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Alcuin and mystical friendship

Alcuin's energetic and independent mind would lead us to expect his friendships also to show a new pattern, a new emphasis on traditional elements. The ancient concept of friendship with its political and paideutic functions in society entered the Christian way of life quite naturally in the patristic age and was transmitted to the early middle ages by popular writings such as Cassian's sixteenth colloquy on spiritual friendship, (1) the third book of St. Ambrose's *De officiis ministrorum*, the letters of St. Augustine (2) and of St. Gregory the Great. Friendship, so essential to the ancient polis, (3) found new significance in the city of God: it was seen as a form, even as the highest form of christian *caritas* and as a means for the formation of the Christian or the monk to perfection and union with God (4). Before the time of Alcuin, two trends in friendship ideals had appeared, represented by Venantius Fortunatus and St. Boniface (5): the mystical or platonistic and the practical or Ciceronian. In Alcuin both traditions meet. As Klibansky points out, the ninth century marks a stage in the Christian transformation of Neoplatonism by the combination of the chief Greek and Latin sources, Dionysian and Augustinian (6). Both tended to intensify

(1) JOHANNIS CASSIANI *Contationes* XXIII, ed. M. PETSCHENIG, Vienna-Prague-Leipzig, 1886, C. S. E. L., XIII; A. FISKE, *Cassian and Spiritual Friendship*, in *The American Benedictine Review*, XII, 2 (1961), pp. 190-205.

(2) P. VENANTIUS NOLTE, *Augustinus Freundschaftsideal in seinen Briefen* (Diss. Würzburg, 1938).

(3) LAURENT DUGAS, *L'amitié antique*, 2 ed., Paris, 1914.

(4) Cf. PIERRE FABRE, *Saint Paulin de Nole et l'amitié chrétienne*, Paris, 1949, pp. 141-42 (Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, CLXVII).

(5) RICHARD KOEBNER, *Venantius Fortunatus, seine Persönlichkeit und seine Stellung in der geistigen Kultur des Merovingen-Reiches*, Leipzig-Berlin, 1915; *Letters of St. Boniface*, trans. by EPHRAIM EMERTON, New York, 1940; A. FISKE, *The Survival and Development of the Ancient Concept of Friendship in the Early Middle Ages* (unpublished Dissert. Fordham University, 1955), pp. 181-217, 219-248.

(6) RAYMOND KLIBANSKY, *The Continuity of the Platonic Tradition during the Middle Ages. Outlines of a Corpus Platonicum Medii Aevi*, London, The Warburg Institute, 1939, p. 27.

the mystical aspect of friendship as *caritas*; both were known to Alcuin (7).

We will first consider the sources of platonistic elements in Alcuin's ideal of friendship; look briefly at contemporary expressions of these elements; then trace their pattern in Alcuin's letters and verses. This pattern shows *amicitia* as a special form of Christian *caritas*, whose source is the divine image in man.

The sources of one who is called the Encyclopedia of his age (8) raise problems beyond the purpose of this paper to handle (9). Alcuin's own list of the books in the York Library (10), though admittedly incomplete, gives an idea of what formed his ideas of friendship. Among the ancient writers, Pliny, Aristotle, Tully (11), Vergil, Statius and Lucan, Plato is not mentioned. This is to be expected; three centuries later few of the dialogues had been translated, and even then, none of those related to friendship such as the *Lysis*, the *Phaedrus*, the *Symposium*. The platonistic tradition reached the Latin west in the early middle ages mainly through indirect channels in which many other influences mingled, channels that were often Neoplatonistic writings, but also Cappadocian and, above all, Augustinian (12). The link between friendship and the

(7) ALCUIN, *Carmina*, in M.G.H., *Poetae Latini Aevi Carolini* (= *Poetae*), I, ed. DUEMMLER, Berlin, 1881; *Epistolae*, IV, ed. DUEMMLER, Berlin, 1895. Cf. ELEANOR SHIPLEY DUCKETT, *Alcuin, Friend of Charlemagne. His World and His Work*, New York, 1948; C. J. S. GASKOIN, *Alcuin, His Life and His Work*, London, 1904; ARTHUR KLEINCLAUSZ, *Alcuin*, Paris, 1948; LUITPOLD WALLACH, *Alcuin and Charlemagne*, Ithaca, 1959; M. L. W. LAISTNER, *Thought and Letters in Western Europe A. D. 500 to 900*, 2 ed., Ithaca, 1959, pp. 197-202, 204, 206, 228, 337-338; F. T. E. RABY, *A History of Christian-Latin Poetry from the Beginning to the Close of the Middle Ages*, Oxford, 1927, pp. 159-162 (= RABY, C. L. P.); ID., *A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages*, Oxford, 1934, I, pp. 178-187 (= RABY, S. L. P.); MAX MANITIUS, *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters*, Munich, 1959, I, pp. 273-288. For further bibliography see Kleinclausz and Wallach.

(8) P. MONCELLE, *D. H. G. E.*, II, 34; F. VERNET, *D. T. C.*, I, 648; cf. MANITIUS, I, pp. 276-277.

(9) This investigation has been initiated in certain areas; cf. WALLACH; also P. HADOT, *Marius Victorinus et Alcuin*, in *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge*, XXIX (1954), pp. 5-19; E. M. SANFORD, *Alcuin and the Classics*, in *Classical Journal*, XX (1925), pp. 526-533.

(10) *Versus de Sanctis Euboricensis Ecclesiae*, 1535-1561 (*Poetae*, I, 203-204).

(11) Was the *Laelius* included among the works of Cicero? Manitius does not list it among the dialogues known to Alcuin or to Isidore, Alhelm and Bede from whom Alcuin might have learned of it; MANITIUS, I, 481 ff. Also, as Schwenke points out, in the ninth century Cicero was more admired than read or studied; PAUL SCHWENKE, *Des presbyter Hadoardus Cicero-Excerpte nach E. Narducci's Abschrift des Cod. Vat. Reg. 1762*, in *Philologus* (1884-1886), *Suppl.* p. 404. Alcuin could have known Aristotle only through Boethius (RABY, C. L. P., p. 159, n. 2). Cf. LAISTNER, pp. 228-229. From this library at York Alcuin was later to build up the Tours Library.

(12) KLIBANSKY, pp. 19-20, 27-28, 36, 51. Alcuin names *pater Hieronymus* first, then Hilarius, Ambrose, Augustine, Athanasius; Basil and Chrysostom, also Victorinus: 1540-1556 (*Poetae*, I, 203-204).

theme of the divine image may be broadly traced from Plato and Plotinus to Alcuin through St. Augustine and Venantius Fortunatus, whose works were in the York library.

In a context remote from that of Christian platonism and speaking of an ambiguous relationship not identical with *philia*, Plato in the *Phaedrus* describes the eros that links lover and the beloved with the divine « first loved » by a likeness that is mutual participation in divine beauty, « as far as man can participate in God » (13). Plotinus speaks of love as a vision of divine Being revealed by the beauty of a soul that is a divine thing, a fragment of primal Beauty (14). To look into such a soul and know its loveliness strengthens the soul too weak to bear the ultimate splendor (15) by the eros that as passion, demon and god, is the cosmic movement of ascension to the Absolute (16). In St. Augustine, eros is replaced by the *caritas Christi*; Christ is the binding force, the *conglutinatio*; He is the gravity of love, *pondus amoris*; love finds its center in another man, for God is found in the friend and the friend in God (17). This holy love that is vision, interior presence, tranquil and secure (18), this *dulcedo* (19), is the mystical experience of the image of God revealed in the friend (20). In this same tradition, Venantius Fortunatus speaks of friendship as an interior presence or interpenetration, *interiora mea penetrans* (21), by the image each friend carries of the other, *intra se loquitur pectore clausus amor* (22), the presence that is *dulcedo* (23) and a sweet weight, *pondus suave meum* (24). Here the image-theme seems displaced from the divine to the human. God is rarely mentioned explicitly in relation to the friends, and it is not at first obvious that the whole world of nature and man and time is only a shadowy symbol of the eternal world, *totus fumus et umbra sumus*, and that love alone is not *levis et fugax* (25).

(13) *Phaedrus* 250B, 251A, 253A, 254B.

(14) *Enn.* I, 6, 6.

(15) *Ibid.*, I, 6, 9.

(16) *Ibid.*, III, 5, 1-6, 9.

(17) NOLTE, pp. 57, 79-80.

(18) *Ibid.*, p. 81; AUGUSTINE, epistle 58, 2.

(19) AUGUSTINE, *De civitate Dei*, XIX, 8.

(20) NOLTE, p. 59.

(21) VENANTIUS FORTUNATUS, *Carm.* VI, 10, 63, (M. G. H., *Auct. Antiquiss.*, IV, I, 152).

(22) *Carm.* VII, 82.

(23) *Carm.* VII, 22, 5; V, 11, 2-3 (120).

(24) *Carm.* V 7, 4.

(25) *Carm.* VII, 12, 107-108. Cf. KOEBNER, pp. 32-37, pp. 114 ff. See GERHART B. LADNER, *The Idea of Reforms, Its Impact on Christian Thought and Action in the Age of the Fathers*, Cambridge, 1959, p. 423, note 92.

Although *dulcedo* seems exteriorized, the friend, *homo dulcis*, is also *homo paradisus* ⁽²⁶⁾. This term suggests archetypal beauty, a paradise that lies ahead, as well as at the origins of mortal life. At least once Fortunatus speaks of an *amor beatus*, a love that draws souls to God, the ultimate goal of human friendship ⁽²⁷⁾. These, then, are themes we find in Alcuin's platonistic idea of friendship: the divine image found in a human being (likeness, equality, unity, presence), the drawing through the divine image in the friend to God himself (*cari-tas*) and the experience of God in the friend (fire, wound, *dulcedo*).

These ideas were not unfamiliar to Alcuin's contemporaries. What use did they make of them in their correspondence and verse? Even including the younger generation that was deeply influenced by Alcuin ⁽²⁸⁾, the extant published letters of the Carolingian age that speak of friendship are few in proportion to the bulk of epistolary material. While the poetry has more to say of it, this is often only in casual or conventional allusion. The letters of Paul the Deacon (c. 720 - c. 800) ⁽²⁹⁾ and certain *epistolae variorum* from obscure individuals ⁽³⁰⁾ express genuinely personal feeling but most are treatises rather than personal letters, like the *Epistola ad Grimaldum* of Ermenricus of Ellwangen (fl. 850) ⁽³¹⁾, the exhortation of Amolo (d. 852) to Godescalc (805-866/869) ⁽³²⁾ or the letters

(26) FORTUNATUS, *Carm.* IV, 1.

(27) *Carm.* III, 22, 3-6.

(28) For example, Lupus Servatus (805-862), Abbot of Ferrières, whose friendships stress mutual services in the common pursuit of a secularized *sapientia*; Walafriid Strabo (809-849), abbot of Reichenau, whose friendships are mystical and platonistic in a poetical rather than a religious sense; Notker I of St. Gall (ca. 840-912) whose abbots, *Grimald and Hartmut* were disciples of Alcuin's disciple, Hrabanus Maurus. It is of interest that of three ninth-century collections of model letters, the *Epistolae Alati* lack even conventional expressions of friendship; the *Formulae* of Bishop Salomon III of Constance, a younger friend of Notker whose worldliness broke up their friendship (NOTKER, ep. 47, M. G. H., *Leg.* V, p. 430, 9) make but few and hackneyed references to it; while the *Salzburg Formulary* contains eight letters from Alcuin to Archbishop Arn of Salzburg, his most tenderly loved friend, and other model letters incorporate phrases and whole passages from Alcuin's letters. See *Quellen zur Bayerischen und Deutschen Geschichte*, VII (Munich, 1858); *Drei Formelsammlungen der Zeit der Karolinger*, ed. LUDWIG RÜCKINGER, pp. 167-168; since re-edited by KARL ZEUNER, M. G. H., *Formulae Merowingici et Karolini Aevi*, pp. 438 ff.

(29) *Epistolae*, IV; *Epistolae variorum*, 10-14, 506-516. Little is known of Paul's friendships save his devotion to Monte Cassino and its monks and perhaps to the venerable grammarian, Peter of Pisa. Cf. RABY, *S. L. P.*, I, 197.

(30) *Epistolae*, V, 299-360; *ibid.*, VI, 127-206. Some letters are from well-known personages, but these are for the most part official communications or treatises.

(31) *Epistolae*, V, 536-579. Ermenricus was educated at Fulda, Reichenau and St. Gall and felt the influence of Irish poets. His poem of friendship to the abbot of St. Gall is more a parade of learning than a tribute to a friend: RABY, *S. L. P.*, I, 237-240; MANITIUS, I, 493.

(32) *Epistolae*, V, ep. 2, 368-378. Amolo was deacon of Lyons, and in 841 succeeded Agobard as archbishop. He is mentioned in the correspondence of Lupus Servatus and involved in the Godescalc controversy: *D. H. G. E.*, II, 1321.

and prefaces of Paschasius Radbertus (780-860) ⁽³³⁾. The fourteen letters of Amalar, bishop of Trêves and liturgist (d. c. 850), written between 811/812 and 829/838 concern liturgy and discipline ⁽³⁴⁾; the nineteen letters of the Agobard's (779-840) collection ⁽³⁵⁾, dated 816-850, are on ecclesiastico-political questions as are the twenty nine letters of Frotharius (d. c. 837) ⁽³⁶⁾. Frotharius' fourth epistle would seem to be *pura amicitia*, but as his friend is Hugo, son of Charlemagne, it is not unlikely that politics here outweigh personality. The poets also mention friendship, as do Aedilwulf (c. 821) ⁽³⁷⁾ Candidus ⁽³⁸⁾ Fardulf (d. 806) ⁽³⁹⁾; with Angilbert (d. 814) friendship allusions are literary conventions ⁽⁴⁰⁾, with Albarus (c. 838) they are religious ⁽⁴¹⁾, and a technique of money-getting with Dungal (c. 784) ⁽⁴²⁾. Certain texts throw light on aspects of the ninth century cult of friendship, but their writers are not unlikely to have felt Alcuin's influence. Such are Smaragdus with his strange amalgam of love and grammar ⁽⁴³⁾, Amalar with his monastic friendships ⁽⁴⁴⁾, Joseph with the tenderness of his affection ⁽⁴⁵⁾, Godescalc with the intensity of his passion ⁽⁴⁶⁾.

(33) *Epistolae*, VI, 132-149, Epist. var. 3-7b. Paschasius, abbot of Corbie in 842, deeply read in the ancients, especially Cicero. He had a *Fortunatus ms. belonging to Mico*: MANITIUS, I, 401 ff. See also SCHWENKE, introduction to *Hadoardus Excerpte*, p. 407.

(34) *Epistolae*, V, 240-274. Amalar was a pupil of Alcuin who rose to high positions in Church and State.

(35) *Epistolae*, V, 150-239. Agobard was from Spain; he came to Lyons in 792, in 816 was made archbishop there: MANITIUS, I, 390-385; *D. H. G. E.*, I, 998-1001.

(36) *Epistolae*, V, 275-298. Frotharius was bishop of Toul.

(37) *Poetae*, I, 562-604; an English monk; cf. MANITIUS, I, 552; RABY, *C. L. P.*, 151.

(38) *Poetae*, II, 94-117, Alcuin's disciple Witto, later bishop of Maestricht: MANITIUS, I, 662.

(39) *Poetae*, I, 352-354. Fardulf, a Lombard, was brought to France in 774 by Charlemagne, made abbot of St. Denis.

(40) *Ibid.*, I, 335-336. The « Homer » of Charlemagne's court circle, Angilbert was a man of affairs who loved the classical authors « in a way that could not altogether have recommended itself to Alcuin ». He was however dear to Alcuin as « son and brother ». Cf. RABY, *S. L. P.*, I, 200-202.

(41) *Poetae*, III, 122-142. A Spaniard of Jewish origin, educated by abbot Sperandeo of Cordova and a contemporary of St. Eulogius (d. 859) whose life he wrote: RABY, *S. L. P.*, I, 235-236; MANITIUS, I, 421 ff.; LAISTNER, pp. 211-213.

(42) *Poetae*, I, 411-413; also *Epistolae*, IV, 568-585, nine letters written between 800 and 814. A learned Irishman in « exile », dependent on patrons for his living.

(43) *Poetae*, I, 605-619. A famous grammarian and abbot of St. Mihiel (819); an Irishman according to Manilius and Raby, but this is held doubtful by Dom Willmart: MANITIUS, I, 461; RABY, *S. L. P.*, I, 206.

(44) *Poetae*, I, 426-428. Bishop of Trier (809-814), he had been at Tours in his youth.

(45) *Ibid.*, I, 149-159. Joseph the Irishman, d. c. 791, a pupil of Colcu and of Alcuin, was made abbot by Charlemagne: MANITIUS, I, 547-549; RABY, *S. L. P.*, I, 206.

(46) *Poetae*, III, 707-738. Educated at Fulda but lived also for a time at Corbie where he had friends, Gislemar and Ratramnus, with whom he later corresponded from prison. He died

In these letters and poems the relatively few references to friendship are for the most part utilitarian in nature; friendship is envisaged as a compact, *foedus* (47); it is *servitium*, *beneficium*, *auxilium*, often in a purely material sense, as when Dungal, « a poor man and an exile », begs abbot Adam for a new horse (48). There are however some phrases that suggest a purer friendship, linked with love of God.

Ermenricus refers explicitly to the image of God according to which man is made (49) but applies this to friendship only indirectly (50). Engelmodus calls love, *caritas*, the likeness to God possessed by the first Adam; one who possesses love beholds heavenly things in the mirror of his heart, *cordis speculum* (51).

The unifying work of friendship is mentioned in the poems, not in the letters. Smaragdus calls it *pacis coniunctio* and likens it to the conjunction as a part of speech (52). The same words, *coniunctio*, *nectere*, are used by Paul Albarus in a prayer that Eulogius will remember his friend's name and pray for him, so that bound by holy love he may be united to him and dear to him forever (53). It is a bond, which Dungal calls glue, *stabilis gluten amoris* (54). Paulinus of Aquileia speaks of *amicitia vera*, distinguishing it from secular friendship that is based on profit or benefits or honors; true friendship consists in loving the Saviour and one's neighbors (55) and by this *intima amicitiarum charitate* the friends are united to the

868-869: MANITIUS, I, 568-574; RABY, C. L. P., 189-192: ID., S. L. P., I, 226-228; LAISTNER, 294-298.

(47) ENGELMODUS, carmen I ad Aglum, 101-102 (*Poetae*, III, 58): « Foedus amicitiae tandem sed respice nostrae, Quam, si forte veils, dissimulare nequis ». DUNGAL, carm. XXIV, 4 (*Poetae*, I, 412): « Nec fidae fidel foedera frango »; SMARAGDUS, *Liber in partibus Donati*, XIII, 11 (*ibid.*, I, 614).

(48) Ep. 4 (*Epistolae*, IV, 579, 34 - 580, 6). See also Dungal's ep. 2, 3, 5, 8.

(49) Ep. ad Grimaldum (*Epistolae*, V, 537, 30-35).

(50) *Ibid.*, 539, 19-27.

(51) Carm., III, 107-108 (*Poetae*, III, 65); Hymnus de caritate, 4 (*ibid.*, II, 244).

(52) *Liber in partibus Donati*, XIII, 1-5 (*Poetae*, I, 614). Cf. also ERMENRICUS, ep. ad Grim. I (*Epistolae*, V, 536, 6-8); Florus later compares love to metre that joins the lines of a couplet; carm. 11, 11-12 (*Poetae*, IV, 931).

(53) Carm., XII, iii, 1-7 (*Poetae*, III, 142).

(54) Carm., XXIV, 5 (*ibid.*, I, 412). In this case as in the other references given here, many more examples, and more poetic ones, could be given from post-Alcuinian writers such as Paschasius Radbertus, Abbo, Radbod, Eugenius Vulgaris, Florus of Lyons, Mico of St. Riquier, Sedulfus Scottus, Waldremnus, Salomon of Constance and Notker of St. Gall, but, as said above, these are not unaffected by Alcuin.

(55) *Liber exhortationis ad Henricum Forojul.*, VIII (*Poetae*, 99, 202).

Lord Christ ⁽⁵⁶⁾. Amalar also speaks of God uniting friends ⁽⁵⁷⁾ and Paul writes:

Est tamen almus amor quem Christus tradidit orbi,
Qui te saepe affert cordis ad antra mei ⁽⁵⁸⁾.

Terms like *unanimis*, *pars animae*, *alter ego* appear only in the post-Alcuinian writers ⁽⁵⁹⁾ save for Paul the Deacon whose friend is called *mei cordis partem non modicam* ⁽⁶⁰⁾ and a certain Aurelianus who writes to a friend as not only a part but the very unity of his soul ⁽⁶¹⁾.

Expressions of friendship as a mystical experience of the divine take the form of presence, sight or vision, light, fire, and sweetness as in Alcuin, but only rarely. The presence of friends is essential to friendship ⁽⁶²⁾, if not bodily then spiritual presence, by letters or by *caritas* ⁽⁶³⁾; love never leaves the soul that is ever profiting by the one beloved ⁽⁶⁴⁾. Engelmodus is captivated by his friend as a fish is lured by bait into a net; he is so dear, so beloved that in his sleep (snoring, says Engelmodus) he sees him and when he wakes up, draws him to his heart, for he feels that his friend too is captured by love of him ⁽⁶⁵⁾. The pledges of their mutual love are treasured as immortal possessions in his heart. ⁽⁶⁶⁾ Even the practical Dungal uses these terms, sending the eye of his heart, *cordis ocellum*, to look at his friend, learn about him and extend to him the pledges of love, *pignus amoris* ⁽⁶⁷⁾. Presence is equated with vision ⁽⁶⁸⁾ and with conversation ⁽⁶⁹⁾. Friendship (love) is also a light, likened by Ermenricus to the moon: there are two great lights (*Gen. I, 14-18*): the love of God is the sun that illumines the day.

(56) *Ibid.*, 7.

(57) *Versus marini*, 79 (*Poetae*, I, 428).

(58) PAULI ET PETRI *carmina*, XLIII, 7-8 (*Ibid.*, I, 76).

(59) Notker to Salomon III, *carm. VI, vi, 7* (*Ibid.*, IV, 345); Florus, *carm. II, 2, 11-14* (*Ibid.*, IV, 930); Paschasius Radbertus, *egloga 48* (*Ibid.*, III, 47).

(60) *Ep. 10* (*Epistolae*, IV, 508, 1-2).

(61) *Ep. var.*, 1 (*Ibid.*, VI, 129, 28), undated.

(62) FROTHARIUS, *ep. 7* (*Epistolae*, V, 281, 4-10); *ep. 32* (*Ibid.*, 298, 10-13); *ep. var. 26, II* (*Ibid.*, VI, 186, 28-30).

(63) FROTHARIUS, *ep. 22* (*Ibid.*, V, 291, 29-32); PAULUS *diac. ep. (Epistolae, IV, 507, 3-4)*; PAULI ET PETRI *carmina*, XLIII, 7-8 (*Poetae*, I 76).

(64) ENGELMODUS, *carm. II, 103-106* (*Poetae*, III, 61).

(65) *Id.*, *Ad Aglum I, 37-42* (*Poetae*, III, 56).

(66) *Ibid.*, 79-80 (*Poetae*, III, 57).

(67) *Carm. XXIV, 30-32* (*Poetae I, 413*).

(68) FROTHARIUS, *ep. 7* (*Epistolae*, V, 281, 4); DUNGAL, *carm. XXIV, 27-28* (*Poetae, I, 413*).

(69) FROTHARIUS, *ep. 12* (*Epistolae, V, 284, 20-21*); *ep. 7* (281, 6-8); *ep. 22* (291, 27-29).

and the love of neighbor the lesser light that shines at night ⁽⁷⁰⁾. Paul the Deacon and Engelmodus speak of love as a fire burning in the heart ⁽⁷¹⁾; Paul and Frotharius use the image of fire and pain to express longing for an absent friend ⁽⁷²⁾. An anonymous letter-writer feels a stab of sorrow, *ictu doloris*, and speaks also of the *pondus amoris* ⁽⁷³⁾. Sweetness as an epithet, *dulcis amicus*, is found in the poems more than in the letters ⁽⁷⁴⁾.

To look at one writer in more detail, the Spaniard Theodulfus: a true poet, the « Pindar » of Charlemagne's court, a passionate lover of classical antiquity, a noble and enlightened man, in him we might expect to find the ancient ideal of friendship in its highest medieval expression ⁽⁷⁵⁾. In the language of Christian platonism Theodulfus says that friendship is concord ⁽⁷⁶⁾ that will be perfect in heaven when all is in harmony ⁽⁷⁷⁾. A friend is *pars animi portio magna mei* ⁽⁷⁸⁾; he is sweet ⁽⁷⁹⁾, his love is fostering, like a mother's love ⁽⁸⁰⁾; it is also a consuming fire ⁽⁸¹⁾; it is the work of the Holy Spirit ⁽⁸²⁾. It must be true and not pretended, *fictus* ⁽⁸³⁾.

(70) Ep. ad Grim. I (*Epistolae*, V, 536, 3-8).

(71) ENGELMODUS, *carm.* III, 17 (*Poetae*, III, 62); PAULUS diac., *carm.* XIV, 16 (*Poetae*, I, 51).

(72) PAULUS diac., *ep. var.* 10 (*Epistolae*, IV, 507, 4-5): *excruciat*; FROTHARIUS, *ep.* 12 (*ibid.*, V, 284, 19-21).

(73) Ep. *var.*, 26, ii (*ibid.*, VI, 19-24).

(74) ANOILBERTUS, *Carm.* II, 74 (*Poetae*, I, 362); ENGELMODUS, I, Ad Agilum, 8 (*Poetae*, III, 55); *carm.* III, 107 (65); PAULI et PETRI *carm.*, XXX, 1 (*Poetae*, I, 65); XXXI, 1 (65); *Versus PAULINI* II, de Herico duce, 4 (131).

(75) RABY, *C.L.P.*, pp. 171-177; *Id.*, *S.L.P.*, I, 186-197; MANITIUS, I, 537-543; LAISTNER, pp. 339-341; *D.T.C.*, XV, 330-335.

(76) THEODULFUS, *Carmina*, XIV, 19 (*Poetae*, I 469): « Est in amicitilis concors. . . ».

(77) *Carm.* LXXV, 65-6 (p. 576): « Tunc, paradise, tuas capient per saecula iusti Divitias, domini consociante choro ».

(78) *Carm.* LXXII, i, 26 (p. 564), to Modoin. Cf. *carm.* XXIV, 5 (p. 483), the epitaph for Fastrada, Charlemagne's queen: « Pars animae mellor Carolus rex ipse remansit ». Theodulfus has a strange reference to a triple friendship: « Unum cor potuit fratribus esse tribus » taken from Isidore (*Orig.* XI, 3, 28), telling of a three-headed Geryon. . . « ut Gerionem Hispaniae regem triplici totina proditum. Fuerunt enim tres fratres tantae concordiae, ut in tribus corporibus quasi una anima esset ». *Carm.* XXXIV (*Poetae* I, 526). See note 2, p. 526: *ISID.*, *Orig.* XI, 3, 28.

(79) *Carm.* XXII, 1 (p. 480); XXXIII, 1, 2 (p. 524).

(80) *Carm.* LXXII, i, 31-4 (p. 564):

Fumea praesentis pereunt, scis, gaudia mundi,
Numquam fraternus sed perit almus amor.
Me modo pluris amas, quamquam me semper amasses:
Aegrum allis natum plus pla mater amat.

(81) *Ibid.*, v, 14 (p. 563): « . . . ubi immensus hunc tuus urit amor ».

(82) *Carm.* XV, 35-38 (p. 470). The Holy Spirit is *flamen sanctum*.

(83) *Ibid.*, 37 (p. 470).

Yet elsewhere his advice conflicts with these sentiments. Make friends by flattery and obsequiousness; remember everyone's name; if a man's name escapes you, speak tenderly to him and kiss him while you try to find it out without letting him know⁽⁸⁴⁾. Be very flattering to dignitaries and self-depreciatory⁽⁸⁵⁾; give and you will get⁽⁸⁶⁾. His most curious platonizing occurs in an *epistula currens*: his eros, « *Sum Theodulfi Erato* » who is also his muse, *Philia*, is sent to his friend Moduin to tell him of Theodulfus' love, but also of his need; he is *exul, inops, pauper, tristissimus, anxius, egens*. His Eros is not for the divine, but for financial aid, it seems⁽⁸⁷⁾. A high point of his friendships is in literary exchanges⁽⁸⁸⁾. The only « correction » he desires is of his style⁽⁸⁹⁾; he longs for Moduin to come into his garden to pluck his roses, i. e. his poems⁽⁹⁰⁾. When commenting on the members of Charlemagne's court, he praises men especially for literary achievements: Riculf for his polished style, *nobilis arte, fide*; Angilbert as a *dulcis Homerus*; Ercanbald for skill; Fredigisus and Osulfus for learning; Alcuin for poetry and learning both⁽⁹¹⁾. Theodulfus' poetic platonisms adorn but do not form the heart of his friendships, which, like those of many of his contemporaries, seem *foedus utile* rather than *pura amicitia*. Alcuin, who was hard-headed too, took more seriously the words he used, *caritas, unitas, dulcedo*.

(84) Carm. XXII, 9-18 (p. 480):

Cumque vides aliquem facie, non nomine notum,
 Ac si in utroque bene sit tibi notus, ama.
 Nec dare te pigeat pla verba aut oscula grata,
 Dumque facis, curam nominis eius habe.
 Ut solet, id vocitante alio fors nosse valebis,
 Aut casu sese nominat ipse aliquo.
 Si latet, est error, pudor at si voce requiras,
 Si discas clam, error et pudor omnis abest.
 Qui tibi se notum putat, aut fors extitit olim,
 Ni proprio vocitas nomine, tristis erit.

(85) Carm. Ad episcopos, II, 19 ff. (452-453).

(86) Carm. XXII, 1-8 (480).

(87) Carm. LXXII, 1 (563-565). Moduin was bishop of Autun (d. 840/843).

(88) Carm. LXXIII (569-573).

(89) Carm. LXXII, iv, 229-230 (569):

Si qua istis fuerint, ut erunt, vitiosa camentis,
 Parce, precor: scriptor non mihi doctus inest.

(90) *Ibid.*, 225-228 (569).

(91) Carm. XXV, Ad Carolum regem, 131-196 (486-488). This judgment may need revision but represents facts as well as impressions.

* * *

Alcuin wrote no treatise on friendship, but his letters and verses give concrete expression to his ideal. His vast correspondence maintained throughout his life is addressed to kings, queens, princes and princesses, popes, archbishops, bishops, abbots, great noblemen, priests, monks and plain folk. More than three hundred of his letters survive, to throw light not only on the society of Charlemagne's empire and on Alcuin himself ⁽⁹²⁾ but especially on what concerns us here – his assimilation of the platonistic tradition of friendship.

Alcuin's letters, 311 in Duemmler's edition, were preserved like other extant dossiers of antiquity and of the middle ages as models of style, not as historical records; hence many dates have been omitted, and in some cases even the names of the recipient. It has therefore been difficult for editors to arrange them in exact chronological order. Only fourteen are anterior to 793, when Alcuin was already near his sixties; over two hundred of the remainder were written from Tours ⁽⁹³⁾. His poems also rich in expression of friendship like the letters are difficult, sometimes impossible, to date. Many were inserted in his letters; others, like the poems of Fortunatus, are really affectionate little letters themselves ⁽⁹⁴⁾.

Both letters and poems are studded with phrases and verses on friendship taken generally from the ancients or from Scripture. *Valde tritum* as these thoughts may often be, they take new meaning and life coming from the warm heart of a truly faithful friend, a man whose soul is well worth knowing ⁽⁹⁵⁾. Alcuin was a man full of initiative, originality, with the measure, tact and skill of a diplomat. He had modesty and pleasant humor, lovable irony and a gaiety that helped his learning to win the esteem and friendship of Charlemagne. He had no use for sadness, the « death of the soul ». His joyous good humor and affability made him the most pleasant of companions: his generous and tender heart made him the best of friends. He shared all the joys and sorrows of « those whom

(92) KLEINCLAUSZ, pp. 9-10.

(93) FRANCIS MONNIER, *Alcuin et son influence littéraire, religieuse et politique chez les Francs*, Paris, 1853, p. 208. Cf. also RALPH BARLOW PAGE, *The Letters of Alcuin*, Ph.D. dissert. (New York, Columbia University, 1909), pp. 7-8; WALLACH, pp. 266-274; Alcuin himself kept copies of his letters, perhaps there was an early ninth century selective edition.

(94) KLEINCLAUSZ, p. 11.

(95) *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47. Kleinclausz quotes, p. 47, AUG. MOLINIER, *Les Sources de l'Histoire de France*, V, xxxi-xxxii.

God had given him », expressed his tenderness in touching terms, and was plunged in desolation at separation from those he loved ⁽⁹⁶⁾. This is not, as Wallach says, to represent him as a « meek, helpless *magister* ». He was, on the contrary, anything but helpless and well able to defend himself when occasion rose, even against the emperor ⁽⁹⁷⁾.

When Alcuin speaks of *caritas* he often means friendship, and often he describes friendship in terms applicable to *caritas*. We will consider here, first, his use of words related to *caritas*; second, *amicitia* as a form of *caritas*; and third, *amicitia-caritas* as mystical experience.

In the letters to his friends, his choice of words shows a distinct emphasis on *caritas*. In the well-known phrase, « Igitur caritas, quae deseri potest, numquam vera fuit », *caritas* has replaced the usual *amicitia*. Isidore in his *Etymologies* had linked *caritas* and *dilectio* with *amicitia*, meaning bound together (*liget, catena*) ⁽⁹⁸⁾. Alcuin speaks of *vera caritas*, *perfecta caritas*, implying the possibility of false and imperfect *caritas*. *Vera* here means *perfecta*, as both are defined as love that desires the sanctification of one's friend as one's own; a love that therefore expresses itself above all by *admonitio*, whether the friend is present or absent, for that is the way to holiness; a love moreover that can never end ⁽⁹⁹⁾. In

(96) D.A.C.L., I, 1090 (quoting Edmund Bishop). See also KLEINCLAUSZ, pp. 45-46. Kleinclausz considers that Alcuin's expression of tenderness is not always « de meilleur goût ». This « goût » is presumably that of twentieth century France. Alcuin's rhetoric, especially in the letters to Paulinus, is indeed excessive; perhaps it is to this that Kleinclausz refers. This was then a mark of esteem, and really bad taste seems incompatible with the delicacy Alcuin often shows. As Monnier points out (p. 210) he is very careful in what he says, very discreet and tactful.

(97) WALLACH, pp. 2-3, 99-126. See WALLACH, *Amicus amicus inimicus inimicus*, in *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, LII (1933), pp. 614-615.

(98) JEROME, ep. 3, 6: « Amicitia, quae deseri potest, vera numquam fuit ». Cfr. CICERO, *De amic.*, IX, 32: « Verae amicitiae sempiternae sunt ». A. OTTO, *Die Sprichwörter und sprichwörtlich Redensarten der Römer*, Leipzig, 1890, refers to Greek versions of the saying: EURIPIDES, *Troades* 1051; ARISTOTLE, *Rhetoric* II, 21; DIODORUS, XXVII, 16. See ALCUIN, ep. 79 (*Epistolae*, IV, 120), ep. 200 (404).

See ISIDORE, *Etymologiarum* VIII, II, 6: « Caritas Graece, Latine dilectio interpretatur, quod duos in se liget. Nam dilectio a duobus incipit, quod est amor Dei et proximi »; VIII, II, 7: « Omnis dilectio carnalis non dilectio, sed magis amor dici solet. Dilectionem autem nomen tantum in melioribus rebus accipi solet »; X, 4: « Amicus, per derivationem, quasi animi custos »; X, 5: « Dicitur autem proprie: amator turpitudinis, quia amore torquetur libidinis: amicus ab hamo, id est, a catena caritatis; unde et hami quod teneant ». For Isidore's early influence in the British Isles, see the Oghan tract in *Auraicept Na-N-E' ces*, *The Scholar's Primer*, ed. GEORGE CALDER, Edinburgh, 1917, pp. xxxi-xl. Isidore although not listed was probably in the York Library (LAISTNER, p. 229).

(99) *Vera*: ep. 74, p. 117, 17-18; ep. 79, p. 120, 20; ep. 185, p. 311, 11; ep. 242, p. 388, 27; *perfecta*: ep. 193, p. 320, 7; ep. 264, p. 421, 33-34.

all, he uses the term *caritas* over 77 times in phrases such as *fiducia caritatis*, *societas caritatis*, *communio caritatis*, *vinculum caritatis* – also with *sons*, *speculum*, *vox*, *flamma*, *scintilla*, *dulcedo*, *pennae*; and with *debita*, *officia*. It is the *imago Dei*. Its work is to unite, *iungere*, *coniungere*, to draw, *perducere*, to call, *appellare*; it does not sleep, never goes to excess, it dictates his letters to him. It is *unitas animorum*, *unanimitas*; it is not found in sin or drink; it is *salus in Christo*: the soul without it is dead. There is *fraterna caritas*, *paterna caritas* and *privata caritas*.

Dilectio is used much less frequently, about 16 times in these particular letters, and differs from *caritas* in its use with an adjective rather than as a genitive. None of these adjectives are related to the nouns which *caritas* modifies; the nouns express an action, the adjectives a condition. *Dilectio* is *antiqua*, *perpetua*, *suavissima*, *spiritualis*, *sancta*, *fraterna*, *germana*. Union is its work, also, *conglutinatus dilectione*, and so it creates *unanimitas*, *familiaritas*, *memoria*, and *dulcedo*.

Amor is used only about seven times. It is *sacer*, *sanctus*, *sua-vis*, *magnus*. Alcuin speaks of *amor Christi*, and *amor animae meae*. *Amor* and *caritas* are used as equivalent, but *amor* seems more directly religious in connotation, perhaps even liturgical.

Amicitia appears about ten times, most frequently as *amicitia conducta* (5x), *amicitia antiqua* (2x). It is also called *foederata*, *indissolubilis*, and only once *spiritualis*. Alcuin speaks of the *ius amicitaē*. *Amicus* is used with *carus*, *unanimis*, *fidelis*, *probatas*, *antiquus*, or as an adjective, *amicales personae*. This term enters the world of politics and affairs.

Familiaritas is used ten times also: *familiaritas humana*; *gratia*, *pactum*, and *fiducia familiaritatis*, *coniunctus familiaritate*. It too belongs to the everyday friendships. The term *caritas*, it would seem, with *dilectio*, is that most closely linked to the platonistic aspects of friendship.

Secondly, Alcuin speaks of *amicitia* as a special form of *caritas*, and as *caritas* from God as a precept, a gift, and a virtue.

Alcuin makes clear the distinction he sees between universal *caritas* and *caritas* as *amicitia*; at the same time he links them as means of attaining the possession of God in Heaven⁽¹⁰⁰⁾. As abbot,

(100) Ep. 18, p. 50, 18-22; to Etheibert and his princes (793) «: Bona vero sunt opera, per quae ascendere in caelum possumus; caritas Dei... dilectio hominum... benignitas in omnes homines, pietas ad amicos... ».

Alcuin opens his arms to everyone who comes to him, and rejects no one. Rather does he seek to draw each to himself ⁽¹⁰¹⁾. But in regard to personal friendship, there are degrees of intimacy. Alcuin's love for Adalhard is greater than his love for others, for Adalhard belongs to him especially ⁽¹⁰²⁾. He is bound to Higbald also *specialiter*; ⁽¹⁰³⁾ he ranks him among his «first» friends, «inter primos parvitas meae amicos ⁽¹⁰⁴⁾».

Arn, above all, is dearer to him than his own «brothers and sisters» (i. e., his compatriots); no letter from across the sea is as sweet to him as those of Arn from across the Alps, nor does his heart long for anyone at home as it does for the beloved vision of Arn's face ⁽¹⁰⁵⁾. He loves him as a father and mother love their son ⁽¹⁰⁶⁾. There is no bishop whose presence he more desires ⁽¹⁰⁷⁾; no one in the kingdom whom he trusts more, whose good he desires more ardently to enjoy ⁽¹⁰⁸⁾. He is closer to him than all the other priests of Christ ⁽¹⁰⁹⁾. Without saying that he loves Charlemagne more than Arn, which would not have been true, he says carefully that «after the emperor», there is no one for whom he would do more:

Tamen sciat dilectio vestra; quod nemini post domnum imperatorem
sudare plus meum ingeniolium optarem... ⁽¹¹⁰⁾.

Such love, between friends is holy; it is a *sacra via*, on which only the friend can pass.

Haec est sacra via, pedibus haec pervia fratrum.
Solus amicus ovans plantis pertranseat illam ⁽¹¹¹⁾.

(101) Ep. 156, p. 253, 18-20. Alcuin has sent Arn's nephew back to him, as he was unhappy at Tours. His program as given in this letter to Arn: «Ecce ego, quantum in me est, apertas habeo manus amplectari venientem, non respuere precantem. Hoc apud omnes servare praesulivi, ut nullum abicerem, sed quemcumque potuissem adtraherem».

(102) Ep. 237, p. 381, 25-27: «... Intimo cordis affectu amavi eos, quamvis non aequaliter ut te, quia aequaliter ad me non pertinebant; te specialius ex omnibus fere amicus unum».

(103) Ep. 24, p. 65, 22.

(104) Ep. 124, p. 181, 31.

(105) Ep. 186, p. 312, 4-7. Alcuin said the same to Adalhard, ep. 9, p. 34, 29-31: «Nec me etiam in peregrinatione morantem, tantum fratris vel sororis carnalis affectus, taedult, quantum tua spiritalis fraternitas moerore perfundit». Alcuin certainly means blood relationship here, as he probably also does in Arn's letter. This letter is dated 799.

(106) Ep. 277, p. 371, 7-8, 13-14.

(107) Ep. 242, p. 388, 13-14.

(108) Ep. 254, p. 410, 30-33.

(109) Ep. 173, p. 286, 12-13.

(110) Ep. 265, p. 424, 7-9. The relationship of Alcuin to Charlemagne will not be considered here.

(111) Carm. CV, v, 3-4, (*Poetae* I, 332): an inscription for refectory: «Ad mensam».

Caritas is of God, in that God commands it, infuses it and is its reward. Alcuin applies to friendship the idea of love as duty, following St. Augustine whom he quotes ⁽¹¹²⁾. This precept is universal, every man is « the neighbor », even an enemy. But if enemies are to be loved, how much more are our brethren. For they love us, and it is an obligation to love in return: « dilige diligentem te » ⁽¹¹³⁾. A concrete illustration of this is his friendship with Arn, of which Arn's love for him is a cause. Alcuin is *debtor to him in love* ⁽¹¹⁴⁾.

Love and friendship are also a gift, a grace. It is God who infuses them into our hearts, « . . . Deus . . . qui hanc infudit cordibus nostris » ⁽¹¹⁵⁾. For *caritas* is Christ, who binds « his own » together. ⁽¹¹⁶⁾. Divine clemency first caused Alcuin's friendship with the priest Eada, and preserves it; it is the « work » of God described in liturgical language:

Quapropter et in nobis antiquae fidei reformastis amicitiam. Utinam ut divina clementia in nobis usque ad finem vitae perserverare faciat, quod ab ineunte aetate in nobis operari dignata est ⁽¹¹⁷⁾.

God himself has joined Alcuin and Arn: « . . . quod Deus coniunxit, homo non separet » ⁽¹¹⁸⁾. In him, then, friendship has its beginning; it is he who begins the « good thing of love » in us ⁽¹¹⁹⁾.

Vera fraternitas, perfecta caritas is, then, unity in Christ, without whom it is impossible ⁽¹²⁰⁾. It is a gift of the Holy Spirit, who is himself given to us that we may love one another as Christ has loved us, ⁽¹²¹⁾ the sweetest gift of love, poured out into our hearts by Divine Wisdom through the grace of the Spirit ⁽¹²²⁾. In

(112) *De Doct. Christ.* I, 23.

(113) Ep. 19, p. 53, 30. He also quotes MATT. XXI, 37; LUC. VI, 27 in ep. 142, p. 224, 3.

(114) Ep. 265, p. 424, 9-10: « . . . nulli plus debitor sum propter semper vestrae beatitudinis probatissimam fidem et dilectionem ».

(115) Ep. 9, p. 35, 6 (to Adalhardus, 790).

(116) Ep. 5, p. 30, 21-22: « Ea caritate . . . qua ille omnes suos coniunxit ». This is to Felix of Urgello and therefore not to a « friend ». He says the same, however, to the English Abbot Vulfhard, ep. 70, p. 113, 29: « . . . in Christo, qui nos coniunxit in caritate ».

(117) Ep. 53, p. 97, 9-11. This recalls the Offertory Prayer.

(118) Ep. 186, p. 312, 24; MATT. XIX, 7.

(119) Ep. 158, p. 257, 13-14: « . . . qui coepit caritatis bonum in nobis, ille perficiet . . . ».

(120) Ep. 193, p. 320, 6-7: « Sed in Christo sit unitas, sine quo nulla perfecta est caritas ».

(121) Ep. 218, p. 362, 23-25 (*Rom.* V, 5; I ION. IV, 12, 10; ION. XV, 12): « . . . quia caritas Dei diffusa est in corde tuo, simul etiam et proximi, per Spiritum sanctum, qui datus est nobis, ut diligamus invicem, sicut et Christus dilexit nos ».

(122) Ep. 186, p. 312, 7-9.

Christ friends are made, or rather begotten brothers by grace ⁽¹²³⁾. Therefore, he who loves, carries Christ in his heart ⁽¹²⁴⁾.

As God and virtue are the beginning, so are they the end of friendship. This end, Alcuin writes to Theodulfus, is the profit of the friend's own soul, and also that of many others ⁽¹²⁵⁾. To « profit » is to flower in the precepts of Christ ⁽¹²⁶⁾. The symbol of a flowering tree is developed elaborately in a letter to the monks of Wearmouth. The tree's root is friendship, *condicta amicitia*, deep-rooted in the heart; the branches bear abundant flowers of faith, *fides*, which will become fruits of eternal happiness ⁽¹²⁷⁾. Therefore, a friend is a *custos animi*, in the words of St. Isidore ⁽¹²⁸⁾, for this growth of virtue through friendship is a conscious, willed product, fruit of solicitude for the friend's soul ⁽¹²⁹⁾.

Ultimately, « growth in virtue » means to draw near to God. Nothing else is as powerful as friendship in drawing man to him. Alcuin repeats to the abbess Aedilthyda the familiar chain of texts: he who abides in charity abides in God because God is charity; through love of the neighbor (*caritas*) we attain love of God (*dilectio*); if we love not our brother whom we see, how do we love God? ⁽¹³⁰⁾ This text may mean theological « charity » only. There is no doubt, however, that in his letter to Calvinus he speaks of friendship: « Christ is our best and closest friend. See what *caritas* has done, it has suddenly raised me from thought of you to him » ⁽¹³¹⁾.

(123) Carm. XXI, 27-8 (*Poetae*, I, 242):

Hac pietate, precor, me tu tibi suscipe fratrem,
In Christo fratres gratia nos genuit.

(124) *Ibid.*, 21-22, p. 242:

Qui in caritate manet, portat in pectore Christum,
Vera quidem caritas est deus omnipotens.

(125) Ep. 160, p. 259, 6-8: « ... nostris quoque multum prodisse animabus n[on] ignoratur; etiam et Deo optulante... multorum profectus erit ».

(126) Ep. 209, p. 349, 33, to Calvinus: « ... aut vera nos caritas florere faciat in praeceptis Christi dei... ».

(127) Ep. 284, p. 442, 32-35: « ... ubi vera est dilectio... ubi radix condictae amicitiae in pectoris thesauro figitur, inde rami floribus fidel vestiti pululasse certissimum est, usque dum fructibus aeternae beatitudinis refecerint veram habentes inter se caritatem ».

(128) Ep. 97, p. 141, 23: « ... te custodem animi obsecrans... ».

(129) Ep. 149, p. 242, 30-243, 5. This is to Charlemagne (798): « Igitur amicus dicitur quasi animi custos [ISID., *Etymol.* X]. Id est qui animum amici sui cum omni sollicitudine fidel studet custodire integrum, quatenus nullatenus sacrum amicitiae ius alicubi violetur. Et hoc rari sunt qui intellegunt. Pene unusquisque secundum animi sui qualitatem, non (ad) alterius animi, qui amicus est suus, satisfactionem amicitiam custodire quaerit. Et si hoc in amico et coaequali diligenter observari debet, ut inviolata animi integritas permaneat illius, quanto magis in domino et in tali persona... ».

(130) Ep. 79, p. 120, 20-25, (1 Ioh. IV, 16; Matt. XXII, 4; Ioh. IV, 20).

(131) Cf. *infra*, n. 169.

Thirdly, friendship is a mystical experience based on the divine image in man; it is likeness (equality), unity and trinity; it is fire and sweetness.

In one of the dialogues Alcuin defines *amicitia* as equality: « 'Quid est amicitia?' 'Aequalitas amicorum' (Ms. animorum.) » (132). He writes to Benedict of Aniane that equality of souls usually begets the sweetness of love. If, as his humility suggests is the case between them, friends are unequal in meritorious works, nevertheless their desire for salvation can restore the balance (133). This is a commonplace of Christian writers, following Cicero who looked to *liberalitas* of superiors and *magnanimitas* of inferiors to make them equal, (*exaequare*) (134). St. Ambrose asked for *gratia* for both, *auctoritas* for the inferior, *humilitas* for the superior (135). This equality of soul of which Alcuin speaks, however, not improbably signified « likeness » rather than balance.

Likeness or similitude, in turn, imply the image concept. For *caritas*, itself the virtue that makes oneness of soul, communion (« Quid est caritas, nisi unitas animorum . . . ? ») (136), is more than a virtue; it is the divine image in the soul, *divinae bonitatis imago*, to which we are created and renewed *per bonitatem salvatoris nostri*. This image is the nobility of the soul (137), its glory, the image of Christ himself, *anima imagine Christi inclita* (138).

If *aequalitas* is thus interchangeable with *similitudo*, image-likeness would be the unifying thread of Alcuin's thought on the union of friends. It leads to unanimity, for the two friends are one in soul. « I am your one-soul » he says, « Ego unanims tuus » (139).

(132) ALCUIN, *Opusculum Quintum: Pippini regalis et nobilissimi juvenis Disputatio cum Albino scholastico*, P.L., CI, 978 B. Cf. also *Liber de Virtutibus et Vitiis*, 36, *ibid.*, 638 D: « Amicus . . . erit tibi coaequus . . . ».

(133) Ep. 56, p. 100, 17-19: « Aequalitas animorum dulcedinem generare solet dilectionis; et si disparia sint operum merita, tamen par potest esse desiderium salutis ». He likens Benedict to a doctor, himself to a sick man (*ibid.*, 19-20).

(134) *De amic.* XX, 71.

(135) *De offic. minis.* III, 133.

(136) Ep. 83, p. 126, 9-10. To Peter of Milan (793-796).

(137) Ep. 275, p. 432, 29-33: « . . . et suum cor frater alterius infundat cordi, et fiat unanimitas animorum, in quibus est communio caritatis. Nam anima sine caritate mortua est, non habens divinae bonitatis imaginem, [Gen. I, 26] ad quam creati sumus, etiam et renovati per bonitatem salvatoris nostri, qui ait: In hoc cognoscent omnes, quia mei discipuli estis, si dilectionem habueritis ad invicem [Ioh. XIII, 35] ».

(138) Ep. 15, p. 41, 10, to Gisla: « Primo omnium te de Dei caritate ammonco: et nobilitatem imaginis illius serve . . . ».

(139) « Ego unanims tuus », ep. 175, p. 291, 4. Also *unanims frater*, ep. 9, p. 35, 7; *unanims amicus*, ep. 97, p. 141, 22-23; *carum*. XVII, 5 (*Poetae*, I, 230).

and this one-souledness is the fruit of spiritual love ⁽¹⁴⁰⁾. Since two together are one, each separately is part of the other: « Pars animae melior, nostrae pars inclyta vitae » ⁽¹⁴¹⁾. The friend is « another self », to whom one talks as to oneself. Alcuin quotes with slight modification the phrase from Pseudoseneca (*De Moribus*, 20): « Quid dulcius est, quam habere amicum, cum quo possis omnia loqui, sicut teipsum ? » ⁽¹⁴²⁾. A kind of identification, then, is the meaning Alcuin gives to the term *unanimis* ⁽¹⁴³⁾. When his friend speaks, it is as though Alcuin himself were speaking ⁽¹⁴⁴⁾. There should be no « mine » and « thine »; for, as Seneca says, this has destroyed the world. What belongs to Alcuin also belongs to Arn, even Alcuin's disciples; so too whoever is Arn's becomes Alcuin's: « I would consider him mine, if you wished him to be yours. You should not think that anyone of yours is not at home with me, as I know mine are never strangers with you » ⁽¹⁴⁵⁾. Moreover, since friends are *unanimis*, they belong to each other ⁽¹⁴⁶⁾. Arn is « *Aquila meus* », Alcuin is « *tuus Albinus* », Paulinus is « *mi mi Pauline* ». This is the theme of the amazing couplet with which he begins his appeal to « Dodo », his *carissimus filiolus*:

Do do iuxta nomen tuum tibi, tu mihi da da.
Do tibi me totum; sed tu, Dodo, mihi te da ⁽¹⁴⁷⁾.

The unity of love that creates this unanimity is a union of will, for where there is one love (*caritas*) there is no diversity of will (*voluntas*) ⁽¹⁴⁸⁾. It is a binding together, a mutual adhesion, *conligatus*, *conglutinator* ⁽¹⁴⁹⁾, for which Alcuin adapts the word of the gospel on the union of man and woman: « What God has joined, let not man separate, nor let that be sundered by space which is joined together by heart » (*mentibus*) ⁽¹⁵⁰⁾. The last phrase indicated ano-

(140) Ep. 166, p. 268, 19-20.

(141) Carm. XX, 2 (*Poetae*, I, 240).

(142) Ep. 78, p. 119, 22. Cf. note 5, p. 119, DUEMLER.

(143) Ep. 107, p. 153, 26; ep. 156, p. 255, 3.

(144) Ep. 259, p. 417, 18-19.

(145) Ep. 186, p. 312, 21-23: « . . . dum verissime eum meum esse putarem, si tuus esse voluisset, cavens illud Senecae sapientis elogium: 'Meum et tuum mundum destruxit'. Nihil non familiare in quoquam tuorum sentias apud me; nihil alienum ex meis sciens apud te ». Cf. Ps. SENECA, *De morib.* 98.

(146) Ep. 253, p. 380, 28.

(147) Ep. 65, 24-25 p. 107. Also ep. 222, p. 365, 32.

(148) Ep. 186, p. 312, 25: « Ubi una est caritas, ibi diversa non est voluntas ».

(149) Ep. 303, p. 461, 13-14: « . . . quo animus meus in vestram conligatus est dilectionem fratribus conglutinator . . . ».

(150) Ep. 186, p. 312, 24-25: « Quia quod Deus coniunxit, homo non separet; nec locis dividatur, quod mentibus coniungitur ».

ther aspect of the mutual selfgiving of friends: it must be a mutual self-revelation, « *Quid facit amicus, si verbis se ipsum non ostendit ?* » ⁽¹⁵¹⁾.

This union is described usually as a mutual presence of the friends in each other's heart. Alcuin begs Adalhard of Corvey (« *Antonius* ») to have Albinus always in his mouth and heart, « *ut habeas Albinum tuum in ore et corde* » ⁽¹⁵²⁾. The heart of one pours itself into the heart of the other, « *et cor suum frater alterius infundat cordi* » ⁽¹⁵³⁾. Other times he speaks of the friendship itself being present in the heart as a living plant rooted in the heart, and as a treasure: « *... radix conductae amicitiae in pectoris thesauro frigitur...* » ⁽¹⁵⁴⁾ or of the sweetness, *dulcedo, suavitas*, of love that fills his heart and drives all troubles far from the secret chambers of his mind ⁽¹⁵⁵⁾. His heart is an eternal treasure-chest, *pectoris aeterna in arca* ⁽¹⁵⁶⁾ and his friend is the treasure ⁽¹⁵⁷⁾. The heart is also a tablet; his friend's name is written not on perishable wax, but in Alcuin's soul, « *in anima quae perire non potest* » ⁽¹⁵⁸⁾. All these figures represent not only presence, but permanence. The « presence » is really a kind of « being ». This suggests that « presence » is for Alcuin related to image-likeness.

Presence is caused by love; this too links it with image-likeness. Alcuin always has Riculf present in the love of his heart: « *in caritate cordis mei te semper praesentem habeo* » ⁽¹⁵⁹⁾. This is a clear expression of presence by love: « *ut... vestrae bonitatis nomen et suavitatis facies menti meae radicatus infixum permanent* » ⁽¹⁶⁰⁾. Love is so great in both Alcuin and Arn that they

(151) *Ep.* 74, p. 117, 18-19. To Rado, notary, chancellor and finally abbot of St. Vexantus. Cf. DUEMLER, p. 116, n. 1.

(152) *Ep.* 222, p. 365, 32.

(153) *Ep.* 275, p. 432, 29.

(154) *Ep.* 284, p. 422, 33.

(155) *Ep.* 42, p. 85, 16-19: « *... a secretis mentis meae cubilibus...* ». Cf. also *ep.* 44, p. 90, 3-4: « *Quia caritas et fides, quae olim in pectore nostro habitare coepit...* »; also *ep.* 225, p. 368, the heart is *abundans caritas fons* (to Theodulf, 801).

(156) *Carm.* XVII, 16-18 (*Poetae*, I, 239):

Te mea mens ardet sacris constricta catenis,
Deiigit, exquirit, complectitur, adtrahit, amblt
Pectoris aeterna secumque recondit in arca.

(157) *Carm.* XXI, 9-10 (*Poetae*, I, 242):

In qua meque precor, gremio caritatis amicum,
Silm licet ignotus, suscipe sancte, tibi.

(158) *Ep.* 28, p. 70, 5.

(159) *Ep.* 25, p. 66, 9-10.

dwell in each other's souls. ⁽¹⁶¹⁾. Paulinus, too, is present by the wound of love in Alcuin's heart; love is a honey-flowing javelin, the wound is sweeter than the honeycomb ⁽¹⁶²⁾: and yet like a flame:

Ex quo vestra mihi innotuit caritas, familiari quadam flamma in corde meo efficacius haec eadem ardebat, ita ut mens mea respondebat mihi: Caritate vulnerata ego sum ⁽¹⁶³⁾.

This text is a link between love as unity by presence and likeness with love as mystical fire and wound.

The unity of friends in a mutual interiority and possession is a reflection of the unity of God. The equality of likeness and the interior presence reflect the relation of Father and Son; the love which springs from the likeness and which causes union reflects the Holy Spirit. That friendship even reflects the mutual presence of Father and Son in the holy Trinity is suggested by Alcuin's adoption of the words of Christ, « . . . and yet I am not alone, for the Father who sent me is with me » ⁽¹⁶⁴⁾. The bond of the friend's love, as in the Trinity, is the Holy Spirit:

Nec de hoc tui cordis thesauro cuiuslibet dubitare fas esse fateor, quia caritas Dei diffusa est in corde tuo, simul etiam et proximi, per Spiritum sanctum qui datus est nobis, ut diligamus invicem, sicut et Christus dilexit nos ⁽¹⁶⁵⁾.

It would not be right (*fas*), it would be a sacrilege, to doubt his friend's love, for it is the love (*caritas*) of God and of his neighbor that is poured out in his friend's heart by the Holy Spirit, who is given to them, that they may love each other as Christ has loved them ⁽¹⁶⁶⁾.

This trinitarian theme takes another form when Alcuin describes the unity in a triad of friends: himself, « Antonius » (Adalhard)

(160) Ep. 124, p. 181, 31-32.

(161) Ep. 60, p. 103, 28-29.

(162) Ep. 80, p. 129, 14-15: « Novit itaque, quicumque melissivo caritatis saculo vulnera omni fave dulciora in corde accipiet. . . ».

(163) Ep. 78, p. 119, 15-17.

(164) Ioh. XVI, 32.

(165) Ep. 218, p. 362, 22-25. This was written in 796, the year Arn was made bishop. « Ecce ego solus relictus cum scola illa; et non ero solus, dum vos habeam fideles et amicos »: ep. 112, p. 162, 24-25.

(166) Ep. 107, p. 154, 21-22.

and Paulus. He suggests a meeting of the three in an elaborate riddle that uses number symbolism:

et fiat unitas prima (Antonius named first in salutation)
 et extremi (Paulus named second)
 et medietatem (Albinus, number 7)
 quia cuncta in creaturis tribus istis terminis
 ad unitatem perveniunt.
 Et si tolluntur de medio unum (7 minus 1 = 6)
 de ultimo duo (8 minus 2 = 6)
 erunt tres termini aequales (i. e., all will be 6, therefore equal)
 mirabiles in perfectione omnium creaturarum, quae a tribus
 personis in unitatem potestatis conditae sint.

The unity of friends is here a reflection of cosmic unity, their love an aspect of the «love» by which all creatures tend to their end. This is the *syndesmos* of ancient thought. The equality of the three friends represents a totality of perfection of all creation, that in turn reflects the Trinity of three persons who created all in unity of power (167).

Arn, Paulinus and Albinus are another trinity of friends. The triple bond, *triplex funis*, will never be easily broken. Love grows strong between three friends, *inter tres*, and whenever three are gathered together it is in the name of Christ. Christ then stands in the midst of them, «astat medius Christus», Christ who is himself love and loving. Here the allusion to the Trinity is in a Christological frame of reference. Alcuin is suggesting what Aelred will dwell on: that, when «two or three are gathered together», Christ is in their midst, «Christ is the third». Alcuin, however, speaks of three friends, not of two, but implies that, as in the Trinity, so in friendship Christ holds the central place, *medius*, and the love that cements friendship is his Spirit (168).

This mystical friendship is symbolized in related images of fire, water, darkness, wound and sweetness.

(167) Ep. 176, p. 291.

(168) Carm. XVIII, 9-14 (*Poetae*, I, 240):

Tertius Albinus vobis lungatur amicus (vobis = Paulinus and Arn),

Et lacrimas resonet inter in ore sacras.

Quippe triplex funis facile non rumpitur umquam [*Eccle.* IV, 12],

Sic quoque tres inter firma viget caritas;

Tres ubi sunt pariter collecti in nomine Christi,

His adstat medius Christus et ipse plus [MATT. XVIII, 20]. (Cf. AELRED, *De Spir. am.*, 667A).

Love of his friend is a flame that seizes him suddenly and transports him to the love of Christ ⁽¹⁶⁹⁾. It is a fire in the «cave» of his heart; the more it burns, the further it scatters its sparks. It is like the river of paradise that is divided into four streams. *Caritas* is a *fons* that makes the heart a paradise, a garden that flows into virtue, and then pours rivers of love out of itself:

Quia latitudo caritatis nulla dividitur longinquitate, nullis clauditur terminis; sed quo magis ardet in pectoris antro, eo latius flammam suavissimi ardoris spargere adsuescit. Sicut fons paradysum inrigans quadrivido tramite latum diffunditur in orbem, sic fons caritatis, pectus virtutum floribus pullulans, in quattuor amoris rivos dirivatur... ⁽¹⁷⁰⁾.

This reference to the love of friendship as «paradisical», as restoring the first paradise or prelude to the final paradise of heaven, was already suggested in Fortunatus' appellation of a friend as *paradisus homo*. It is related to the whole complex of thought centered about image-likeness and the restoration or renovation of the original image. Aelred explicitly was to call friendship a return to the happy relations of true love that once existed before the Fall ⁽¹⁷¹⁾.

Alcuin's friendship with Peter of Milan is also described in terms of fire. *Caritas* is a flame (*flamma*); it burns in Alcuin's heart; but paradoxically in Peter's presence the vision of his friend cools and refreshes the burning heart, «ut refrigerarem ex paterna visione pectoris mei ardorem» ⁽¹⁷²⁾. It is hidden flame, that must send forth sparks if it is to keep burning ⁽¹⁷³⁾. For *caritas muta* is like

(169) Ep. 209, p. 348, 8-11: «Melior est Christus propinquus et amicus, quam totius sacculi numerosa propinquitas vel amicitia. Vide quid caritas faciat. Dum te ammonere familiaris stilo exorsus sum, repente me caritatis flamma transtulit ad illum». This is like a foreshadowing of Aelred's thesis, *De Spir. am.*, 671D, 672BCD, that the friendship of Christ follows a human friendship, although the psychological background is different as Alcuin is writing an *ammonitoria epistola* and seems to speak also from some bitter experience of the insufficiency of human friendship.

Alcuin also speaks of having God as one's friend, ep. 277, p. 434, 8 (804): «Habeto illum amicum, qui unicuique amicus est secundum se». Quoting the *Canticum*, he interprets the «friends» as the angelic powers in ep. 66 to Cuculus, p. 110, 15: «Fac amicos, id est angelicas dignitates, audire vocem tuam».

(170) Ep. 19, p. 53, 11-15, to monks of Wearmouth and Yarrow (793). Quoting Augustine, *De doct. Christ.* I, 23, 22.

(171) *De spirituali amicitia*, I, 668A.

(172) Ep. 83, p. 126, 2-7.

(173) Ep. 139, p. 220, 15-17 to Paulinus. «... ut flamma caritatis in corde abscondita aliquam fortasse scintillam elicere valeat, ne totum torpescat, quod intus ignescit...».

fire that does not burn; one must strike the flint to get sparks ⁽¹⁷⁴⁾. Love is *familiaris quaedam flamma* ⁽¹⁷⁵⁾, the *integer antiqui amoris flamma* ⁽¹⁷⁶⁾; a flame that penetrates and burns ever more fiercely ⁽¹⁷⁷⁾. The fire-symbol almost always signifies the identity of friendship-love with God's love, for love is the fire of God: « Quis est ignis Dei, nisi caritas ? » ⁽¹⁷⁸⁾ and speaks in hyperbole ⁽¹⁷⁹⁾.

The love of friendship is therefore a mystery. It is a reality experienced darkly, so intense that it surpasses understanding; only God, whose gift it is, can measure it ⁽¹⁸⁰⁾. To Paulinus Alcuin writes of the impossibility of describing the sweetness of the love he drinks from his friend's heart. The Spirit is witness of this, through whom that love is poured out in them ⁽¹⁸¹⁾. Yet he seeks to make his friend understand; if only his voice were iron, and every hair a tongue, that the words of his love might reach the ears of his friend's heart; or if only his friend would have the spirit of prophecy, to see into the secret places of his heart, then at last he could believe how very sweet is the experience of love that fills his heart. This is the language of mysticism, of the ineffable experience of love, likened to taste and sweetness. So too is the next image he uses, for he goes on to say that he is writing to try to make his friend understand this, though it scarcely can be understood. It is like a fire, a flame that can be seen but not touched. Like sparks from the fire, his words are love, flying up in light and flame. An experience, surpassing understanding, that can only be « believed », that is like a flaming fire that enlightens and burns, such is friendship, *caritas* ⁽¹⁸²⁾.

(174) Ep. 191, p. 318, 7-8: « Quid proficit... caritas muta? Num ignis in silice, nisi excutiat, flammificat? ».

(175) Ep. 78, p. 119, 15.

(176) Ep. 212, p. 352, 39-353, 1.

(177) Carm. XI, 1-2 (*Poetas*, 1, 236):

Pectus amor nostrum penetravit flamma...

Atque calore novo semper inardet amor.

Cfr. *carm.* XVIII, 3, p. 240, also to Arn: « Culus amore calent patris praecordia tota », and *carm.* XVII, 16, p. 239: « Te mea mens ardet... ».

(178) Ep. 13, p. 38, 19.

(179) Ep. 6, p. 31, 11.

(180) Ep. 9, p. 35, 4-6, to Adalhard: « Haec ideo, frater, tibi scripsi, ut scias, si tamen scire potes, qua te caritate diligo; nam me ipsum fateor adicere non posse – forsan etiam nec tu, qua me diligas – Deus scit, qui hanc infudit cordibus nostris ».

(181) Ep. 95, p. 140, 9-11: « Sed nulla cartula sufficit caritatis essari dulcedinem, quam pleno ore anima mea de tuo hauserat pectore. Testis est veritatis ille Spiritus, per quem caritas diffusa est in cordibus nostris ».

(182) Ep. 39, p. 82, 9-18, to an anonymous friend: « O si mihi vox ferrea esset [*Aen.* VI, 626], et omnes pili verterentur in linguas, ut vel sic ad aures tui cordis verba dilectionis meae

The intensity of Alcuin's love expresses itself also in language from the *Canticum of Canticles*. He would go to the sweetest dwelling of St. Amandus, seeking his lover: « Veniens veniebam ad sancti Amandi... dulcissimas mansiones quaerens amatorem meum... » (183). Their love is *vera*; it is that spoken of in the *Canticum*, « Flumina multa non obruent caritatem » (184).

He applies to a hoped-for meeting the words of the bride;

... et teneam, quem diligit anima mea, nec dimittam eum, donec introducam illum in domum matris meae; et osculetur me osculo oris sui; et gaudeamus ordinata caritate invicem » (185).

Arn's voice is the voice of the beloved, *vox vestrae dilectionis*, that must draw Alcuin after him until the king introduces them both into the wine-cellar, putting in order in them the sweetness of his love (186). He is wounded by love, so great a wound that there is no comfort that can heal it (187). The absence of his beloved is that wound; Arn's love alone makes the wound and alone can heal it (188), for it is the wound inflicted by love, *inflicium vulnus per caritatem* (189).

In Alcuin the words *dulcis* and *dulcedo* ever recur. *Dulcis amor* (190) and *dulcis amicus* (191) are most frequent, with *dulcis dilectio* (192). His friend is *requies mentis* (193), their brotherly love

pervenire valuissent; vel in tuo pectore spiritus esset prophetiae, ut perspicere cordis mei arcana potuisses, crederes utique, quam suavissimo sapore tui amoris pectus meum impleretur.

Sed nunc quod valeo faciam... ut... intellegas quod vix intellegi potest. Sicut flamma potest videri, tangi autem non potest: ita caritas in litteris cerni potest, sed vix in animo scribentis sentiri valet. Quasi scintillae de igne sparguntur, ita dilectio litterarum officio volat ».

(183) Ep. 167, p. 275, 18-19.

(184) Ep. 242, p. 388, 27-28.

(185) Ep. 157, p. 255, 32-33 [*Cant.* III, 4; I, 1; *Rom.* IV, 101].

(186) Ep. 158, p. 256, 33-257, 1 [*Cant.* VI, 4]: « Trahe me post te precibus tuae sanctitatis: curremus simul, donec introducat nos rex in cellam vinariam ordinans in nobis suae caritatis suavitatem ».

(187) Ep. 59, p. 102, 30-31: « Quid facies modo mens caritate vulnerata? estne aliquod solacium, quod tantum vulnus vel aliquod refocillare valeat? ».

(188) Ep. 159, p. 257, 28-30 [*Cant.* V, 8; *Job* V, 18]: « Unde et sponsae voce decantatur, absentiam lugentis optati sponsi: 'Vulnerata karitate ergo sum...' Quia utrumque caritas vestra et vulnerat et sanat ».

(189) *Ibid.*, 30.

(190) *Carm.* XI, 7 (*Poetae*, I, 236); XIII, 5 (p. 237); XXXV, 3-4 (p. 251); LV, 1 (p. 266); LIV, 36 (p. 266); LVIII, 41 (p. 270); LX, 15 (p. 274); XXXVII, 9 (p. 252); XLII, 7 (p. 254); XLVI, 3 (p. 259); XC, 6 (p. 313).

(191) *Carm.* XXI, 14 (p. 242); XXXII, 4 (p. 249); LII 2, 24, (p. 265), also « dulcis Homere »: XXXVII, 1, 2 (p. 251), etc.

(192) *Carm.* XXXVII, 3, p. 251.

(193) *Carm.* LV, I, 10, p. 266.

(*germanus amor*) is peace, pure faith of Christ, sweet concord (194). A friend is like a song in his heart (195). The sweetness of friendship surpasses all earthly secular joys. What are riches without friends? (196). In comparison with a friend's love, all other wealth seems worthless (197).

Alcuin's expressions of tenderness are not, indeed, original in form nor without rhetorical exaggerations; yet they are sincere and personal. This is true even when, in the style of Jerome and Boniface he dwells on the thought of the embrace of his friend (198). He will embrace the most sweet wings of his « eagle » (Arn) and receive his kiss: « . . . ut ibi amplecter alas illius suavissimas . . . et osculetur me osculo oris sui . . . » (199). With sweet embraces he will bind Arn to him, *dulcibus amplexibus colla constringere patris venerandi* (200), and kiss him not only with his mouth, but with his whole heart, *toto corde* (201). It is from the sweetness of love, *ex caritatis dulcedine*, that he gives Arn the name of son (202).

When Alcuin calls friendship a divine gift, springing from a divine image, he is directly in the platonistic tradition referred to above. Plato's eros was productive love, engendering the image of true Beauty in the beloved (203); the Augustinian neoplatonic friendship reflecting the beauty and sweetness of the divine Logos, ravished the soul to God, *rapere ad Deum* (204). In Fortunatus the

(194) Carm. CLV, III, 1-2, p. 331:

Sit germanus amor, fratres, vos inter ubique,
Sit pax, pura fides Christi et concordia dulcis.

(These are inscriptions for a monastery); also CV, v, 7-8, p. 332:

Sed fraternus amor pariter comitetur euntes,
Et pax atque fides, pietas, concordia sacra.

(195) Carm. XXIX, I, 3, p. 248:

Tu mihi dulcis amor, cordis tu carmen in ore.

(196) Ep. 167, p. 275, 22-23: « Fidelis amicus diu quaeritur, vix invenitur, difficile servatur; culus dulcedo omnes saeculi superat locunditates. Quid divitiae sine amicis? ». Cf. JEROME, ep. 3; ALCUIN, ep. 147, p. 237, 7-8; ep. 18 (to King Aethelred), p. 49, 21-22.

(197) Ep. 242, p. 388, 26: « . . . ut in comparatione eius caritatis omnis divitiarum species vilescit ».

(198) Ep. 10, p. 36, 5-7. « . . . quam citatis manibus ruerem in amplexus paternitatis vestrae, et quam compressis labris non solum oculos aures et os, sed etiam manuum vel pedum singulos digitorum articulos, non semel, sed multoties oscularer ».

(199) Ep. 157, p. 255, 32-35.

(200) Ep. 185, p. 311, 10-11; also ep. 193, p. 319, 20-30: « Quam tenacibus tua colla strinxissem, o dulcissime fili, amplexibus . . . ».

(201) Ep. 194, p. 322, 2-3: « . . . ut eam [Aquila] amplecter, deosculer, non solum ore, sed etiam toto corde ».

(202) Ep. 227, p. 371, 6-7.

(203) *Phaedr.* 252, 254; *Symp.* 206E.

(204) NOLTE, pp. 93, 103.

dulcedo was in a human image interior to the soul, and the *rapere* of friendship also immanent to the interior world of the friends rather than « out of themselves » to God ⁽²⁰⁵⁾. In Alcuin's thought, the transcendence of the movement of love is maintained. The image is of divine goodness, of Christ himself; it is also sweet, *dulcis*. The bond of friendship is the work of the Holy Spirit that unites friends with Christ, and that draws them to perfect likeness and possession. *Dulcedo* is the manifestation in time, with all its pain and darkness, of the serenity and peace and light of eternity, an eternity that is « pax . . . Christi et concordia dulcis ».

When one contrasts both the extent of Alcuin's correspondence and the intense vitality of his friendship with the meagre collections of letters from contemporary writers and their matter-of-fact, utilitarian or conventionalized attitude to friendship, one cannot help but wonder at the cause of this. One suggestion may be made. Alcuin had great need of friends ⁽²⁰⁶⁾ but he saw friendship also as a moral obligation, a real task imposed on him, as on the one best fitted to unite among themselves the best minds of the age ⁽²⁰⁷⁾. It was his means of working for the kingdom of God. As Plato saw in friendship a creative force in the polis, productive like marriage but on a far higher plane, so did Alcuin see it as means of bringing about the religious and cultural renewal that was the dream of his age. Friendship was the only force capable of re-creating humanity, for friendship was the most complete actualization of the *caritas Christi*.

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(205) Carm. VII, 19, 1-12 (M.G.H., *Auct. antiq.*, IV, 1, 173); III, 19, 5-6 (71); Carm. append. 14, 5-8 (284).

(206) DUCKETT, p. 27: « Within his religion two intense forces played upon him: the need to teach, to help, to inspire, and the need to make and keep friendship, wherever he went. Behind both these motives lies personal attachment. . . . But behind all can be felt in him, now and again, a hint of inner uncertainty ».

(207) KLEINCLAUSZ quotes MONNIER, p. 208: « Cette correspondance, a-t-on pu dire, fut une véritable tâche qu'Alcuin s'imposa, tâche agréable et toute sociale; elle porta les plus beaux fruits; il s'instruisit, il rapprocha les esprits ».