

(1869), 216 ff.; and *Gesch. d. christl. Eth.*, § 122; ZIEGLER, *Gesch. d. christl. Eth.* (2nd ed.), chap. v; SIDGWICK, *Hist. of Eth.* (3rd ed.), 145; SIEBECK, in *Arch. f. Gesch. d. Philos.*, x. 521 ff. The derivation of the term is discussed in the *Athenaeum* (London) for 1877, i. 738, 798, iii. 16, 48.

Synechism [Gr. *συνεχής*, continuous, holding together, from *σύν* + *ἔχειν*, to hold]: not in use in the other languages. That tendency of philosophical thought which insists upon the idea of continuity as of prime importance in philosophy, and in particular, upon the necessity of hypotheses involving true continuity.

A true CONTINUUM (q. v.) is something whose possibilities of determination no multitude of individuals can exhaust. Thus, no collection of points placed upon a truly continuous line can fill the line so as to leave no room for others, although that collection had a point for every value towards which numbers endlessly continued into the decimal places could approximate; nor if it contained a point for every possible permutation of all such values. It would be in the general spirit of synechism to hold that time ought to be supposed truly continuous in that sense. The term was suggested and used by C. S. Peirce in the *Monist*, ii. 534 (July, 1892). Cf. PRAGMATISM, *passim*.

The general motive is to avoid the hypothesis that this or that is inexplicable. For the synechist maintains that the only possible justification for so much as entertaining a hypothesis, is that it affords an explanation of the phenomena. Now, to suppose a thing inexplicable is not only to fail to explain it, and so to make an unjustifiable hypothesis, but much worse—it is to set up a barrier across the road of science, and to forbid all attempt to understand the phenomenon.

To be sure, the synechist cannot deny that there is an element of the inexplicable and ultimate, because it is directly forced upon him; nor does he abstain from generalizing from this experience. True generality is, in fact, nothing but a rudimentary form of true continuity. Continuity is nothing but perfect generality of a law of relationship.

It would, therefore, be most contrary to his own principle for the synechist not to generalize from that which experience forces upon him, especially since it is only so far as facts can be generalized that they can be understood; and the very reality, in his way of looking at the matter, is nothing else than the way in

which facts must ultimately come to be understood. There would be a contradiction here, if this ultimacy were looked upon as something to be absolutely realized; but the synechist cannot consistently so regard it. Synechism is not an ultimate and absolute metaphysical doctrine; it is a regulative principle of logic, prescribing what sort of hypotheses are fit to be entertained and examined. The synechist, for example, would never be satisfied with the hypothesis that matter is composed of atoms, all spherical and exactly alike. If this is the only hypothesis that the mathematicians are as yet in condition to handle, it may be supposed that it may have features of resemblance with the truth. But neither the eternity of the atoms nor their precise resemblance is, in the synechist's view, an element of the hypothesis that is even admissible hypothetically. For that would be to attempt to explain the phenomena by means of an absolute inexplicability. In like manner, it is not a hypothesis fit to be entertained that any given law is absolutely accurate. It is not, upon synechist principles, a question to be asked, whether the three angles of a triangle amount precisely to two right angles, but only whether the sum is greater or less. So the synechist will not believe that some things are conscious and some unconscious, unless by consciousness be meant a certain grade of feeling. He will rather ask what are the circumstances which raise this grade; nor will he consider that a chemical formula for protoplasm would be a sufficient answer. In short, synechism amounts to the principle that inexplicabilities are not to be considered as possible explanations; that whatever is supposed to be ultimate is supposed to be inexplicable; that continuity is the absence of ultimate parts in that which is divisible; and that the form under which alone anything can be understood is the form of generality, which is the same thing as continuity. (C.S.P.)

Synergism (in theology) [Gr. *σύν* + *ἔργον*, work]: Ger. *Synergismus*; Fr. *synergisme*; Ital. *sinergismo*. The theory which has found many forms of expression in the history of Christian doctrine, that in the regeneration of man there is a co-operation of the human will with the divine grace in such a way as to secure man's free initiative and responsibility for his own salvation.

For a special sense see MONERGISM and the controversy which it involves.

Literature: see MONERGISM, PELAGIANISM, and JANSENISM. (A.T.O.)