dans l'oeuvre de R. Simon," Revue des Etudes Juives, CXXIX) (1964) p. 200, n. 2.

²⁹ Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique: contenant l'exposé des doctrines de la théologie catholique leurs preuves et leur histoire, tome deuxième (Paris: Letouzey et Ane, 1910).

³⁰ In this same fragment we find: "Donc tout ce qui nous incite à nous attacher aux créatures est mauvais puisque cela nous empêche, ou de servir Dieu, si nous le connaissons, ou de le chercher si nous l'ignorons....donc, nous devons haïr nous-mêmes, et tout ce qui nous excite à autre attache qu'à Dieu seul."

³¹ Voltaire, "Vingt-Cinquième Lettre Sur Les Pensées de Pascal," (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1939), p. 140.

³² In his memoirs P. Beurrier explains the principles which governed Pascal's behavior: "Il fonde le règlement de sa vie sur les principes évangéliques qui sont: 1. de renoncer à soy meme, à tout plaisir, à toute superfluité et à la vaine gloire. 2. de faire tout ce qu'on peut faire de bien dans une pure veue de Dieu, pour son amour, et pour nous perfectionner. 3. d'aymer son prochain et sa propre âme d'un amour désintéressé dans la veue de Dieu." (Lhermet, p. 177).

33 Otto Fenichel, The Psychoanalytical Theory of Neurosis, p. 42.

34 M.-J. Maggioni, The 'Pensées' of Pascal, a study in baroque style, (New York: AMS Press, 1969), p. 145.

35 Herberg, Buber, pp. 342-3, n. 121.

36 Pascal, "Lettre à M. et Mme Périer," p. 275.

37 Albert Béguin, Pascal par Lui-Même, (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1961), p.106.

38 Miel, Pascal and Theology, p. 184.

39 fragment 317-701: "Qu'il est beau de voir par les yeux de la foi, Darius et Cyrus, Alexandre, les Romains, Pompée et Herode, agir sans le savoir pour la gloire de l'Evangile."

40 Jean Mesnard, Les Pensées de Pascal, (Paris: Société d'enseignement supérieur, 1976), p. 154.

41 F. Ruah, Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale, 30 (1923), p. 341.

42 ". . . vous retenez dans l'Eglise les plus débordés et ceux qui la déshonorent si fort que les synagogues des Juifs et sectes des philosophes les auraient exclus comme indignes et les auraient abhorrés comme impies."

43 Jean Steinmann, Pascal, (Paris: Brouwer, 1962), p. 284.

44 Steinmann, p. 285.

45 Le Guern, p. 225.

46 Topliss, p. 187.

47 Mativa, A. "Pascal Ecrivian," Lettres Romanes, 4 (1950), p. 431.

48 Mativa, p. 431.

49 Sur les bords des fleuves de Babylone,
 Nous étions assis, et nous pleurions,
 En nous souvenant de Sion.
 Aux saules de la contrée
 Nous avons suspendu nos harpes.

50 This image of nature as violent and a torrent is also found in the Ecrits des curés: "Comme la nature de l'homme tend toujours au mal dès sa naissance, et qu'elle n'est ordinairement retenue que par la crainte de la loi, aussitôt que cette barrière est ôtée, la concupiscence se répand sans obstacle . . . voyant à nos yeux ce débordement de corruption prêt à submerger l'Eglise, nous n'oserons. . . ."

51 Le Guern, p. 143.

52 "Enarratio in Psalmum CXXVI: 3-5: Tamen, charissimi attendite flumina Babylonis [..]. . . . Attende quia fluit, attende quia labitur; et si attendis quia fluit et labitur, cave quia trahit [..] O sancta Sion, ubi totum stat et nihil fluit [..] Sede super flumen noli in flumine, noli sub flumine: sed tanem sede humilis, loquere non quomodo in Jerusalem. Ibi enim stabis; quia de ipsa spe loquitar alius psalmus et canta dicens: Stantes erant pedes nostri in atriis Jerusalem [..] Attendat si non fluit ista felicitas, si potest certus esse de illa quia manet in

aeternum. Si autem non est certus, et videt fluere unde gaudet; fluvius Babylonis est. (Le Guern, p. 38, n. 17).

53 Frag. 631-422: "Il est bon d'être las et fatigué par l'inutile recherche du vrai bien, afin de tendre les bras au Libérateur." fragment 793-466: "Ainsi, je tends le bras à mon Libérateur."

54 Frag. 757-212: "L'écoulement. C'est une chose horrible de sentir s'écouler tout ce qu'on possède."

55 Topliss, p. 268.

56 Topliss, p. 264.

57 Fragment 130-420.

58 Cayrou, pp. 581-2.

59 Fragment 149-430: "Et ceux qui ont vu la vanité de cette prétention vous ont jeté dans l'autre précipice en vous faisant entendre que votre nature était pareille à celle des bêtes."

60 Le Guern, p. 180.

61 Nombres 16:32: "La terre ouvrit sa bouche et les engloutit."

62 Psaumes 106:17: "La terre s'ouvrit et engloutit Dathan."

63 God also hides Himself while blinding others as in Isaiah 45:7 and 45:15. These two images are commented on by the four Evangelists: Matt. 13:14, Mark 4:12, Luke 8:10, and John 9:39, 12:40. (Lhermet, p. 392).

64 Davidson, p. 1461.

65 Pascal, Ecrit sur la conversion du pécheur, p. 290.

66 Paul Friedlander, Plato, trans. Hans Meyerhoff, (New York: Harper Torchbooks, Harper and Row, 1964), p. 15.

67 Le Guern, p.

68 M. de Gandillac, "Pascal et le Silence du Monde," Blaise Pascal: L'Homme et L'Oeuvre, Cahiers de Royaumont, Philosophie no. 1, (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1956), p. 348.

69 It is not speculation, "Dieu des philosophes et des savants," which leads to faith but rather this sense of "étonnement." A modern formulation of this Pascalian idea is found in A.J. Heschel's thinking in The Insecurity of Freedom where he writes, ". . . not the definable issues, but the indefinable enigmas, the questions we do not know how to ask, have always poured oil on the flames of man's anxiety. Religion begins with the sense of the ineffable, with the awareness of a reality that discredits our pride."

70 Rudolf Otto, The Idea of the Holy, 2nd edition, (1923; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 79.

71 Otto, p. 80.

72 Luther in his Short Form of the Ten Commandments, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer (1520) writes, "I venture to put my trust in the one God alone, the invisible and incomprehensible, who hath counted Heaven and Earth, and is alone above

all creatures (Otto, p. 185, n. 1). Chrysostom in his De Incomprehensibili distinguished between the numinous and merely rational wonder. He quotes from Ps. cxxxix.14 which in the Septuagint reads, "I praise Thee: for that Thou madest Thyself fearfully wondrous." He explains this passage as follows: "What does fearfully mean here? Many things move us to wonder in which there is nothing 'fearful'--the beauty of a colonnade, for example; the beauty of pictures, or bodily loveliness. Again, we wonder at the greatness of the sea and its measureless expanse, but terror and 'fear' only seize upon us when we gaze down into its depths. So, too, here the Psalmist. When he gazes down into the immeasurable, yawning (*ἀγᾶντος*). Depth of the Divine Wisdom, dizziness comes upon him and he recoils in terrified wonder and cries:" Thy knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, above my power (I am too weak for it: LXX).'" (Otto, p. 182).

⁷³ This quotation follows Sellier's edition of the Pensées. Lafuma writes "rabaïsser" instead of "échauffer."

CONCLUSION

While Pascal's attitude toward the Jews, their religion, and their Bible has many traditional elements inherited from the writers of centuries of Christian apologetics, it also bears the unique stamp of Pascal's own thinking and style. Like his contemporaries, he writes in the apologetic tradition which views the Jews as rejected and abandoned by God and replaced by the new Israel, Christianity. Yet, unlike them, Pascal's writings, particularly the Pensées, show a preoccupation with the Jews and their Bible in the development of all aspects of his religious thought and style. He interweaves many of the same traditional themes more systematically and yet more subtly throughout the Pensées. Why this difference and preoccupation?

Certainly as we have seen, Pascal's biographers give us no clues to his preoccupation with the Jews. His merchant family background offers us some hints of traditional prejudices against the Jews as competitors. Unlike a La Peyrère, for example, Pascal's thinking shows no trace of the messianic hopes so prevalent in the seventeenth century which saw Jewish messianism as its core.¹ The answer must be sought for elsewhere, and we have found it to be threefold: psychological, polemical and apologetic, and biblical.

First, there is the psychological factor, the nature of Pascal's personality. As Jerphagnon in his Le Caractère de Pascal explains, the psychological explanation, although not necessarily revealing causality, does help explain why Pascal's thinking followed one path as opposed to another.² The abandonment and rejection he felt at the loss of his mother, his physical ailments and suffering found many parallels and identification with the abandoned Jews and the suffering Christ. As we have noted, the disparagement of the old religion of Judaism and the introduction of the new religion of Christianity drew him closer to his mother, because in Christianity Christ while certainly not supplanting the Father, yet holds an equal place with Him. The mother is also closer to the Son than to the Father. Pascal's attitude toward the Jews reveals the same ambivalence of Christianity to Judaism wherein there is both an attachment and an obligation on the one hand ("J'admire une première et auguste religion")³ and a resentment and revolt on the other ("ennemis irréconciliables").⁴

Secondly, Pascal stands in the long line of Christian polemicists and apologists and as such he deals with several important issues which have been central throughout the ages in the Christian-Jewish encounter. First and foremost, there is the debate over the Messiah and Christ. Pascal understood that the intelligent "libertin" could question

the stubborn fact of Jewish belief and survival as he writes in fragment 273-745: "Ceux qui ont peine à croire cherchent un sujet en ce que les Juifs ne croient pas." The unbeliever just like the Christian can point to the reality of the Jews to affirm his non belief. If the "libertin" could be made to see that he was blind like the Jews in his refusal of Christ, he would be drawn to Christian belief. Secondly, there is the question of the Law and the Gospel, the Letter and Spirit which deals with views on the proper mode of interpretation of a common sacred text. Pascal tried to convince the "libertin" that the Jewish tradition itself taught belief in the figurative interpretation of Scripture as well as the belief in the Messiah. It is for this reason that he turned to the Pugio Fidei, a text neglected by his contemporaries.

The Pugio Fidei provided a parallel theology revealing much use of the figural interpretation of Scripture and its christocentric outlook. It reinforced Pascal's emphasis on the perpetuity of the Jewish religion and tradition by showing the continuity of the concept of original sin from Adam to the Rabbinic interpreters of the Talmud. The Isaianic vocabulary of blindness is found throughout the Pugio Fidei and may have been Pascal's direct source for this metaphor.

Furthermore, like the apologist Tertullian centuries

before, who used the Jews as a means of comparison to one's opponent, Pascal used the Jesuits, comparing them to the Jews of yesteryear who confused exterior acts with those of true piety which come only from the interior.

The last factor in Pascal's particular interest in the Jews comes from his reading of the Jewish book par excellence, the Old Testament. Because he believed that the Bible was the key to Jesus Christ,⁵ he drew upon it both conceptually and stylistically.

From the book of Ecclesiastes, he took the theme of "divertissement," the vanity of life and man's vainglorious strivings; from the Psalms, prayer, the theme and vocabulary of man's suffering, abandonment, and from the book of Job, man's suffering, the vanity of life and human endeavor and the ultimate mystery of God and the universe. Above all, Pascal's emphasis on man and the world and man and God bears the stamp of the biblical Prophets. Isaiah gave him his arch concept of the "Dieu caché," while Jeremiah inspired his concept of "coeur." He adopted the Prophets' sense of drama⁶ and their relentless use of interrogation and exclamation in order to drive home his point. From all of these books, he adopted the style of biblical parallelism, particularly antithetical parallelism, which for him revealed not only the contradictions and antithesis of man in the universe, but those inherent in faith itself: (fragment 809-

230) "Incompréhensible que Dieu soit et incompréhensible qu'il ne soit pas, que l'âme soit avec le corps, que nous n'ayons point d'âme, que le monde soit créé, qu'il ne soit pas, etc., que le péché originel soit et qu'il ne soit pas."

Pascal's greatest inheritance from the Old Testament was the concept of revelation which is most poignantly expressed in the "Mémorial:" "Dieu d'Abraham, Dieu d'Isaac, Dieu de Jacob, non des philosophes et des savants." It claims that religion is not mere abstract doctrine but rather revealed to man by God and perceived by the "coeur" and the "yeux de sagesse." This belief in revelation cannot be characterized as totally mystical as some critics have attempted to do, because it is grounded in history. Like the prophetic consciousness from which he drew his inspiration, "mystical and rational thinking is combined in a way which puts to shame all slogans about rationalism or irrationalism."⁷

Thus, Pascal, before such existentialists as Kierkegaard, Marcel, and Buber, understood man's existential relation to God. This he learned from the Jews and their history as portrayed in the Bible. Yet, he remained the victim of traditional Catholic thought and tradition which had only now begun to free itself of patterns and prejudicial attitudes inherited from the patristic and medieval periods. This raises the question of Pascal's anti-Semitism, a question

almost completely ignored by Pascalisants with the exception of Malcom Hay in his very partisan volume, Prejudices of Pascal. Although Hay is clearly prejudiced⁸ against Pascal, conceiving of him as a great misanthrope whose magnificent prose betrays a "dialectical trickery,"⁹ his point is well taken that such thinking and writing which nourished French readers for generations did eventually lead to the Holocaust and that Nazi anti-Semitism would have been impossible without the heritage of centuries of Christian anti-Semitism such as Pascal's.

In a scientific study, Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark of the Survey Research Center of Berkeley University showed that the teachings of Christianity significantly shape American attitudes toward the Jews. The two attitudes that were found to be most prevalent were, first, that of particularism, and second, that of deicide. Whereas particularistic Christians also see Jews as guilty of the Crucifixion, particularists view Jews of today as guilty as those of the past.¹⁰

In France itself, a study of French teaching materials by Claire Huchet Bishop, some published before Vatican Council II as early as 1945, and others just shortly after, in 1966, reveals some interesting data. The purpose of the study was "to verify the soundness of the opinion that sees anti-Semitic themes in the content of Christian teaching,

and . . . if this opinion turns out to be correct, to reveal the deep reasons that make Catholic religious teaching a vehicle for certain anti-Semitic values." Words such as "Jews" and "Pharisees" were found in many unfavorable references. There were 53.50% favorable references to the word "Jews" and 28.80 unfavorable. The word "Pharisees" showed 8.05 favorable references and 90.75 unfavorable references. As we have noted in our study of Pascal, most of the favorable references dealt with Jewish religious faith and practice in the days of the Old Testament and often in the context of messianic preparation. Unfavorable references appeared in discussion of the mission of Jesus or Christian faith. They often accused the Jews as a group of hostility toward Jesus and the Apostles. Contrasts were made between Christian moral behavior and that of the Jews. The Jewish religion was portrayed as "debased, Jewish messianism as political or materialistic." Even in the favorable references to the "Pharisees" such individuals characterized as such were considered exceptional. Unfavorable references labelled them as legalistic. Temporal Judaism was contrasted with spiritual Christianity.¹¹ As a result of these findings, one wonders whether the Christian concept of the Jews and their religion in modern times differs much from the days of seventeenth century Pascal.

Indeed, French anti-Semitism has a long history dating

back to the burning of the Talmud in Paris in the Middle Ages,¹² the final expulsion in 1394, the accusation against Raphael Levy in Metz for the supposed murder of a Christian child in 1670,¹³ the claims of Voltaire who abandoned the traditional accusations of deicide against the Jews and introduced the racist concept of the innate bad character of the Jews,¹⁴ to the famed Dreyfus Affair, and finally to the horror of the Holocaust.

Unfortunately, the history has not ended, and understanding the forms and manifestations of anti-Semitism in a writer such as Pascal takes on greater import when we note some recent manifestations of anti-Semitism in France. The recent October 1980 bombing of a Paris Synagogue shocked all of France and reawakened buried memories of French attitudes toward the Jews during the Nazi period.¹⁶ Other recent manifestations of anti-Semitism, both in the press and on television, in Anti-Semitic incidents,¹⁷ street graffiti, and the rise of the "New Right,"¹⁸ make one sensitive to their origins and roots in French history and literature.

We recall the theme of the wrathful, vengeful God of the Old Testament in Pascal's characterization, its previous history in the Christian tradition, and its subsequent taking root in the writings of Western Civilization, when we note that many French writers in news articles and publications

about Jews and Israel use the word "vengeful" in speaking of Jews.¹⁹

In light of these facts, we may question the relief felt by many Jews and non-Jews alike after the declaration of Vatican Council II. Pascal's view of the Old Testament as a prefiguration of the New, and the Jews as chosen people were, of course, maintained by the declaration: "le salut de l'Eglise est mystérieusement préfiguré dans la sortie du peuple élu hors de la terre de servitude."²⁰ Fortunately, unlike Pascal, the Vatican Council did recognize the Jewish origins of Jesus, Mary, and the Apostles. Most important of all, the Vatican Council II disapproved of the designation of the Jews as cursed, and it declared its abhorrence of any persecutions against Jews and any manifestations of anti-Semitism.

David Efroymsen in his study on Tertullian raises an interesting question concerning the relationship between Christian theology and the portrayal of Jews and Judaism which applies as well to our study of Pascal. Is it even possible, he asks, to separate certain themes of Christian theology which by their very nature go hand in hand with a caricature of Jews and Judaism?²¹ Rosemary Reuther, prominent theologian, sees the only solution to be in a reconstruction of Catholic theology and christology in particular. She advocates such reforms as viewing Jesus as "proleptic"

rather than final and fulfilled. In this way, she claims, Christians will not "demonize the past of the 'others' who are the antagonists of the experience." Christians would then see the Jesus story as parallel to Jewish history and not invalidating it. In such a way, she suggests, both can look forward to future hope and redemption.²²

Notes

¹ These hopes date back to the Joachite tradition of the Middle Ages which saw the French king elected Emperor, conquering the heathen and having dominion over the nations from Jerusalem. In the fourteenth century, Jean de Roquetaillade combined the Joachite vision of an angelic Pope and last Emperor with French nationalism. The True Pope was to reside in France while the Antechrist reigned in Rome. At the end of days, Jews, Saracens, infidels and schismatics would come to know the True Pope who would then reign in Jerusalem.

² Lucien Jerphagnon, Le Caractère de Pascal, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1962), p. 312.

³ fragment 793-737.

⁴ fragment 431-560.

⁵ fragment 417:548: "Ainsi sans l'Écriture qui n'a que J.-C. pour objet nous ne connaissons rien et ne voyons qu'obscurité et confusion dans la nature de Dieu et dans la propre nature."

⁶ Topliss considers the "dramatic" as the most important feature of the concreteness of Pascal's style: "Whether derived from the Essais or not," she writes, imagery in the Pensées is often all the more striking because it is dynamic imagery. We hold the view that this sense of the dramatic

was learned by Pascal from the Prophets.

⁷ Heschel, The Prophets, vol. II, p. 90.

⁸ Hay admits this prejudice and even flaunts it: "Too many books have been written with a conventional appearance of neutrality. This book is written only to refute calumny, and to expose prejudice. I am not writing on the one hand and on the other. Enough has been written on the one hand. I am writing on the other."

⁹ Hay considers "hate" the master word in the philosophy of Pascal. He points to the fact that Pascal did not protest against the torturing of animals, dogs, by Port Royal, as reported by M. Fontaine in his Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de Port Royal, Utrecht, 1736, vol. II, pp. 52-53.

¹⁰ Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark, Christian Beliefs and Anti-Semitism, New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1966, p. 208.

¹¹ Claire Huchet Bishop, How Catholics Look at Jews: Inquiries into Italian, Spanish and French Teaching Materials. New York: Paulist Press, p.136.

¹² The burning of the Talmud took place in 1240 after the Paris disputation, a religious dialogue convened by the French king, Louis IX, before clerical and state dignitaries where an apostate Donin, leveled an accusation of thirty-five points against Judaism, mainly the Talmud. Tosafist R. Jehiel ben Joseph replied on the Jewish side. Twenty-four wagon loads of the Talmud were sent up in flames in a public square in Paris. (Hans Joachim Schoeps, The Jewish-Christian

Argument: a history of theologies in conflict. trans. David E. Green, Canada: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963).

13 Richard Simon wrote a defense of Levy in the form of a short pamphlet that appeared in two editions under two separate titles: Juif de Metz and Factum Judaica (Hertzberg, note 20.)

14 In Lettres de Menmius à Ciceron, the character of Menmius, in speaking of the Jews says, "They are, all of them born with raging fanaticism in their hearts, just as the Bretons and the Germans are born with blond hair. I would not be in the least bit surprised if these people would not some day become deadly to the human race." In Voltaire's, "Il faut prendre une partie," the theist turns to the Jews and says, "You seem to be the maddest of the lot. The Kaffirs, the Hottentots, and the Negroes of Guinea are much more reasonable and more honest people than your ancestors, the Jews. You have surpassed all nations in impertinent fables, in bad conduct, and in barbarism. You deserve to be punished, for this is your destiny."

15 Even before the Dreyfus Affair, political anti-Semitism had a start in Toussenel's Juifs, Rois de l'Epoque in the 40's, and Gougenot des Mousseaux's Les Juifs, le Judaïsme, et la Judaïisations des Peuples Chrétiens in 1869. The latter was suggested reading material by the Directeur du Séminaire des Missions Etrangères. The Dreyfus Affair itself received

Catholic support symbolized in La France Juive by Edouard Drumont. (Alan T. Davies, Preface to Anti-semitism and the Foundations of Christianity, p. VII).

¹⁶ On October 3, 1980 a powerful bomb exploded outside a Jewish Temple on the Rue Copernic. It killed three passers-by and wounded twenty.

¹⁷ One such incident was the fire in late 1978 in a synagogue of a Paris suburb, Drancy, a town where Nazis had a camp from which French Jews were deported followed by another fire which broke out in the temporary hall being used while the synagogue underwent repair. A second incident occurred in March 1979 when a kosher student restaurant on the rue Médicis was bombed. The last major incident occurred in the mid Sept. 1979 assassination of Pierre Goldman, a veteran of May 1968 who was accused of a murder and then acquitted.

¹⁸ Nives Fox, "Unease in France," News and Views, Reports from the American Jewish Committee 2, no. 3 (Jan-Feb. 1980), p. 4.

¹⁹ Fox, p. 4.

²⁰ Jean Daniélou et Andre Chouraqui, Les Juifs: Dialogue entre Jean Daniélou et André Chouraqui, Paris: Beauchesne, 1966, p. 110.

²¹ David Efroymson, "Tertullian's Anti-Judaism and Its Role in His Theology," Diss. Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1976, p. 228.

22 Rosemary Radford Reuther, "Toward a New Conventional Theology," in Disputation and Dialogue: Readings in the Christian-Jewish Encounter, ed. F.E.Talmadge, (New York: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1975), p. 324.

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