ALCUIN AND THE POWER OF REASON: PART I

by Pierre Beaudry

INTRODUCTION : {*RIGHT MAKES MIGHT, NOT MIGHT MAKES RIGHT!*}

If you project through the continuity of universal history the different shadows of truth that were cast from the beacon of Solon of Athens, until today, you can begin to discern how the enemy of mankind has been using sophistry to distort these truths and capture the sleeping people of every period in history, all the way down to our times. For example, just as Pericles was recruited by Zenon the Eleates to the sophistry of the Babylonian oligarchical model of the Cult of Apollo at Delphi which actually initiated the Peloponnesian wars, similarly, the Ultramontane Sophistry of the dying Roman Empire, which was nothing but a shady copy of that same Babylonian model, was attempting to reassert itself against the Carolingian Renaissance. In this report I will show how, in fact, it was Alcuin of York who reasserted the Carolingian Renaissance against the Ultramontane design of Venice, in much the same way that Plato had reasserted the Athens of Solon against the sophistry of the Peloponnesian Wars in his dialogue of {*The Republic*}.

The reason I have chosen the title {*Alcuin and the Power of Reason*} for this report is not only because it fully represents the political thinking of Alcuin, but because it should also serve to identify the shortcoming of the book by Luitpold Wallach, {*Alcuin and Charlemagne: studies in Carolingian history and literature*}, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1959, that Gerry Rose asked me to give an evaluation of for your benefit.

To get right to the point, at the very opening of his book, Wallach deliberately identified Alcuin's political intention as being precisely in opposition to the principle of reason. Wallach falsely identified Alcuin's political theory for the rule of Charlemagne as a sophist who should justify the arbitrary rule by authority of {*might makes right*}, in order to correct sinful man by means of {*terror*}. From that standpoint, Wallach attempted to put the Carolingian Renaissance in bed with the Sparta of Licurgus, the Athens of Pericles, the Rome of Octavian (Augustus), the Imperial Paris of Joseph de Maistre and Napoleon, and the America of Leo Strauss and Cheney. Wallach wrote:

"{**Moreover, he (Alcuin) adopted Isidore's patristic theory that the rule of the king is for the correction of fallen and, therefore, sinful man, whose evil disposition should be restrained by {terror}. If the word of the priest has proved**

powerless, this {*terror*} must be used by the princes of the world. Such disciplinary {*terror*} was ascribed by Alcuin to Charlemagne's government: it was to render nations everywhere subject to Frankish rule. Furthermore, the same terror was put into foreign nations, according to Einhard, after Charlemagne had become emperor. The function of the king as an auxilliary to the priest in preventing injustice through this terror was, finally, confirmed at the Paris Synod of 829.}" (Luitpold Wallach, Op. Cit., p. 8)

This political justification of the use of {*terror*} by Alcuin is simply false, and can only be the result of a malicious sophistry on the part of Wallach. Let us just project the beacon of Solon's reason against the wall of Plato's cave and we shall see how some of the shadows of Wallach lie or tell the truth. In Latin the verb {*terreo*} means to terrify, to scare away, to chase away, or to deter by fear. What Alcuin is referring to here is what we today also call "putting the fear of God in people." The Latin term never had the modern connotation of using actual terrorism against a people, as Wallach implies. As a result, everything that Wallach has reported from Alcuin on the question of "terror" has been taken out of context, or mistranslated outright, and rehashed for the justification of the Ultramontane policy of Rome.

Just to give this example, in quoting partially {*Sententiae*} III. 51.4, PL, 83, 723B, Wallach leaves out the entire phrase and picks out only the end part saying: "{*…per disciplinae terrorem,*}" which simply means "…by the fear of discipline" and not "by disciplinary terror," as Wallach paraphrased it in his text. That is a total conscious falsification, a typical fallacy of composition. Also, in {*Epist.*} 17 D.47.2, Wallach missed completely the irony of Alcuin's expression: "{*humanae dignitatis terror*}," which means ironically "the terror of human dignity," as if he had said: "Charlemagne should terrorize the pagans with love!"

As for the reference to Einhard, quoted from {*Vita Caroli*}, c.30, Wallach also lies about the context, which is not "after Charlemagne had become emperor," but when Charlemagne was old and ill and his son, Louis, was chosen as heir to the imperial crown. Einhard actually wrote in {*Vita Caroli*}, c.30: "At the end of his life, when old age and illness were already weighing heavily upon him, Charlemagne…gave Lewis a half-share of his kingship and made him heir to the imperial title. …This decision of Charlemagne's was accepted with great enthusiasm by all who were there, for it seemed to have come to him as a divine inspiration for the welfare of the state. It increased Charlemagne's authority at home and at the same time it struck no small terror into the minds of foreign peoples." As you can see, "no small terror" does not mean that Charlemagne had endorsed a policy of terror. However, Wallach gives the spin that seems to be projected from the superior authority of the Babylonian Oligarchical Model, which is based on treating the barbarians as wild animals.

Quite to the contrary, when one is guided by the principle of {*agape*}, like Alcuin was, as opposed to oligarchical population control, one can realize that Alcuin was, indeed, the author of the Carolingian Renaissance, the author of a lawful form of governing which led to the sovereign nation-state of Louis XI, to the Leibnizian idea of a

Republic, and to the Constitutional Republic of the United States. In other words, Alcuin's notion of government was based on the power of reason rather than the power of the royal authority. The central political idea of Alcuin, therefore, was that "{*authority must be derived from reason, while reason cannot be derived from authority*}" In a word: {*right makes might, might does not make right*.} In a nutshell, that principle was the whole political and legal philosophy of Alcuin.

Armed with this fundamental {*principle of reason*} Alcuin will test its strength in both the political and religious realms, by applying it as an instrument of peace forged against the Ultramontane policy of Venice. I will also show how this {*principle of reason*} was used in the context of the most important event of the Seventh Council of Nicaea II, which involved both the iconoclastic issue raised by Byzantium and the issue of the {*Filioque*} raised by Charlemagne. With this principle in mind, we can now look at the implications of Wallach's book with the appropriate corrective lense. Wallach's general hypothesis is the following.

"{**His (Alcuin) so-called {***Rhetoric***} is here seen as Charlemagne's {***via regia***}, and not merely a rhetorical textbook. New evidence reveals that Alcuin was the editor of Charlemagne's {***Libri Carolini***}, the official Frankish protest against the Byzantine worship of images decreed by the Seventh Ecumenical Council of II Nicaea in 787. The proof here offered of Alcuin's anonymous authorship of some of Charlemagne's political documents confirms the great influence which the deacon from Northumbria exercised on Frankish political life**.}" (Wallach, Op. Cit. p. 4)

Because Wallach's introduction was mistaken on the question of {*terror*}, his entire outlook on Alcuin's politics will tend to be tainted correspondingly, especially on the question of authority. However, as I will show later, on the question of Alcuin being the author of the Carolingian Documents, Wallach was right. The author of the Carolingian policy was not Charlemagne but Alcuin.

1. THE TWO POWERS OF ALCUIN VERSUS THE ULTRAMONTANE POLICY OF VENICE.

Alcuin's political conception of government is based on a harmonic relationship between the State and the Church (***regnum et sacerdotium***). In taking this Augustinian position, Alcuin was flanking the Ultramontane policy of Pope Gelasius I (492-496), who had already defined the authority of Rome from the standpoint of Venice and of the traditional imperial view of the Babylonian Oligarchical Model. Here is what the Venetian inspired Pope Gelasius I had written in a letter to the Byzantine Emperor, Anastasius I:

{**There are indeed, Augustus Emperor, two [principles] by which this world is mainly ruled, the sacred authority of the popes (*auctoritas sacra pontificum*) and the royal power (*regalis potestas*). Of these two, the weight of the priests (*pondus***

sacerdotum) **is much more important (***tanto gravius***), because it has to render account for the kings of man themselves at the divine tribunal. For you know, our most clement son, that although in dignity you occupy the leading place among mankind, yet you must bend the neck to the leaders who have charge of divine things and look to them for the means of your salvation.**}" (A. K. Ziegler, {*Pope Gelasius I, and his teaching on the relation of Church and State*}, Catholic Historical Review, 27, (1942), 412-437.)

There is no doubt that Alcuin understood very well the implication of these two principles, which defined explicitly the Ultramontane policy of the Pope of Rome, and he could never endorse them. For every French King, Ultramontanism always meant that the superior authority of the Pope over kings represented a return to the Roman Empire, a return to the Whore of Babylon. Those two very same principles also became the fundamental synarchist principles separating authority (*auctoritas*) from power (*potestas*), as developed by Joseph de Maistre and Saint-Yves d'Alveydre.

What Alcuin ascribed to was two different and separated kinds of powers; one is a secular power (*potestas secularis*), the other a spiritual power (*potestas spiritalis*). Though these two powers may be separated, the relationship between them is not of superiority of one commanding the other, but of each one being created for the benefit of the other, a relationship of mutual duty to each other, where the secular power protects and defends the Church and its priests, while in the spiritual power of the priests intercede as mediators between the secular powers and God. This Alcuin conception of the two powers is valid for all kingdoms, including the Carolingian Kingdom. However, for the Carolingian Emperor, Alcuin defined additional responsibilities.

With respect to Charlemagne, Alcuin considered him as unique and infallible, and called him {*pontifex*}, the defender and protector (*defensor et rector*) of the Church, but also with the responsibility for preaching and for spreading the Catholic faith. Alcuin considered that it was impossible to corrupt Charlemagne, and that is why he considered that he was competent to make reforms within the Church. Alcuin actually made Charlemagne the titular head of the Carolingian Church.

It is clear that Charlemagne did not agree personally either with the Ultramontane policy of Rome. He made that quite clear when he presented his official policy in a letter to Pope Leo III, written in 796, four years before the same Pope crowned him Emperor. Charlemagne wrote to him this inspired statement:

"{**It is {*our*} part with the help of Divine Holiness to defend by armed strength the Holy Church of Christ everywhere from the outward onslaught of the pagans and the ravages of the infidels and to strengthen within it the knowledge of the Catholic faith.**

It is {*your*} part most holy Father, to help our armies with your hands lifted up to God like Moses, so that by your intercession and by the leadership and gift of

God, the Christian people may everywhere and always have the victory over the enemies of his Holy name.}"

This Charlemagne letter was directly inspired, if not written, by Alcuin, himself. Every word was weighed and crafted very carefully and with a gifted power of reason, making sure that the "Divine Holiness" would serve as final authority as opposed to the "holy Father." Note that "Holiness" does not apply to the Pope but to God. Furthermore, the letter shows Alcuin's recurring themes of "defending" the Church and of "defeating "everywhere" (*undique*) the enemies of Christianity. The comparison of the Pope to Moses is also a very well chosen reference to Charlemagne's ecumenical work, given his relationship to Harun al-Rashid and to Bulan, the king of the Jewish Khazar Kingdom.

2. POWER AND WISDOM: THE TWO GIFTS FROM GOD.

In order to confirm solidly this anti-Ultramontane policy of Alcuin, I have retranslated three of his letters to Charlemagne. Those letters illustrate the relationship between the two powers and they stress the essential political requirement of proportionality between reason and wisdom.

1. Letter from Alcuin to Charlemagne, dated 795:

"People should consider themselves blessed to have such a protector {*rector*} and preacher (*predicator*} as Charlemagne, who wields both the sword of triumphal power (*potentas*) and the trumpet of Catholic preaching; who also, like his Biblical prototype, David, everywhere subdues the nations with his victorious sword and who appears before the people as a (*predicator*) of God's law. Under Charlemagne's shadow the Christian people possesses security, because he appears formidable (*terribilis*) everywhere to the pagan nations." (Alcuin, {*Epist.*} 41. (Dummler 84).)

2. Letter from Alcuin to Charlemagne, dated 799:

"May God help Charlemagne everywhere in subduing enemy nations through the triumph of his fearfulness (*ut triompho terroris vestri inimicos undique subsiciat gentes*) and may he bring the wildest spirits into submission to the Christian faith. The authority of Charlemagne's power (*potestas*) proves he is the king, and his persevering diligence in spreading the word of God makes him a {*predicator*}. It is on these grounds that divine grace has enriched Charlemagne in an extraordinary manner through these two gifts namely, the {*imperium*} of earthly felicity and the fullness of spiritual wisdom. May he advance in both gifts until he reaches the happiness of eternal beatitude." (Alcuin, {**Epist**.}, 178 (Dummler 194).)

3. Letter from Alcuin to Charlemagne, dated 802:

"Charlemagne's imperial dignity, ordained by God, is destined for nothing else but to guide and help the people. Power (*potestas*) and wisdom (*sapientia*) are given to those elected by God; power, so that the ruler may suppress the proud and defend the humble against the unjust; wisdom, so that the ruler with pious care may rule and teach his subjects. Divine grace has exalted and honored the emperor's incomparable sublimity through those two gifts by sending the fear of his power (*terrorem potentiae*) over all the peoples everywhere, so that they may come to Charlemagne in voluntary surrender, whom war in earlier times could not subject to his rule, and so that they may live in peace." (Alcuin, {*Epist.*}, 257 (Dummler 414).)

These two gifts of wisdom and power that Alcuin said Charlemagne received from God are the same two gifts that Leibniz had identified in his {*Outline of a memorandum (1671)*} when he wrote that "The beauty of minds, or of creatures who possess reason, is a proportion between reason and power, which in this life is also the foundation of the justice, the order, and the merit, and even the form of the Republic, that each may understand of what he is capable, and be capable of as much as he understands. If power is greater than reason, then the one who has that is either a simple sheep (in the case where he does not know how to use his power), or a wolf and a tyrant (in the case where he does not know how to use it well). If reason is greater than power, then he who has that is to be regarded as oppressed. Both are useless, indeed even harmful." (Gottfried Leibniz, {*Outline of a Memorandum: on the Establishment of a Society in Germany for the Promotion of the Arts and Sciences (1671)*}, in {*The Political Economy of the American Revolution*}, EIR, 1995, p. 215-216.)

This is the paradoxical situation that Alcuin also confronted Charlemagne with, and which began to be resolved only when the Frisian leaders started coming down from their northern country, just before Easter, in order to convert to Catholicism, voluntarily, and join the Charlemagne Ecumenical Jewish Company of travelers in collaboration with the Baghdad Abbasid of Harun al-Rashid and the Jewish Khazar Kingdom of king Bulan. The unresisting surrender of foreign nations to Charlemagne's power obviously did not come from a terror policy, except maybe from the terrifying love for mankind that exulted from Alcuin and which had been captured by the brilliant mind of his best student, Charlemagne. It was the Promethean mind of Charlemagne that got other kings, including the Great Harun al-Rashid, to submit to his policy of {*gift-exchange*} economics, out of sheer admiration. Such was precisely the policy of Alcuin in total opposition to the real terrorists that derived their power from the Ultramontane policy of the Venetians, the Roman Empire, and the Babylonian Olygarchical Model.

The Alcuin policy for the conduct of the king is also coherent with the famous mission that Virgil had suggested to the Roman emperor in the sixth book of the {*Aeneid*}. Alcuin quoted it to Charlemagne in a letter he wrote him in 799:

"Spare your Christian people and defend the Church of Christ that the blessing of the King above may make you strong against the heathen. We read that one of the old poets, when praising in song the Roman emperors and describing the character that they should have, said, if I recall correctly,

"{*To be generous to the conquered and war down the proud*.}"
  "{*parcere subiectis et debellare superbos*}" Virgil. Aeneid (v.853)
a verse that the blessed Augustine explained with much praise in his book {On the City of God}. Yet we must strive more to follow the dictates of the Gospel than Virgil's verses." {*Alcuin, (Epist*.}} 178 (Dummler 294.).)

Alcuin had also echoed the same idea of proportionality between power and reason in a short poem to Charlemagne.

"{*Lift up the conquered and put down the proud
That peace and divine worship may rule everywhere*.}"

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ALCUIN AND THE POWER OF REASON: PART II

3. THE CAROLINGIAN-AUGUSTINIAN ECUMENICISM.

Alcuin created an exquisite ambiguity when he crafted the coincidence between Charlemagne the Emperor and Charlemagne the Supreme Head of the Carolingian Church. This was a very interesting anomaly between Church and State, which the French historian Arquiliere has recently identified with what he called {*la compenetration du temporel et du spirituel*}. (H. X. Arquilliere, {*L'essence de l'augustinisme politique*}, {*Augustinus Magister*} II (Paris, 1954), 997 f.) This is some sort of "copulation between the temporal and spiritual domains" that the Martinist-Synarchists would tend to imagine in order to bring Charlemagne to their camp. In reality, the point is that Charlemagne's political activities were not fundamentally different from his religious functions. They were integrated into a much better idea that former Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger identified as a form of "Political Augustinianism," in his {*Herkunft und Sinn der Civitas Lehre Augustins*}, {*Augustinus Magister*} II (Paris

1954), 965 n. 6.) That is more to the point. Maybe someone in Germany can look into that Ratzinger piece.

At any rate, this unity between the political and the religious is what elevated Charlemagne over other kings, and to the level of what I called in another report that I will send you shortly, Charlemagne's {*Ecumenical Civilization*}, that is to say, the same quality that Judah Halevi had identified in his Platonic dialogue, {*The Kuzari*}, for the superior political leadership of the Jewish king of the Khazar Kingdom, and which is also found in the character of Harun al-Rashid of the Abbasid Renaissance. I recall here the condition set by Halevi for the unification of the {*passive intellect*} of religion with the {*active intellect*} of politics:

"{*The philosopher, however, who is equipped with the highest capacity, receives through it the advantages of disposition, intelligence and active power, so that he wants nothing to make him perfect. Now these perfections exist but {in abstracto}, and require instruction and training to become practical, and in order that this capacity, with all its completeness or deficiencies and endless grades, may become visible. In the perfect person a light of divine nature, called Active Intellect, is with him, and his Passive Intellect is so closely connected therewith that both are but one. The person [of such perfection] thus observes that he is The Active Intellect himself, and that there is no difference between them. His organs -- I mean the limbs of such a person -- only serve for the most perfect purposes, in the most appropriate time, and in the best condition, as if they were the organs of the Active Intellect, but not of the material and Passive Intellect, which used them at an earlier period, sometimes well, but more often improperly. The Active Intellect, however, is always successful. This degree is the last and most longed for goal for the perfect man whose soul, after having been purified, has grasped the inward truths of all branches of science, has thus become equal to an angel, and has found a place on the nethermost step of seraphic beings. This is the degree of the Active Intellect, viz. that angel whose degree is below the angel who is connected with the sphere of the moon. There are spiritual forces, detached from matter, but eternal like the Prime Cause and never threatened by decay. Thus the soul of the perfect man and that Intellect become One, without concern for the decay of his body or his organs, because he becomes united to the other. His soul is cheerful while he is alive, because it enjoys the company of Hermes, Asclepios, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle; nay, he and they, as well as everyone who shares their degree, and the Active Intellect, are one thing. This is what is called allusively and approximately Pleasure of God. Endeavour to reach it, and the true knowledge of things, in order that thy intellect may become active, but not passive. Keep just ways as regards character and actions, because this will help thee to effect truth, to gain instruction, and to become similar to this Active Intellect. The consequence of this will be contentment, humility, meekness, and every other praiseworthy inclination, accompanied by the veneration of the Prime Cause, not in order to receive favour from it, or to divert its wrath, {but solely to become like the Active Intellect in finding the truth, in describing everything in a fitting manner, and in rightly recognizing its basis. These are the characteristics of the [Active] Intellect. If thou hast reached such disposition of belief, be not concerned about the forms of thy humility or religion or worship, or the word or language or*

actions thou employest. Thou mayest even choose a religion in the way of humility, worship, and benediction, for the management of thy temperament, thy house and [the people of thy] country, if they agree to it. Or fashion thy religion according to the laws of reason set up by philosophers, and strive after purity of soul. In fine, seek purity of heart in which way thou are able, provided thou hast acquired the sum total of knowledge in its real essence; then thou wilt reach thy goal, viz. the union with this Spiritual, or rather Active Intellect. Maybe he will communicate with thee or teach thee the knowledge of what is hidden through true dreams and positive visions.

2. Said to him the Khazari: Thy words are convincing, yet they do not correspond to what I wish to find. I know already that my soul is pure and that my actions are calculated to gain the favour of God. To all this I received the answer that this way of action does not find favour, though the intention does. There must no doubt be a way of acting, pleasing by its very nature, but not through the medium of intentions. If this be not so, why then do Christian and Moslem, who divide the inhabited world between them, fight with one another, each of them serving his God with pure intention, living as either monks or hermits, fasting and praying? For all that they vie with each other in committing murders, believing that this is a most pious work and brings them nearer to God. They fight in the belief that paradise and eternal bliss will be their reward. It is, however, impossible to agree with both.

3. The Philosopher replied: The philosophers' creed knows no manslaughter, as they only cultivate the intellect.}" (Judah Ha-Levi, {***The Kuzari***}, Schosken Books, New York, 1964, p. 38-39.)

This is obviously Halevi's ideal of philosopher king that he invites Bulan, the King of the Khazars to become, and elevate himself to the "{***Pleasure of God***}," which corresponds to what Saint Augustine had identified as the "immortal felicity" (*felicitatis aeternae*) of the Christian Emperor, and what Ibn Sina called the {***Necessary Existent***}. I have not yet found in Alcuin's writing anything that would resemble what Halevi described as the Active Intellect, which was later be expressed by the unity between the {*vita activa*} and the {*vita contemplativa*} during the Italian Renaissance, but it is clear that Alcuin addressed the same question of "immortal felicity" in regards to Charlemagne in another form.

Alcuin's purpose was to help develop in Charlemagne the ability to compose with both domains of the political and the religious, in accordance with Saint Augustine's ideal of the Christian Emperor. And the way to achieve that result was to follow the principle that Augustine developed in his {***City of God***}. Charlemagne's biographer, Einhard, acknowledged the importance of Saint Augustine in the education of Charles. He wrote: "He took great pleasure in the books of Saint Augustine and especially in those which he called {***The City of God***}." (Op. Cit., p. 78) One can only imagine both Alcuin and Charlemagne reading and discussing the following prescription for the happiness of the Christian Emperor:

24. "{*What Is and How True Is the Felicity of Christian Emperors.*}

"{*When we describe certain Christian emperors as "happy", it is not because they enjoyed long reigns, or because they died a peaceful death, leaving the throne top their sons; nor is it because they subdued their country's enemies, or had the power to forestall insurrections by their enemies in their own land and to suppress such insurrections if they arose. All these, and other rewards and consolations in this life of trouble were granted to some of the worshipers of demons, as their due [See Plato's Republic Book II] ; and yet those pagans have no connection with the kingdom of God, to which to which those Christian rulers belong. Their good fortune was due to the mercy of God; for it was God's intention that those who believe in him should not demand such blessings from him as if they represented the highest good.*
"We Christians call rulers happy, if they rule with justice; if amid the voices of exalted praise and the reverend of excessive of excessive humility, they are not inflated with pride, but remember that they are but men; if they put their power at the service of God's majesty, to extend his worship far and wide; if they fear God, love him, and worship him; if, more than their earthly kingdom, they love that realm where they do not fear to share the kingship; if they are slow to punish, but ready to pardon; if they take vengeance on wrong because of the necessity to direct and protect the state, and not to satisfy their personal animosity; if they grant pardon not to allow impunity to wrong-doing but in the hope of amendment of the wrong-doer; if when they are obliged to take severe decisions, as much often happen, they compensate this with the gentleness of their mercy and the generosity of their benefits; if they restrain their self-indulgent appetites all the more because they are more free to gratify them, and prefer to have command over their lower desires than over any number of subject peoples; and if they do all this not for a burning desire for empty glory, but for the love of eternal blessedness, ; and if they do not fail to offer to their true God, as a sacrifice for their sins, the oblation of humility, compassion, and prayer.*
"It is Christian emperors of this kind whom we call happy; happy in hope, during this present life, and to be happy in reality hereafter, when what we wait for will have come to pass."* (Saint Augustine, {*The City of God*}, Penguin Books, New York, 1967, Book V. Chapter 24.)

Both Alcuin and Charlemagne agreed with that Christian political ideal of {*pursuit of happiness*}, which Alcuin had also proposed to other kings, as indicated by a letter to King Ethelred of Northumbria, which states, *"{…the bliss of the present age, and the earthly honors that are to become celestial ones.*}" It is quite interesting to see that the fundamental principle of the American Constitution, the {*Pursuit of Happiness*} was explicitly referenced by Saint Augustine and prescribed by him for the political leadership of the {*City of God*}. This is real closure between Solon of Athens, Plato, Saint Augustine, Charlemagne, Leibniz, and the American System.

The missionary zeal by which Alcuin was shaping the character of Charlemagne indicates to what degree the way by which Charlemagne was treating the conquered nations had to be changed from his earlier barbarian treatment, and Alcuin was the only one of his advisors who dared to forcefully address these required changes. Alcuin

repeated to Charlemagne the same thing that Augustine had said to the Roman Emperors: "{**Faith is a voluntary matter, not one of coercion**.}" (Alcuin, {**Epist**.} 111 (Dummler 160.19.) Alcuin was following the same Augustinian idea of ecumenicism and peace. This is the same Platonic philosopher king idea that Judah Halevi was also addressing to King Bulan, and which made Charlemagne understand and respect that Harun al-Rashid had chosen the Muslim faith because it was the religion that most suited his Active Intellect and for the agreement of his people.

Similarly, this is the pathway that Ibn Sina (Avicenna) (980-1037) had established for the wise political leader of Islam who became as the Necessary Existent by making his public actions coincide with his knowledge. Within the proximate path of the Necessary Existent, the wise leader must also have his actions display the unity of complete knowledge with perfect action for the common good. Ibn Sina wrote:

35. {**Finding the wisdom (bakimi) of the Necessary Existent.**

"Wisdom (bikma), in our opinion applies to two things: to complete knowledge (dani<u>sh</u>-i taman) and to perfect action. Complete knowledge in thoughts is displayed by recognizing (<u>sh</u>inasad) a thing by its essence (mahiyya) and by its definition. In a judgment, complete knowledge of a thing would be evident in asserting all of its causes correctly. Perfection, on the other hand, applies to an act that is determined (muhkam). Perfection is that property which is present in the subject of perfection and in whatever is necessary for its existence. Whatever is necessary to continue the existence of the subject of perfection will exist as far as it is possible for it to subsist in it. Furthermore, that will also exist which is ornament (arayi<u>sh</u>) and of benefit (<u>sud</u>) to It, although it may not be necessary. And the Necessary Existent knows all things as they are, even with respect to their complete causation (tamami), since its knowledge of things comes not from secondhand information, from intermediaries, but from itself, for all things and the causes of all things are due to it. In this sense wisdom can be attributed to the Necessary Existent and its wisdom consists of having complete knowledge (ilm). The Necessary Existent is that being to Whom the being of all things is due, Which has endowed all things with the necessity of being. It has also bestowed necessity upon things external to Its own necessity in a similar manner. If time permits, we shall write a book on this topic. This idea also appears in the Qur'an in several passages. In one passage it is written, 'It is our creator, who has given genesis to all things and has set for them their proper path.' It is also written, 'He who has ordained, has set the path', and in another passage, 'He who has created me, has guided me thereafter on the proper path'. The wise have called the creation (afarini<u>sh</u>) of necessity the primary perfection, whereas the creation of multiplicities has been called second perfection. Henceforth, The Necessary Existent has absolute wisdom (bakim-I mutlaq)."({**The Metaphysica of Avicenna (ibn Sina)**}, translated by Parviz Morewedge, Columbia University Press, 1973, p. 70-71.)

This is the pathway of the principle of least action to which Ibn Sina attributed the quality of Necessary Existent, and which, in the language of Leibniz would be the least action pathway of {**sufficient reason**} in the best of all possible worlds. The role of the

wise political Islamic leader is therefore to take that pathway for the betterment of mankind, and in doing so, he becomes ecumenical, or, as the Christians say, he becomes creative, that is, God-like; or, as the Jews say, he reaches the level of the Active intellect, that is, the closest proximity with God; or, again, as the Muslims would put it, he achieves the highest level of the Necessary Existent. Thus, the common pathway of the three religions has been established in harmony with one another.

Moreover, this most exquisite text of Ibn Sina also finds its echo with Nicholas of Cusa in that any explicit reference to God as the Necessary Existent, or the Non-Other, can only be expressed by a language of privation. Therefore, since, Ibn Sina is dealing here with perfection, and since all contingent quality of existence must be excluded from It, then, the primary quality of God's being must be Absolute Necessity. Thus, in the series of wise causes which generate things, by necessity, and which are produced for the common good of mankind, in the form of enacted policy, it follows that the contingent effects that are produced by those who love wisdom most, from among the three religions, may have several intermediary causes; however, the one being the most proximate to God, or the more God-like, must also participate with the immortality of the ultimate cause, or the final cause, that is with the wisdom of the Necessary Existent.

4. ALCUIN'S DISPUTE OF RHETORIC AND VIRTUE: THE ROYAL PATHWAY.

The book of {*Rhetoric*} that Alcuin wrote for the education of Charlemagne after he returned from Ireland in 793 was not a treatise on how to make public speeches. It is a book of instruction on how to become a Philosopher King, or a training manual on the principles of good government, a treatise on kingship. For that purpose, according to Wallach, the book borrows about 80 percent of its sources from Cicero's {*De Inventione*}. I have not yet investigated Cicero's book.

The royal pathway {*via regia*} is the pathway of justice {*via justitiae*}, that is, {*agape*}. Alcuin is very explicit on this question, not only in the {*Rhetoric*} but also in many of his {*Epistles*}. The period of time he lived in was totally devoid of Christian justice. The royal pathway then became the process by which Charlemagne has to consider himself responsible for the moral conduct of his subjects, and for whom he had to set himself as a personal public display and example. This civic morality (*civiles mores*) of Charlemagne made Charlemagne judge and lawgiver of the Kingdom. In a society based on gift-exchange, the practice of offering gifts, however, excluded the use of bribes. Bribes are contrary to justice. As Alcuin once told King Charles, the son of Charlemagne, who used to bribe his councilors: "{*gifts blind the heart of the Wise and change the words of the Righteous.*}"

(INCOMPLETE. I am waiting for a translation of the {*Rhetoric*} in order to give a more complete assessment.)

5. THE CONTROVERSY OF THE FILIOQUE

It was Alcuin who authored most of Charlemagne's political and theological writings. This question of authorship becomes clear when one looks at the documents involving the {*Filioque*} question. It was Alcuin who was the genius behind the {*Charlemagne Creed*}. When one compares the style and choice of metaphor between the official Carolingian Documents and the private letters of Alcuin, especially Alcuin's letters in comparison with the language of the {*Charlemagne Creed*}, it becomes evident that the author is the same, because the ideas are the same.

The {*Charlemagne Creed Letter*}, which I quote below as reproduced by Wallach, is not the complete modern creed of the Catholic Church, but a composite of various parts, or suggested formulations to be taken under consideration by theologians. They seem to be more like a series of suggestions, rather than an actual completed creed. This indicates that the Roman Catholic creed of the 9th century was not yet firmly established during the lifetime of Charlemagne.

"{*Credimus in unum Deum patrem omnipotentem, factorem caeli ac terrae, visibilium omnium et invisibilium…filium Dei unigenitum, natum expatre ante omnia secula et ante omnia tempora, lumen de lumine… non adoptivum,…et unius substantiae cum patre.*
Credimus et in spiritum sanctum, Deum verum, vivificatorem omnium, a patre et filio procedentem, cum patre et filio coadorandum et conglorificandum. Credimus eandem sanctam trinitatem…Spiritum sanctum procedentem ex patre et filio, nec patrem aliquando coepisse, send sicut semper est Deus, ita semper et pater est, quia semper habuit filium. Aeternus pater, aeternus filius, aeternus et Spiritus sanctus ex patre filioque procedens,…In qua sancta trinitate nulla est persona vel tempore posterior vel gradu inferior vel potestate minor,…Alius… in persona pater, alius in persona filius,…Spiritus sanctus…perfectus in divinitate Deus, perfectus in humanitate homo ; Deus ante omnia secula ; homo in fine seculi,…in forma Dei aequalis patri, in forma servi minor patre ;…Haec est fides catholica, et ideo nostra,…quia una est fides et unum baptisma et unus dominus noster…Hanc fidem vos, karissimi fratres, firmiter tenere in commune deprecamur…contentiones nominum novitatesque vocum devitate, quia iuxta apostolum non est hereticus nisi ex contentione…Habetote nos cooperatores salutis vestrae, catholicae pacis auxiliatores… }» (Wallach, Op. Cit., p. 153.)

The letter identifies three different expressions of the Holy Spirit proceeding from the son, {*Filioque*}, which I have underlined:

1. {*Credimus et in spiritum sanctum* … *a patre et filio procedentem*} (We believe in the Holy Spirit…proceeding from the father and the son)

2. { *Credimus eandem sanctam trinitatem…Spiritum sanctum procedentem ex patre et filio*} (We also believe in the Holy Trinity…the Holy Spirit proceeding from the father and the son)

3. {*Spiritus sanctus ex Patre Filioque procedens*} (The Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father and from the Son). It was this last formulation that became incorporated in the traditional Roman Catholic Creed.

The letter also identified the new form of the heresy which it rejected in the section { *filium Dei … non adoptivum* } (the son of God … not adopted). It would be too long to go into the history of the heresies, but suffice it to say, here, that they started in the first century AD and they were all sophistries, most of which were targeting the divinity of Christ. During the Carolingian period, the old Arius heresy (condemned at the first ecumenical council of Nicaea, in 325) was revived again in the form of the Iconoclastic heresy and the Adoptionist heresy. The Iconoclastics wanted to eliminate all of the Icons, holy Images, and statues from the churches. The Adoptionist orientation claimed that Christ was not God but was the "adopted son" of God." Alcuin and Charlemagne fought these two heresies against the adoptionists, Felix of Urgel and Elipand of Toledo, during the Synod of Frankfurt of 794, who were also banned at the 7th Ecumenical Council of Nicaea II, in 787.

The inclusion of the {*Filioque*} into the creed was crucial because it indicated that non only the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father and the Son, but that by becoming Christ-like, man was also able to become God-like and, therefore, was also capable of acting on the universe as a whole by acting in accordance with the absolute trasfiniteness of God.

The new Carolingian creed was used in the liturgy of the royal collegiate church of Aachen only for a short period of time, because its ecumenical character was not universally recognized. Wallach noted that "{*Permission for this liturgical innovation was granted by Leo III as late as 809 – with the exhortation, however, to omit the disputed {Filioque}. Charlemagne's creed was used at Aix-la-Chapelle until 798, when it was replaced by the {symbolum} promulgated by Paulinus of Aquileia at the Synod of Friuli in 796 (Conc. 2.187). This profession of faith was adopted by Charlemagne upon the initiative of Alcuin, who had openly expressed his interest in a letter of congratulation addressed to Paulinus on the occasion of the latter's publication of a commentary on the new creed.*}"* (Wallach, Op. Cit., p. 155.) I have not yet found the text of the Paulinus Creed.

It is clear that the intellectual authorship of this {*Filioqu*e} creed was derived from the authority of reason, rather than from the authority of majesty. The authorship of this Profession of Faith letter required someone like Alcuin, who was steeped in the different disputed aspect of theology, as well as in the necessary transcendental functions of epistemology, while Charlemagne had never expressed such functions in any form. The controversy is a serious issue because it deals with the theological question of heresy, on the one hand, and on the epistemological question of the transcendental

function of the human mind, on the other. Ironically, in last resort, the issue of religious ecumenicism is not at all a question of theology, but rather of epistemology.

This is the {*via regia*} (royal path) that Alcuin keeps referring to in his letters, as well as in the Creed Letter, which is never in a straight line, but is rather like a least action pathway that prevents from deviating either to the right or to the left. (*in dexteram vel in sinistram a via regia declinate*). It is important to note here that Alcuin was such a respected theologian and canonist law expert that even the Bishops, who attended the different Synods, requested his expertise. However, what is most extraordinary is the fact that Alcuin was the mind behind the throne, so to speak. He was to Charlemagne as Augustine had been to the Church.

FIN PART II

ALCUIN AND THE POWER OF REASON: PART III

6. THE LAUNCHING OF THE CAROLINGIAN RENAISSANCE.

The Palatinate School of the Frankish Kings at Aachen was not created by Charlemagne but by his grandfather, Charles Martel. It was the Monks of Saint Denis, for example, that educated Charlemagne's father, Pepin the Short. However, shortly before he became Emperor, Charlemagne wrote a number of Capillaries, or Ordinances, for the reform of monasteries. The most important one was under the name of {***Karoli Epistola de Litteris Colendis***} which Charlemagne addressed to the Abbot of the Fulda in Hesse-Nassau monastery, Baugulf, between 794 and 796. The letter was intended for all of the Bishops and all of the Abbots of his kingdom, and had the explicit purpose of initiating an extraordinary reform of education that would become the foundation of the Carolingian Renaissance. This is the policy impulse that transformed the whole of Europe, and through which Charlemagne was able to institute an {***Ecumenical Civilization***}. There is no doubt that the letter of Charlemagne had been inspired, if not entirely dictated, by Alcuin himself.

"{Charles, by Grace of God, King of the Franks and of the Lombards, and Patrician of the Romans, to Abbot Baugulf and all his community, and to our faithful fellow-Christians: In the Name of Almighty God, Loving Greetings.

"{*Be it known to your devotion, pleasing to God, that we, together with these faithful, have judged it expedient that throughout the monasteries entrusted by the Grace of Christ to us for governance, in addition to the following of the Regular Life and the discipline of holy Religion, monks who by the gift of God are able to learn should also give due care to the teaching of letters, according to their individual capacity; to the end that even as the Regular Life fosters in monks uprightness of manners, so perseverance in teaching and in learning may order and adorn in them literary form; that those who seek to please God by rightful living may not neglect to please Him also by correct speaking. For it is written: {By your words you shall be justified, or by your words you shall be condemned.} It is better, in truth, to do well than to know; yet knowing is prior to doing. Therefore each man must learn that which he desires to carry out, and the soul will more fully understand its duty when the tongue declares the praises of Almighty God, without offence of falsities.*

"{*Now, falsities are to be avoided by all men; but much more, so far as is humanly possible, by those who are openly called to this one thing, the singular serving of truth. Of late years, writings have frequently been sent to us from monasteries, telling us that the brethren are diligent for us in holy and pious prayer. Yet in many of those writings we have perceived goodly feeling clothed in rough writing; the faithful dictation of the heart could not find correct expression in words because of lack of learning.*

"{*We began to fear, therefore, lest this might lead to lamentable want of understanding of the Holy Scriptures, and we all know well that, dangerous as are errors in form, errors of understanding are far more to be feared.*

"{*Wherefore we exhort you, with most humble effort pleasing to God, not to neglect the study of letters but to learn eagerly for this end, that more easily and rightly you may penetrate the mysteries of the Divine Scriptures. For when figures of speech, metaphors and the like, are found amid the sacred text, none can doubt that each reader is the quicker to gain spiritual understanding as he shall have been the netter instructed beforehand in grammar.*

"{*Let men, then, be appointed for this work, willing and able to learn and keen to teach, and let this be done with that same energy with which we now bid the same. For we would that you, as becomes the soldiers of the Church, should be both inwardly devout and outwardly learned, pure in goodly living and cultured in good speaking; so that whosoever shall visit you, for the Name of the Lord and the repute of your holy life, may both be edified, as he looks upon you, at your outward aspect, and instructed in wisdom, as he listens to you, through your skill in reading and in chant. So shall he, who came only to see, return home inspired both by sight and by hearing, giving joyful thanks to Almighty God.*}" (Eleanor Shirley Duckett, {*Alcuin, Friend of Charlemagne*}, Archon Books, Hamden, Connecticut, 1965, p. 124-126.)

That was the document that launched the Carolingian Renaissance.

2. THE RHETORIC OF ALCUIN AND CHARLEMAGNE.

This work is a Platonic dialogue (***disputatio***) between Charlemagne and Alcuin, which was written in 796 and was entitled {The Dialogue of the Most Wise King Charles and the Master Alcuin Concerning Rhetoric and the Virtues. Alcuin makes clear from the beginning of his dialogue that his purpose is to turn "wild beasts" back into human being. From the onset, Alcuin tells Charlemagne: "{***I shall explain the view of the ancients. For there once a time, as it is said, when mankind wandered here and there over the plains very much as do wild beasts, and men did nothing through the reasoning power of the mind, but everything by sheer brute strength***.} (Wilbur Samuel Howell, {***The Rhetoric of Alcuin and Charlemagne***}, Russell & Russell. Inc., New York, 1965, p.69.) So, the question is not simply a question of mastering the language for the purpose of making public speeches, but of how to civilize a bestialized population of the dark ages. The elements that Alcuin uses are all relative to court of justice. Felix Rohatyn has been studied closely some of Alcuin's arguments in order to force bankruptcy on the car industry. His tactic is to force the opposing party to accept a proposition, which is against his own interests. The following dialogue between Alcuin and Charlemagne shows the was the {***trebuchet principle***} (Warwolf principle) works. (1) Note.

THE TREBUCHET PRINCIPLE AND THE POWER OF INDUCTION

"{***30. Alcuin. Induction is a process of argument designed to force an unwilling opponent to assent to your proposition, the method being to use truths not open to question to prove conclusions more open to question.***

Charlemagne. It seems incredible that Induction can force an unwilling opponent to accept our case.

Alcuin. You shall hear a concrete example and then perhaps you will believe it possible. There was once a philosopher who conducted a disputation with a certain Xenophon and his wife, and began by questioning the latter: 'Tell me, I beg of you, O wife of Xenophon, if your neighbor had finer gold than you have, would you prefer her gold or your own?' 'Hers,' she replied. 'What if she had clothing and other ornaments of greater worth than yours, would you prefer yours or hers?' She responded, 'Hers, indeed.' 'Come, then,' said the questioner, 'What if she had a better husband than you have? Would you then prefer your husband or hers?' At this Xenophon's wife blushed. The philosopher then began to question Xenophon. 'I ask you, O Xenophon,' he said, 'If your neighbor had a better horse than you have, would you prefer your horse or his?' 'His,' Xenophon answered. 'What if he had more productive land than you have, which would you prefer to possess?' 'Undoubtedly the more productive,' he said. 'What if he had a better wife than you have? Would you prefer her? To this question Xenophon also made no answer. Then the philosopher said: 'Since you both fail to give me the one answer that I wish

to hear above all, I myself shall tell what each of you has in mind. You, O woman, wish to have the best husband, and you, O Xenophon, desire beyond all else the choicest wife. Therefore, if you Xenophon, do not succeed in making yourself the most excellent man in the world, and if this woman fails to make herself the most perfect wife, then each one of you will continue to prefer a more nearly perfect mate; you Xenophon, will wish yourself the husband of a woman perfect beyond the perfection of your present wife, and she will wish herself the wife of a man perfect beyond your present perfection.' Thus, by making use of premises not open to question, the philosopher has established a conclusion which previously would have been disputed. And he hs done this by means of inductive resemblances. If he had asked questions which bore no resemblance to the conslusion intended, the final proposition would perhaps not have been conceded."

Charlemagne. This philosopher was not a Christian.

Al;cuin. Not a Christian, but nevertheless a good rhetorician." (Howell, Op. Cit., p. 117)

"{…My name is Alchuine, and wisdom was always dear to me..."
Alcuin's Epitaph.

FIN PART III