

**LaCugna. (Catherine LaCugna)**  
**Freeing Theology: The Essentials of Theology in Feminist Perspective**  
**Ed. LaCugna. (Harper San Francisco)**

### **God in Communion with Us - The Trinity.**

“Trinity is the Specifically Christian way of speaking about God.”

Rublev icon of hospitality: hardly possible from monotheism. Eucharistic Cup of Communion at centre.

#### **1. Doctrine of the Trinity: the Preeminently Person God:**

Arian Subordinationism and Eunomius (God is Unbegotten i.e. not Jesus)

Cappadocians gave first complete Trinitarian doctrine of God: (c.350) viz.

God is distinguished between *ousia* (substance) and *hypostasis* (person)

This created a distinction between Fatherhood and Godhood. Before them the father was God the monarch.

*They made person (someone towards another) and not substance (something in and of itself) the prime ontological category.* This is originating principle of all reality.

They obliterated Arian Subordinationism and sowed seeds of social reform.

For Augustine God is first One and then three. He sees a self as a closed entity.

Aquinas conceived perfection as self-sufficiency. Once again closed.

Trinity seen as self-sufficient divine community.

Theology was trinitarian but practice was unitarian.

*Latin: Being underlies communion. Greek: Communion underlies Being.*

#### **2. Metaphysics and Politics:**

Political implications: If the supreme ontological predicate is personhood, not being in itself, then destiny of human person is to be that of living in authentic community with God, other persons and all living creatures and creation.

- i. Male is not the arche of the woman
- ii. Question all politics of subordination of many by one. Religious, sexual, political.
- iii. Cappadocians challenged Church not to think of fatherhood of God as biological nor patriarchal.

Cappadocians were not successful.

#### **3. Complementarity and the Trinity**

Father is the source of the Son and by analogy woman to be obedient to man. Whereas one can interpret doctrine to mean not inferiority but order.

- i. Subordination of woman to man consequence of fall not our divinely inspired nature.
- ii. In baptism we are reconstituted thus. (No race, sex, class domination)
- iii. Cappadocians followed Acts 15. Estranged Otherness put right, Atoned, in rule of God.

#### **4. Trinity and God-Language**

“Doctrine of Trinity, properly conceived, not only does not support patriarchal doctrine of God but directly overturns it.” Against the worship of a male God.

Different Strategies:

- i. *Status Quo* because to call God feminine would emphasise gender specification.

Sallie McFague stresses metaphoric nature of words and says, free the imagination and keep images. Recognise the conditioned nature of biblical writings.

ii. *God is unnameable*. Apophatic via negativa .Let God be God.

iii. *Feminine and Masculine Images* Gives impression that God remains fundamentally male.

iv. *Jesus healed the father metaphor*. *Is the Iconoclast* His images transformed picture of fatherhood.

v. *Holy Spirit as feminine*. Syriac. Wisdom. Care though not to stereotype Spirit's activities to gender-determined women's roles. Still two-thirds male.

vi. *Creator Redeemer Sustainer*. Impersonal, Functional, tritheistic or unitarian, not in accord with biblical testimony that God creates and redeems through Jesus, by power of HS. Does not stress that nature of God is not essence but Person-all.

## **5. Towards and Solution**

We are to live "in the Name" of the Trinity - being incorporated into Trinity's personal history.

A new identity is given

Commitment to inclusive language must be matched by commitment to inclusive community and vice versa.. Language can raise consciousness.

Care not to try to control God by words or gestures.

Give praise to God.