

Modernism held that the goal of religious experience was the integration of personality, and that the kind of religious experience which most fully fosters the integration of personality is that exemplified in the life and teachings of Jesus. Although Christianity could not be granted any absolute status among the religions of the world, it could be viewed as possessing a relative superiority.

Modernism held that the outlook concerning the ultimate triumph of the forces of good over the forces of evil was optimistic. God himself was viewed by some modernists as a finite, struggling, suffering, and growing God; by others as the consummation of the moral and religious evolution of the human race; by still others as that power in the world to which we gain right adjustment when achieving the greatest goods of which human nature is capable, especially the good of harmonious unification and effective invigoration of personality.

Most modernists held that human personality was immortal, while rejecting the orthodox ideas of hell and heaven. They believed that the integration of personality would find fuller expression beyond this present life, in a continued existence. They rejected miracles, prayer as petition for special benefit, and the Bible as the inspired record of supernatural revelation. They redefined the concepts of sin, grace, salvation, etc., in the light of present experience.

Humanistic Liberalism appeared early in the twentieth century. Most liberals tended to find the heart of religious experience in the need of integrating human personality into a coherent whole. But whereas the modernist held that Christianity provided the most effective way to attain this wholeness, the humanistic liberal, consistent with empirical method, held that whatever aids people to achieve this experience is religious. It followed that the traditional distinction between Christian and the non-Christian religions, and between the religious and the secular realms, must be dropped. Thus any devotion to an appealing good in the form of an artistic vision, the advancement of scientific truth, an enticing social cause, a personal friendship, a family trust -- whatever specific form it might take -- through which an individual found himself, attaining serenity and unity of purpose, was *ipso facto* religious. Religion could then be defined as man's eager, unshackled quest for whatever goodness and fineness life makes possible.

The culmination of Liberalism in continental, English, and American theology occurred during the first two or three decades of the twentieth century.

On the Continent, Gustav Theodor Fechner, Rudolf Hermann Lotze, and Eduard von Hartmann were attempting to synthesize science and philosophy, and Hermann Cohen and his successors were making epistemology their entral concern. The dominant tone of the nineteenth century was post-Kantian and post-Hegelian, but as yet pre-existentialist. This dominance was reflected in the theology of the Ritschlian school, especially in Wilhelm Hermann and Adolf von Harnack.

In England the neo-Hegelians, Francis H. Bradley and Bernard Bosanquet, dominated philosophy. The "New Theology" controversy (1907-1910) centering about the immanentist, R. J. Campbell, occasioned a strong reaction, on the part of P. T. Forsyth, J. R. Illingworth, and Baron von Hugel, in the direction of transcendence. But the dominant tone remained that of immanence until the 1930's.

In the United States, Drummond, Fiske, and Abbott appropriated the framework of evolution for the doctrine of God. Just before the turn of the twentieth century, such theological schools as Oberlin, Union, Chicago, Yale, and Colgate joined the already liberal Andover in its theological viewpoint. This shift was largely due to the coming of such men as H. C. King (Oberlin), Shailer Mathews (Chicago), and W. N. Clarke (Colgate). After 1900 a movement