EDITORIAL

Since its foundation under the leadership of Father Walter Farrell, O.P., The Thomist has been edited and staffed by Dominican Friars as a service to the international intellectual community within the church and beyond. The journal's primary purpose has been to provide a forum for the publication of original work in philosophy and theology pursued in the spirit and tradition of Thomas Aquinas. The Thomist has been privileged to number among its authors over the years thinkers of great reputation and influence--like Maritain and Gilson, Chenu and Congar-as well as young scholars appearing in print for the first time in its pages.

The publication of this October 1986 issue brings the 50th anniversary volume of The Thomist to completion. The Thomist celebrates this milestone by observing a significant anniversary which coincides with its own: the centenary of the birth of Karl Barth.

The editors and staff take this occasion to reaffirm their commitment to the standing editorial policies which give The Thomist its particular character and quality.

EXTRA NOS-PRO NOBIS-IN NOBIS*

CHRISTIANS ARE THOSE from whom it is not hidden that in the hisfory of Jesus Christ their own history has taken place. By a living word spoken and received in the power of the Holy Spirit, they know that tihe history of Jesus Christ ,is the decisive moment which establishes their existence as Christiians. In the midst of aH other people they ,are free to see themselves as among those for whom and in whose place Jesus Christ did what he did. They are those whose lives he has entered precisely as the one who enacted a particular history, those by whom he is acknowledged, recognized and confessed 1as Lord. They are those whom he has given an active share in the history he enacted. Jesus Christ, his history, thus became and is the foundation of their Christian existence, his history and only his history. From him, his history, from knowledge of it, Christians arise, and to it they look back. It is the ground on whioh they stand. It is the air they b11eathe. It is the word ringing in their ears above and beyond all other words. It is the one light, incomparably bright, which illumines their way.

What is the "new garment" Christians have put on-and must continually put on-in order to be Christians? Is it the "new humanity"? Yes, but any suggestion that they may have produced it themselves, or that the garment is new while the wearer is not, is explicitly ruled out when we read in Gal. 3.27 ,and Rom. 13:14 that putting off the old humanity and putting on the new means putting on Christ. Who else but he is called the new or second Adam from heaven by whom the

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first and earthly Adam is taken off, superseded and oveTCOme (I Cor. 15:47)? His blood is the blood of the Lamb by which, in a bold combination of images, the garments of the elect are made white (Rev. 7:14, 19:13). Only with reference to him, it hardly needs to be said, can ,anyone seriously be addressed as a man or woman of God (II Tim. 8:17). When the new humanity is described as the inner person, the one meant is plain when Christians are summoned to test themselves against the knowledge that Christ is in them (II Cor. 13:5). Similarly, when reference is made to the believers' name as inscribed in the book of life, it is simplest ·and surest to think of *christianoi* (first ascribed to them in Antioch, according to Acts 11:26), and thereby once again of the name of Jesus Christ himself.

Only as his law (Gal. 6:2) can the work of the law be written in their hearts and fulfilled as God requires. The ·spiritual person is distinguished from the merely physical by the fact that spiritual persons have the "mind of Christ" *(nous christou,* I Cor. 2:16). By his circumcision (Col. 2:11)--or ·as the context makes clear, by his death-the new hearts in which he dwells by faith (Eph. 8:17) become and are centers for the living of new life.

Matters are no different when the New Testament speaks of the new birth or regeneration by which alone a person is qualified but also assured of entering God's kingdom. The "privilege" *(exousia)* by which people become children of God does not fall down on them from heaven, nor can it be conferred by other people, nor can they simply aSiSume it on their own. **It** is rather given them by the one to whom even John the Baptist could only bea,r witness, by the one who came into the world as the true light, by the one who came to his own though they received him not. He gives it as freedom to believe in him, in his name. Thus it came to pass that people were "born of God" (John 1:9-18). The christological turn, completely unexpected, in the conversation with Nicodemus points in this direction. At first being born "from

above" *(anothen,* Jn. 8: 8) is interpreted to mean being born "by the ·spirit" *(ek pneumatos).* Quite abruptly, however, the Son of Man's coming down from heaven (v. 18), and the cross as his exaltation on earth (compared to Moses's lifting up the bronze serpent in the wilderness), are described as the event, baffling to Nicodemus, whereby those who believe in him are to have eternal life. Thus, just as the first Adam became "a living being" *(psyche zosa),* so the second and last Adam became "a life-giving spirit" *(pneuma zoopoioun)* (I Cor. *15:* 45) . Through his, Jesus Christ's, resurrection Christians were born again to a living hope (I Pet. 1: 8). That God was pleased to reveal his Son in him (en emoi) is the decisive assertion in Paul's own accounJt of his conversion (Gal. 1: 16). Convevsely, but to the same effect, anyone in Christ is a new creature (II Cor. : 17) . Through him the Spirit has been poured out on us by God as the " washing of regeneration and •11enewal" (Tit. 8: 5f.). Nor is there a different meaning to the other passages whioh 1speak of the new birth from God. To sum up, it is a. fair reading of the ma.terial to ·say that the nativity of Christ is the nativity of every Christian; the birthday of every Christian is Christmas Day.

Finally, the matter oomes sharply into focus when we remember the pa;ssages where death is described as one's entry into life and thus as the foundation of Christian existence. According to the New there is no sense in which one's deaith as such, whether literal or figurative, conveys saving power to oneself. These passages have nothing to do with a mysticism of physical or spiritual dying, regardless of how often they may have been *so* construed. When the remarkable thing happens thait one loses one's life in order (only thus, but truly thus) to save it, then it takes place " for my sake and the gospel's" (Mk. 8: 85). The primary meaning here is not that one dies as a martyr or undertakes some other form of self-sacrifice for Jesus :and his cause. Although the saying may include that as well, the decisive point is elsewhere. The saving loss of life, of one's own life, occurs for

those who partake in the life-saving, life-giving loss of life of the One who is the origin, content ,and proclaimer of the gospel. It occurs for those who died in the death he suffered for them in their place, and who on that basis, again in community with him, ·are free to look and move forward to resurrection and life. According to Matt. 3: 15 Jesus spoke of his death as saving for many, for .all, when he explained the reason for commanding John the Baptist (*aphes arti)* to admit him along with all other people to the baptism of repentance in the Jordan: " For thus it is fitting *(prepon estin)* for us to fulfill all righteousness." In other words, and this is whait John the Baptist is to recognize by ·admitting him, Jesus must and will subject himself in full identification and solidarity with all others to what ha1s been announcerl in the preaching of the Baptist: divine judgment. Thereby he is to everything righteously demanded of all and thus the whole of God's righteous will. As attested by his letting himself be baptized with and like them, he thus takes up his messianic office. Indeed, the office he begins to exercise there he will bring to completion on the cross of Golgotha. In this office what will be and akeady is at stake is the justification, sanctification and vocation of this whole wretched people. Already, at this point, those baptized with and like him by John are passive participants in his death, not by virtue of their own bapbism, but by virtue of Jesus's letting himself be baptized with and like them, and by virtue of his thereby taking up and exercising his saving office on their behalf. How the events at Jordan and Golgotha are connected as beginning and end may be seen from the saying in Luke 12: *50.* There Jesus's death as the goal of his office is described as a baptism: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how I am constrained until it is accomplished!" That this baptism by death includes within itself his disciples and theh· dea1th may be seen in Mk. 10: 35-40. When the sons of Zebedee ask that in his future kingdom they may sit rut his right hand and his left, Jesus retorts with three points. Fiirst, he asserts: " You do not know what you are

asking." Then he queries whether they can drink the cup he drinks (implying that he already does so), or be baptized with the baptism with which he is baptized (agiain, the present tense). Finally, their bold assumnce that they can, he offers an unexpectedly positive reply: "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized." The quesrtion about places of honor remains open; they are to go to those for whom they are prepared and appointed. But the disciples have received a clear answer to a question unasked ,and apparently unconsidered: how one enters into that glory at all. One enters not because Jesus' baptism by death is something in which one could possibly take part, but because one's participation in it aotually becomes an event. If in pa,g,sing-but really only in passing- a reference to the martyrdom to be suffered by the disciples is also in view, the decisive reference of these prophecies is to the death of Jesus himself, in which they are appointed to take part. Jesus *does* not drink that cup for himself alone. Nor is he baptized with that baptism fo.r himself alone. It is for them iand in their stead that these things take place. And so in his death they also will die, and in that way gain entry into his glory (regardless of which places they occupy). Similarly, in the remaining statements of the New Testament, there is no sense in which one's being crucified or dying is regarded as redemptive in itself and as such. In itself one's death does not mean entry into God's kingdom, the grounding of one's Christian life, or hope for resurrection and eternal life. This holds true whether dea:th is taken in a literal or metaphorical sense. (Neither ils there any sense in which one's birth is sa.v-

in itself and as such, not even when one regards it as one's spiritual, moi.ial or religious rebirth.) In itself and as such death is the wages of sin (Rom. 6: 23). It came into the world :through sin and so spread to all human beings (Rom. 5: 21) for as long as it can and may. Through sin one dies (Rom. 7: 10). Christian mysrticism through the ages, which has often, paganly enough, led to death mysticism, ought to have taken

heed from such passages. In itself and as such our death is in no sense transition into life. Death *(thana.tos)* is the corruption *(phtora)* into which all inclinalbions *(phtronema)* of the flesh plunge us as iruto a ciabaraot. It is the evil fruit which, hav.ing been sown in th.re flesh, must be reaped (Gal. 6: 8; Rom. 8: 6). But Christ died, acoording to so many New Testiament p111Ssages, precisely "for our sins" (I Cor. 15: S). He bore our sins on the tree (I Pet. 2: 24). He was and is the Lamb of God, who accepts, bears and takes away the sin of the world (Jn. 1: 29). Thus in his death he took the place of all human beings-the place where they should have undergone the desperate death of sinners. He gave his life as a ransom for many slaves (Mk. 10: 45 par.). He, the one without sin who was made to be sin, died just this desperate death, the accursed death of sinners on the cross (Gal. S: 18)-and he did it for us (I Thes. 5: 10). The death which comes to us as sinners is therefore something we neither can nor must undergo. Precisely the God-forsakenness of this death (Mk. 15: 84) is what we neither can nor must experience. For he has " tasted " it for us all (Heb. 2: 9). Since he died it in our place, we have it absolutely behind us. In his death we who deserved to die as he died are already put to death. With him Paul (Gal. 2: 19), once called Saul, is crucified-as is every one of us with the " old humanity " we all were and still are *(palaios anthropos)* (Rom. 6: 6), as are the two thieves, the unrepentant thief on the left no less than the repentant thief on the right (Mk. 15: 27). We are all dead with him. As the sinners we were and still are, we are all finished off, disposed of, and present no more in him. "One has died; therefore all have died" (II Cor. *5:* 14). How so? Because they have "appropriated" the crucifixion of Christ in the obedience of faith (R. Bultmann)? No doubt that also occurs as the necessary consequence of their dying with him, since they are to crucify the flesh with its passions and desires (Gal. *5:* 24; cf. Col. S: 5). But their saving death, in which they become Christians who do this, is something which promises new life because it hap-

pened the other way around. For while they were still enemies (Rom. 5: 10), thus at a time when there can be no talk about their obedience of faith, it was Jesus Christ who "appropriated" and took them up into his death! Their saving death took place not here and now, but most truly there and then, when they too were baptized in and with Jesus's baptism by death, when he "was lifted up from the earth" ("he said this to show by what death he was to die") and drew all human beings to himself (Jn. Hl: 32ff.). More precisely, it took place here and now by virtue of taking place there and then.

The origin and beginning of the Christian life is thus to be found in the history of Jesus Christ. In his history occurs the divine transformation whereby the impossible becomes not only possible but actual. The impossible happens in the move'.. ment "from faith to faith" *(ek pisteos eis pistin).* It happens from the depth and power of God's faithfulness to the corresponding faithfulness of human beings (Rom. 1: 17). The witness of the New Testament in this regard is too definite for there to be any evasion of this statement, too unequivocal to make possible its demythologization or reinterpretation. Many human and undertakings may have other origins and beginnings, but the Christian life, faithfulness to God as one's free act and deportment, begins with what actually took place in the days of Augustus and Tiberius, on the way from the manger of Bethlehem to the cross of Golgotha, according to the measure of what is possible with God *(para theou)* (Mk. 10: 22 par.). By originating and being grounded in the history of Jesus Christ, the change whereby one becomes a Christian is characterized, in contrast to all other remarkable changes, natural or supernatural, as a divine occurrence. Any description of the Christian life as having some other ground would only be describing a tree cut off at the root. Whatever might be said about it, it could not be said to have its own life, for that can only be had in unity with the root. Similarly, one's own life as a Christian is possible

and actual only in unity with its origin in Jesus Christ. We speak of its mystery when we say that it originates in his history, that it derives from the divine change which took place in him there and then. Nothing to be said in explanation of this statement can dispel the mystery. No explanation can make it anything but larger. Explanation can consist only in confirming it and making it more precise.

Let us turn immediately to the point where the statement seems to confront us with a riddle, so that we are understandably tempted either to evade it or to get around it by reinterpretation. Certainly it cannot be stressed too strongly that a person faithful to God cannot possibly be produced out of one who is not unless a change comes ove1· that person's life. Nor may this change be the awakening of one's natural capacities, nor one's being gifted with supernatural powers, nor one's being placed by God under another light and judgment whereby one can stand before God. It must rather be an inner change whereby one becomes a different person so that one freely, from within, and by one's own resolve, thinks, acts and conducts oneself differently than before. Does, then, the New Testament's unavoidable and unequivocal statement-namely, that the divine change which occurred in the history of Jesus is the origin and beginning of the Christian life-finally lead us to the highly unsatisfactory view that this change does not affect human beings themselves (who, after all, are not Jesus Christ and whose history is not his history)? Does it mean that while the change might apply to human beings in some way it does not really touch them, that it must remain external and alien to them, that it simply is not and could not become their own change from disobedience to obedience? What took place *extra nos* is not only an event distant in time and space. It is also completely different from all our possibilities and actualities: the event of Jesus Christ's obedience, of his birth, self-proclamation and crucifixion, of his entire being and work as the true Son of God and Son of Man. What has he to do with me, this other who was born in Bethlehem

and who died on Golgotha there and then? What has the freedom of his life as the true Son of God and Son of Man to do with the liberation I need to be God's child, with my liberation to authentic humanity corresponding to the will of this Father? And what have I to do with him? How can it be that I so grow out of him as my root that he becomes one with me and I with him? How can it be that in unity with him I begin to live my life as a " Christian " life, as the life of a human being faithful to God? How can what he was and did *extra nos* come to be an event *in nobis?*

And if it does not become an event *in nobis,* how by virtue of his existence and history can or am I to be faithful to God-changed from an enemy to a friend, from a victim of death to a recipient of life, to a member of God's kingdom, a Christian? That is the question we must undoubtedly pose and just as undoubtedly answer.

Any solution may be assumed to be artificial which dissolves the contrast between Christ and the one who becomes a Christian. An artificial solution would the contrast which stands in the midst of their unity. For what is at stake in the grounding of the Christian life is an event between God and a human being, an event of genuine intercourse between two different partners. Any solution which obscures or denies this difference would falsify the matter before us.

A solution would therefore be artificial, on the one hand, if it could really be described *in mal,am partem* as " christomonist." Here the *in nobis,* the liberation of human beings themselves, would simply be a secondary extension, a mere reflection, of the act of liberation accomplished in the history of Jesus Christ, and thus *extra nos.* As the only truly acting and effective subject, Jesus Christ would be fundamentally alone. The faithfulness of human beings distinguished from him could not, then, be a response to the word of God's faithfulness spoken in his history. It would not be their own free act. It would be an aspect or appearance of the divine act accomplished in Jesus Christ. It would not be an act of human,

grateful obedience, which, though awakened and empowered by divine grace, is really humanly performed. It would simply be a passive human participation in that which God alone did in Jesus Christ. It would be strictly a divine action, not a human action evoked by and responsive to God. The invitation or summons: "Be reconciled to God" (II Cor. 5: 20) would be rendered superfluous and untenable from the very outset, for humanity's reconciliation with God would have been effected omnipotently in Jesus Christ. The summons would then be pointless and the act it calls for completely useless. How human activity could arise in correspondence to divine activity, the ethical problem of how Christian life originates, would thus be solved by rendering it irrelevant. All anthropology and soteriology would be swallowed up in Christology. But the New Testament witnesses, even in their most far-reaching sayings, did not think and speak like this, not even Paul in Gal. 2: 19f. They do not invite us to adopt such a "subjectivism from above." No one who wants to remain true to their teaching will think and speak in this way, not even under the compulsion of a valid " christocentric " intention. Authentic " christocentricity " will strictly forbid one to do so.

An " anthropomonist " solution, on the other hand, would also be artificial. Here salvation history would only truly and properly take place *in nobis.* Its subject would be none other than the human self. Jesus Christ and what took place in his history *extra nos* would be regarded as merely predicate and instrument, cipher and symbol, of what takes place *in nobis.* It would now be oneself who alone held center-stage while one transformed oneself into a Christian. As such the change in oneself, one's awakening, one's inner compulsion, one's decision for faith, hope and love would now be the truly divine change. In bringing about this change the history of Jesus Christ would perhaps serve as stimulus, instruction and aid, and perhaps (but only perhaps) indispensably so. But the prime moving cause, the secret, of one's salvation history

would be simply oneself. It would be one's own act of passing from unfaithfulness to faithfulness, one's free decision of obedience. Decision of obedience? Could it seriously be called that? A concrete other, who acts toward one with power, and who speaks to one in the word of promise as the beginning and end of one's change, would seem to be lacking. Hence the change would not really have the character of corresponding to the action of another. It would not really be a response to this word, an act of gratitude. And so here too the ethical problem of how the Christian life originates would be rendered irrelevant, but this time from the other side. For in relation to God one would now be one's own reconciler, teacher and master. Christology would be swallowed up in a self-sufficient anthropology and soteriology. It hardly needs to be said that the New Testament witnesses, even when they appeal most strongly to humanity, never think and speak in this way, not even in their most urgent ca.lls for repentance, decision, faith, patience and love. Once again, therefore, remaining true to their teaching means not being seduced by this monism, which in contrast to the first might be called " subjectivism from below."

Common to these obvious but distorted solutions is that they both approach the subject matter from the outside, and that is why they are both artificial. The both operate with an alien concept of unity. They do not allow the subject matter to be interpreted on its own terms, for they both conjure away the mystery which confronts us in it. But if the mystery is conjured away by being imprisoned in one of the two monistic formulas (perhaps even alternating between them both), then the subject matter has been falsified and drops from sight. No matter how successful the imprisonment, one is really talking about something else. And that is the very thing which here must not be allowed to happen. Only if the riddle is first accepted can one perceive how the matter interprets itself, how the riddle solves itself from within.

If we follow the singular movement of New Testament

thought, then on the one side we must establish that basically the riddle is posed quite simply by the mystery of God's faithfulness. For God's faithfulness is the mystery whereby One deals with all, the mystery whereby One affirms, rectifies, saves, gladdens and thereby summons to faithfulness each and every human being. In this faithfulness God shows that God is our God. For in faithfulness God intervenes in an act of self-giving to prosecute our cause before God, making a good cause out of our bad one. In this faithful work of God, the divine call is sounded forth; and whoever is free to hear and follow it, far from being irritated or offended, can only worship and praise. Everything unfolds of its own accord.

The history of Jesus Christ is different from all other histories. In its particularity, singularity and uniqueness, it cannot be compared or interchanged with any other. Different from all other histories, it demands the singular thinking of the New Testament witnesses (which must be accepted if it is to be understood) . As the history of salvation intended for all human beings, addressed to them and bestowed upon them by God's free grace, it is from the very first a particular history with a universal orientation and goal. As such it is not sterile but fertile, determining every human life anew. Occurring *extra nos* it is at the same time effective *in nobis,* instituting a new being for every person. It did not take place *extra nos* for its own sake but rather *pro nobis: qui propter nos homines et salutem nostram descendit de coelis.* This *pro nobis* or *propter nos* is to be taken quite literally. As the true Son of God and *so* as the true Son of Man, Jesus Christ was not only faithful to the faithful God, but by being faithful to God as his Father, according to God's righteous will, he was also true to us as his brothers and sisters. He was faithful to us by himself being given and by giving himself to fulfill in his person the covenant between God and humanity, by being faithful to God in our place, the place of those who had been unfaithful to God. By being in our place then and there what only he could be, he was also in our here and now, in the weakness,

godlessness, and enmity, in the heart, the personal center, of every human being's existence. But if he acts *extra nos pro nobis* and to that extent *in nobis,* that necessarily implies that he creates in the history of every human being, despite all their unfaithfulness, the beginning of a new history, their history as human beings become faithful to God. All this occurs because it is God who takes in hand the cause of every human being in Jesus Christ. Human being8 do not make this new beginning for themselves. They do not of themselves make themselves into another. They do not transform themselves as unfaithful people into people faithful to God. But on the way from Bethlehem to Golgotha which Jesus Christ, the true Son of God and so the true Son of Man, trod also for them, the new beginning of their lives was posited and established as people faithful to God. Because of this, their new beginning in the history of Jesus Christ, they themselves can and may live a new Christian life here and now, a life corresponding to the transformation of their hearts and their persons which took place there and then. That is the self-explication of the subject matter as rendered by the New Testament witnesses, whose way of thinking, concentrated on Jesus Christ, is admittedly singular. **It** should be clear that if we follow them, there can be no question of anthropomonism or what we have called " subjectivism from below." The grounding of the Christian life occurs not in that human beings step into the place of ,Jesus Christ as their own liberators, but in that Jesus Christ steps into the place of human beings in order at that very point to liberate them.

The self-explication of the subject matter, in which the riddle solves itself from within, needs to be pursued from the other side, however, in order to give more amplitude to the mystery. Just as the matter explicates itself from above to below, so also does it do so from below to above. And so the New Testament witnesses to this self-explication also present it with reference to the Christian life. By stepping into the place of human beings, doing in their place what they fail to do, and

being faithful to God at the very point of their unfaithfulness, Jesus Christ liberates, or through him God liberates, humanity, making human beings free to become faithful from their side. But what does that mean for us others who are not Jesus Christ if a history taking place *extra nos* also took place *pro nobis?* What does it mean if precisely this *pro nobis* is effective and entails that by taking place there and then as the history of this One, it also becomes an event here and now, *in nobis,* in the life of many? It evidently means-as the actualization of the fullness of divine possibility-that the God who acts in that history, while not finding and confirming an immediate relation between us and God, nonetheless creates and makes possible such a relation-a relation we ourselves could not create and make possible, but which once established we cannot escape. By intervening for us in Jesus Christ, God is present to us-not from afar, hut in greatest intimacy, confronting us now in our own existence, thinking and sensibility. Since the one who acts in the history of Jesus Christ is the righteous, merciful and as sucl1 omnipotent God, what thereby happens is this: *in nobis,* in our heart, in the very center of our existence, a contradiction is lodged against our unfaithfuJness. It is a contradiction that we cannot dodge, but have to validate. In confronting it we cannot cling to our unfaithfulness, for through it our unfaithfulness is not only forbidden, but canceled and rendered impossible. Because Jesus Christ intervenes *pro nobis* and thus *in nobis,* unfaithfulness to God has been rendered a basically impossible possibility. It is a possibility disallowed and thus no longer to he realized, a possibility with which we have no longer to reckon, one we recognize as eliminated and taken away by the omnipotent contradiction God lodges within us. What then? One and only one thing remains to us, to will and to do that which is positively prefigured in the deed of the true Son of God and Son of Man acting *pro nobis* and *in nobis,* namely, to become faithful to God! That is our liberation through the divine change which occurs in the history of Jesus Christ. This change insti-

tuted by God is truly our liberation as human beings. It comes upon us completely from the outside, completely from God's side-but as our liberation. As in general so here in particular, God's omnicausality must not be construed as God's soJe causality. The divine change by virtue of which one becomes a Christian is an event of genuine intercourse between God and human beings. As certainly as it originates in God's initiative, so just as certainly human beings are not bypassed in it. Rather, they are taken seriously as independent creatures of God. They are not overrun and overpowered, but placed on their own feet. They are not infantilized, but addressed and treated as adults. The history of Jesus Christ does not blot out the history of our own lives as human beings. By virtue of his history, the history of our lives is made new while still remaining ours. The faithfulness to which we are summoned is not an emanation of God's faithfulness. It is really our own faithfulness, decision and act. It would not be ours had we not been liberated to it. But we are liberated to it as our own deed, as our response to the Word of God spoken to us in the history of Jesus Christ. Therefore, just as in this matter there can be no "subjectivism from below," so also there can be no "subjectivism from above." Just as there can be no anthropomonism, so also can there really be no christomomsm.

KARL BARTH

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF KARL BARTH FOR CONTEMPORARY THEOLOGY

THE CENTENNIAL OBSERVATION of Karl Barth's th provides a happy opportunity to reassess the sigficance of the Swiss theologian's work. Such a reappraisal is needed, because American theologians since the 1960s have tended to dismiss Barth as a once influential figure in a now discredited theological movement called " neo-orthodoxy ." [1] Setting aside the oddity of a classification which lumps together such diverse thinkers as Barth, Brunner, Bultmann, Tillich, and the Niebuhrs, this easy dismissal hardly does justice to the man who produced the most wide-ranging theological work of the twentieth century, the *Church Dogmatics.*

In this essay I will assess Barth's importance for contemporary theology by first viewing his thought in the context of the disputes surrounding the promulgation of the Barmen Declaration. Through an analysis of the criticisms directed against Barth by his conservative German Lutheran opponents of the 1930s, I will seek to show the ecumenical significance of Barth's work for theology in the 1980s. My introductory comments will focus on the Protestant tradition, because the theological and political disputes of those years were carried on in isolation from the Roman Catholic community. [2]

1 Both Protestant and Catholic theologians have tended to group Barth with the "neo-orthodox" movement. See, for example, Langdon Gilkey, *Naming the Whirlwind* (Indianapolis. Bobbs-Merrill, 1969), pp. 73-106: and David Tracy, *Blessed Rage for Order* (New York: Seabury Publishing House, 1978), pp. 27-31. Tracy treats Barth and the other "neo-orthodox" theologians simply as "critical moments " in the history of modern liberalism.

2 The definitive work on the church in Nazi Germany is Klaus Scholder, *Die Kirchen und das dritte Reich,* (Frankfurt: Ullstein, 1977). Only the

The issues raised in that Reformed-Lutheran squabble in those early years of the Third Reich have, however, a continuing significance for contemporary Christian theologians from the full spectrum of confessional traditions.

The Barmen Synod of May, 1984, and its famous declaration were primarily the result of the efforts of Reformed theologians. Karl Barth's essay "Theologische Existenz Heute!" launched the confessional protest movement against state interference in church affairs.[3] While Martin Niemoller, a Lutheran pastor, founded the "Pastors' Emergency League," the impetus for a confessional synod was provided by those free Reformed churches which first met in Barmen in January, 1984, and issued a statement of theological confession and protest authored by Karl Barth.[4] The subsequent confessional synod met on May 29-81 at the Reformed Church of Barmen-Gemarke, and Barth, of course, authored the document we now know as the Barmen Declaration. Though Lutheran theologians and pastors were involved in the preparations for the Barmen synod, their direct contributions were rather limited. In fact, Barth reported that he wrote a first draft of the theological declaration while his two Lutheran colleagues, Thomas Breit and Hans Asmussen, took three hour long naps! With some glee Barth described the occasion. "The Lutheran

first volume, which deals with the period 1914-1933, of this projected two volume work has been completed. The best studies in English of the churches' encounter with Nazism are J. S. Conway, *The Nazi Persecution of the Churches Under Hitler, 1933-1945,* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1968) and Ernst Helmreich, *The German Churches Under Hitler,* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1979). For works which focus primarily on Roman Catholicism's situation in the Third Reich, see Gordon Zahn, *German Catholios and Hitler's Wars* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1962) and Guenter Lewy, *The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany* (New York: McGraw & Hill, 1964).

s *Theologische l!Jwistenz Heute,* 1 (1933). English translation: *Theological l!Jwistence Today,* trans. by R. Birch Hoyle (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1933).

4 Karl Barth, "Erklarung iiber das rechte Verstandnis der reformatorischen Bekenntnisse in der Deutschen Evangelischen Kirche der Gegenwart," *Theologische l!Jwistenz Heute,* 7 (1943), pp. 9-15.

Church slept and the Reformed Church kept awake ... I revised the text of the six statements fortified by strong coffee and one or two Brazilian cigars." [5]

Though Barth's account of Lutheran inaction was somewhat exaggerated, there can be no doubt that Barmen's chief critics were conservative Lutheran theologians. Lutheran opposition to the Declaration surfaced even before the Synod met. Hermann Sasse, one of the members of the Reich Council of Brethren which organized the Barmen Synod, refused to endorse the Declaration, because he believed that Lutheran and Reformed churches possessed insufficient doctrinal unity to issue a joint confession. Paul Althaus and Werner Elert, Professors of Systematic Theology on the influential Lutheran faculty at Erlangen, were among the leading theological critics of the Declaration and were responsible for the creation of the Lutheran Council, a mediating " third front " in the German Church Struggle, which drained valuable Lutheran support away from the Confessing Church. [6]

The Lutheran objections to Barth and Barmen were pri-

5 Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth: His Life from Letters and Autobiographical Texts,* by John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), p. 245. There is some controversy about whether this event occurred precisely as Barth described it. It certainly could not have occurred on May 16, because that afternoon Barth took the 3:11 train from Frankfurt back to Bonn. Most likely the famous "Lutheran siesta" took place on May 15. Helmut Traub recalls that Asmussen was overcome with an "acute migraine" and retired to his room after *Mittagessen* and that Breit received an urgent long-distance telephone call which occupied his time after the mid-day meal. Barth used that time to draft an initial version of the Barmen theses. Thus the event does not reflect quite so badly on the Lutheran participants as Barth's gleeful telling of the tale would imply. For a thorough reconstruction of the events of these days see Martin Rohkramer, "Die Synode von Barmen in ihren zeitgeschictlichen Zusammenhangen," *Bekennende Kirohe wagen,* edited by Jiirgen l\foltmann, (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1984), pp. 34-41.

6 A thorough analysis of the events which led to the creation of the Lutheran Council has yet to be done. The best current account is that of Gerhard Niemoeller, *Die erste Bekenntnissynode der Deutsohen Evangelisohen Kirahe zu Barmen,* Band 1, *Gesohiahte, Kritik, und Bedeutung der 8ynode and ihrer thoologisahen Erkliirung,* (GOttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959)' pp. 188-229.

marily theological and focussed on the Declaration's apparent rejection of the revelatory content of God's law. The well-known first article of the Declaration affirms Jesus Christ," the one Word of God," to be the sole source of God's revelation. [7] To German Lutheran ears that sounded like a familiar sixteenth century heresy. Werner Elert's assessment of that teaching is characteristically blunt. "That the Barmen Confession is a point-blank, provocative repetition of the antinomian false teaching of the Reformation will be immediately clear to anyone who stands not on the ground of Barmen but on that of the Lutheran Confessions . . . This explicit antinomian heresy ... is not a peripheral lapse of the Barmen Confession. It reveals far more the sense and intention of the entire Confession. This teaching is fundamental also for the entire ecclesiastical and church-political position of the Barmen Synod." [8]

Those are serious charges, "fightin' words" one might say, and they raise issues which are worthy of serious theological discussion and debate. But Elert issues this challenge in June of 1984, a full seventeen months after Hitler assumed the Chancellorship, nine months after the German Christian, Ludwig Muller, was elected Reich Bishop, just eight months after Reinhold Krause's scurrilous anti-semitic Sports Palace address, and a scant three months after the promulgation of the first of the Nuremburg laws. One might well ask whether this was the time to be raising questions about fine points of theological doctrine. And that is precisely what Elert's fellow Lutheran, Hans Asmussen, asked in a scathing response written just weeks after Elert's original attack on the Declaration.

" Excuse me, Herr Professor, for bringing to your attention the latest news. For the last year thousands of pastors have had their existence as Christian preachers threatened, thou-

1 *Die Bekenntnisse und grundsaetzlichen Aeusserungen zur Kirchenfrage,* gesammelt und eingeleitet von Karl Dietrich Schmidt, Band II (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1935), p. 93.

s *Allgemeine lDvangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung, 61* (June 29, 1934), p. 603.

sands of congregations have had their existence as Christian communities threatened. We find ourselves in a raging sea after a shipwreck. A sea-worthy ship is near by, ready to rescue the shipwrecked. Believe me, those who have been shipwrecked will not jump into the water again, because an engineer on the land has shown that in his opinion our ship's mast is slightly askew." [9]

Asmussen then turns his ire directly on that dry and secure theological engineer for his failure ever to criticize the Deutsche Christen. " Violence, injustice, and false teaching were never sufficient grounds earlier for him to declare war on the other side. He won't even address us theologically. Otherwise he would have at least taken the trouble to read the Barmen Declaration properly. He wants war! Then let him have it! If God has allowed the confessing front to be formed without him, so also God will preserve it against him." [10]

By the end of 1938, however, the confessing front had been effectively eliminated as a force for nonconformism in the Reich. Hemmed in by legislative strictures devised by the Nazis and torn by internal strife, the Confessing Church so disintegrated that its leadership offered no word of protest following the horrible events of Kristallnacht in November of 1938.

The reasons for the ultimate collapse of the confessing church are many, and scholars of the Church Struggle have not yet reached consensus on this matter. But some factors have been clearly identified. Eberhard Bethge has shown that by 1938 resistance to the Nazis was possible only in the form of active disobedience against the government, and few in the Confessing Church were willing to engage in such activity. When war was finally declared Martin Niemoeller was among the first to volunteer for active service, and many Confessing Church

[9] Gerhard Niemoeller, *Die erste Bekenntnissynode der Deutschen Evangelischen Kirche zu Barmen,* Band I (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959)' p. 151.

[10] *Ibid.,* p. 150.

pastors foilowed his lead. Bethge writes that of the hundreds of young confessing pastors with whom he has spoken there was not one " who had not accepted the draft card as the long-sought opportunity to prove his inner national conviction and to sacrifice himself for the nation as a soldier." [11] German patriotism and nationalism ran deep, even among those who most courageously resisted the theological and church-political threat of the Deutsche Christen.

It may be that no amount of solidarity within the Confessing Church could have withstood the enormous pressures presented by the outbreak of the war. But the fact remains that very few Lutheran theologians and clergy were forced to make the momentous choice which Niemoeller and others had to face. The vast majority of Lutherans had by 1936 accepted the authority of the state-run Ministry for Church Affairs and participated freely in the new national German Evangelical Church. There can be no doubt that the early Lutheran opposition to Barmen seriously weakened the ability of the Confessing Church to serve as a force for nonconformism in German society from 1934-1938.

Why were theologians like Althaus, Elert, Gogarten, Sasse and others so unwilling to participate in the confessional movement? Again the reasons are complex and not yet fully obvious even to the most insightful of Church Struggle scholars. Some, like Arthur Cochrane, have ventured opinions. In his influential book *The Church's Confession Under Hitler* Cochrane writes that " Many Lutherans were jealous of the prominent part being played by Reformed Churchmen, and Karl Barth was especially obnoxious to them ... Depressing to record is the fact that at a time when the ' house was on fire,' when the very existence of the evangelical Church was at stake, many Lutherans were intent upon preserving institutional Luther-

[11] Eberhard Bethge, "Troubled Self-Interpretation and Uncertain Reception in the Church Struggle," *The German Ohurch Struggle and the Holocaust,* ed. by Franklin H. Littell and Hubert G. Locke (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1974), p. 177.

anism." [12] Such charges, though often repeated, hardly do justice to the theological seriousness of Barmen's Lutheran opponents. Their theological objections to Barmen's Barthian Christocentrism were authentic and cannot be dismissed as mere camouflage for positions which were essentially political or church-political in nature. On the other hand, the widespread support for Hitler among German Lutherans and their virulent opposition to the Confessing Church is deeply distressing. The full story of the Lutheran position in the early years of the Church Struggle has yet to be told.

It is not my intention to tell that story in this essay, though I hope my comments might illuminate a part of it. My primary task is a different one, viz., to assess the contemporary significance of the theology of Karl Barth. I have begun with this extended historical introduction, however, because theologians in America have hardly been more supportive of Barth's theology than their German predecessors. While there have been pockets of support for Barth's theology within American Christianity, most theologians have shared the widespread American view that Barth's opposition to natural theology, his rejection of any systematic connection between theology and philosophy, and his single-minded attention to the doctrine of revelation rendered his theology passe for the American cultural situation. Langdon Gilkey speaks for the majority of mainstream theologians in the following analysis of Barth's thought.

> [Barth's] theology presupposed a stark and real separation between the Church and the world, between belief and unbelief, between the Word of God and the secular . . . But the actual situation was by no means characterized by any such clear and distinct separation: the world was within the Church, belief was saturated by secular doubt, and no one, either in pew or pulpit, was sure a divine Word had been heard at all or a divine presence manifested. In such a situation, the theology that was unable to relate itself to ordinary experience was bound to falter-and it did . . . The

[12] Arthur Cochrane, *The Olvurch's Oonfession Under Hitler* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962), p. 197.

present unreality and so seeming impossibility of theological language about God stems fundamentally ... from this [Barthian] split between our existence in the secular world . . . on the one hand, and a theological language, on the other, that has had no essential touch with that world.[13]

These objections to Barth's theology appear to be vastly different from those conservative, and somewhat parochial, criticisms of Barmen's German Lutheran detractors. And yet, I want to suggest, they share one crucial characteristic. Both sets of criticisms reflect the predominant intellectual and political sentiments of their respective sub-cultures. Althaus and Elert represent that broad cultural tradition of post-Reformation Germany: confessionally Lutheran, politically conservative and monarchial, socially aristocratic. These are the people who found themselves displaced and alienated from the political democracy and cultural freedom of Weimar culture. Writing in 1927 Althaus bemoaned the decadence of the German nation.

Germany appears everywhere to be painfully degenerate. Our Volk has lost itself ... Lost itself to civilization, lost to foreign ways ... splintering into the mass instead of membership in the Volk body, a ' society ' of unbound individuals instead of organic community, uprootedness and homelessness . . . disinheritedness instead of life in the traditions of our fathers ... the takeover by foreign influences of our literature, theater, art, fashions, and celebrations, of party ways and of public life, our abandonment to Volkless money powers.[14]

As the antidote to these poisonous modern ways the confessional Lutherans urged to reaffirmation of the God-given unity between the spirit of Lutheranism and that of the German Volk. " The peculiar form that Christianity has taken on in its evangelical aspect," wrote Emanuel Hirsch, " derives from the

13 Langdon Gilkey, *Naming the Whirlwind* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1969), pp. 102-103.

14 Paul Althaus, *Evangelium und Leben: Gesammelte Vortrage* (Giitersloh: Verlag von C. Bertelsmann, 1927), p. 115. Quoted in James Zabel, *Nazism and the Pastors* (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1976), p. 85.

meeting of German humanity with the Gospel." [15] " The present historical hour " was so crucial because it represented the flowering of that implicit eternal covenant between Lutheranism and the Germanic heritage *(Deutschtum)* . Lutheranism was, Althaus argued, the peculiar German form of religion. " The way that Germans conceive of the reality of God and the form of Jesus Christ ... corresponds in its depths to the Germanic type and makes the German and the Biblical ... so kindred to each other." [16] Though Althaus later withdrew his support from such Volkish sentiments, he remained wedded to these cultural and political notions at least through 1935.

Contemporary American critics of Barth are also wedded to particular cultural and political conventions of our society. In no way do I want to suggest that the liberal intellectual and political traditions of our culture pose the same kind of dangers as the Volkish ideology of nineteenth and twentieth century Germany. In many ways Barth's liberal American critics stand on the opposite end of the political spectrum from their German Lutheran counterparts. They would undoubtedly have felt at home in that Weimar culture so alien to the Volkish theologians. Nothing could be more repugnant to these contemporary theologians than the assertion of an eternal covenant between the Christian gospel and a particular national or cultural group. They have embraced that spirit of free inquiry born of the Enlightenment which Volkish thinkers so feared. Indeed, they most often criticize Barth for his apparent arbitrary and inconsistent use of the tools of critical inquiry. Barth's argument concerning the historicity of the resurrection is, Van Harvey asserts, " either arbitrary or a sacrifice of the intellect ... He makes historical assertions on the basis of faith which he then claims no historian has the right to assess. He claims that the bodily resurrection is a guarantee that it was Jesus who appeared to the disciples and

[15] Emanuel Hirsch, *Deutsohes Volkstum und evangelisoher Glaube* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1934), p. 5. Quoted in Zabel, p. 51.

[10] .Althaus, op. cit., p. 97. Quoted in Zabel, p. 63.

yet insists that no historian can, in the nature of the case, assess this claim ... Barth, in effect, claims all the advantage of history but will assume none of its risks." [17]

And yet for all their distance from the conservative Germans of the 30s, Barth's contemporary detractors assert their own form of an "eternal covenant." Langdon Gilkey, Van Harvey, Gordon Kaufman, Schubert Ogden, David Tracy all submit to some version of that creed first and most powerfully articulated by Friedrich Schleiermacher. " Shall the tangle of history," Schleiermacher asked, "so unravel that Christianity becomes identified with barbarism and science with unbelief? . . . Unless the Reformation from which our church first emerged endeavors to establish an eternal covenant between the living Christian faith and completely free, independent scientific inquiry, so that faith does not hinder science and science does not exclude faith, it fails to meet adequately the needs of our time." [18]

One of the most distinctive aspects of Barth's theology is his adamant refusal to subscribe to either form of the eternal covenant. And that refusal has earned him the ire of both his German and American critics. To claims that the Volkish revolution represented the consummation of the divine covenant between Lutheranism and Germanic culture Barth replied simply, "I continue to do theology, and only theology, as if nothing had happened." [19] To claims that the Christian faith must be eternally yoked with free scientific inquiry Barth responded with characteristic irony, "Christianity need not accompany barbarism nor scholarship unbelief. Natural science and biblical criticism can come ... The little ship of the church in which we are all voyaging is protected against overturning. No war will be declared and no one will be shut out.

17 Van A. Harvey, *The Historian and the Believer* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966), pp. 157-158.

18 Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On the Glaubenslehre,* trans. by James Duke and Francis Fiorenza (Ann Arbor: Scholars Press, 1981), pp. 61, 64.

10 *Theologisohe E11Jistenz Heute,* 1 (1933), p. 3. ET: *Theological E11Jistenoe Today,* trans. by R. Birch Hoyle (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1933), p. 9.

Is not all this very remarkable? There are only two mourners, the Bible and the Reformation." [20]

I want to argue that Barth's rejection of the notion of any eternal covenant between the Christian faith and science, culture, politics, or philosophy ought not be the basis for a critique of his theology but is in fact the key to an appreciation of Barth's contemporary significance. In repudiating the *etem<il* covenant, Barth does not thereby cut all ties between Christian theology and the intellectual and cultural resources of contemporary society. Gilkey and others are simply wrong when they claim that Barth " presupposes a stark separation " between church and world, faith and secularity, theology and culture. Rather, Barth takes the relationships among those pairs to be endlessly fascinating and complex. No single systematic scheme could possibly encompass the variety of relations between theology and culture. No general philosophical ontology could acoount for the complicated relation between Christian faith and secular self-understanding. Any theology which yokes itself to a systematic philosophy, no matter how general or formal, will inevitably, Barth believed, lose touch with the surprising variety and particularity of God's creation reconciled in Jesus Christ, with the boundless possibilities for interaction between the Christian gospel and contemporary culture. Barth did not eschew philosophy; he simply used it eclectically in service of the Christian faith.

That observation points to a second major reason for Barth's repudiation of the eternal covenant. Barth's reading of the history of modern theology convinced him tha;t any systematic correlation between Christian discourse and the language of culture threatened the independence and integrity of the Christian faith. Christian language does, in its own halting and piecemeal fashion, describe the reality of the world in which we all live, a world whose origin and destiny are deter-

[20] Karl Barth, "Concluding Unscientific Postscript on Schleiermacher," *Karl Barth: The Theology of Schleiermacher,* ed. by Dietrich Ritschl, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), p. 205.

mined by the reconciliation accomplished in Jesus Christ. Insofar as the language does truly describe, its irreducible integrity and distinctive logic must be preserved. Because that language describes our common world of experience, it must be related to other forms of human discourse, but the terms of that relation must always be ruled by the logic of the Christian gospel. Though he rejects any eternal covenant between the gospel and culture, Barth willingly adopts a series of *a,d hoc.* alliances, for example, between theology and philosophy. But every use of philosophy in theology is for Barth simply the temporary borrowing of a tool to help us better understand the complex meaning of the Christian gospel. Barth's view of the role of philosophy in the development of theological method is strikingly similar to that of a rather surprising colleague, Bill James, a sabermatrician, who writes in the 1984 version of his *Baseball Abstraot,* "Methods are roads that one travels on in searching for the truth, and like all roads they can be constructed and abandoned as needed." [21]

I want to argue that Barth's rejection of the eternal covenant is as relevant for our own time as it was for Germany of the 1930's. In the next section of this essay I will try to show that Barth's theological argument against the German Christians and their implicit supporters, those whom Barth termed " mediating theologians," is nothing more than an outgrowth of his doctrine of revelation. For Barth proper speech about God and appropriate political action go hand in hand. Since Barth developed the theological implications of his view of revelation in much greater detail than the political implications, I will focus on Barth's distinctive contribution to theological method. Then in the following section I will attempt to show why and how Barth's conception of theology remains peculiarly appropriate for a secular and pluralistic culture like our own in which we struggle to maintain and develop an appropriate sense of Christian identity. I realize that, particular-

[21] Bill James, *The Bill James Baseball Abstract* 1984, (New York: Ballantine Books, 1984), p. 9.

ly as I explicate Barth's understanding of revelation, I run the risk of inviting my readers to join Thomas Breit and Hans Asmussen in a post-dinner siesta. Hans Frei has remarked that "there is nothing as wooden to read as one's own or others ' restatements of Barth's terms, his technical themes and their deployment . . . For that reason," Frei continues, "reading' Barthians,' unlike Barth himself, can often be painfully boring." [22] While I am surely no "Barthian," that hardly protects me from anaesthetizing my readers in my summary of Barth's position. I will try, as best I can, to be clear and mercifully brief.

Late in 1933 Barth offered the following assessment of the theology of the German Christian movement. " Because the teaching and conduct of the ' German Christians ' is nothing else than an especially striking consequence of the whole development of modern Protestantism since 1700, the protest is directed against an existing and spreading corruption of the whole evangelical Church." [23] Barth was convinced that the Volkish heresy of the German Christians was not simply an anomalous outbreak of bizarre false teaching but was rather a consistent development of the neo-protestant theology begun by Schleiermacher. Moreover, Barth argued that those, like the confessional Lutherans, who refused to join the confessing church movement were for all their apparent conservativism infected by the mediating tendencies of neo-protestantism. For a long time I believed that charge to be at best an example of Barth's rhetorical bluster and at worst a libelous condemnation of a noble theological tradition. I still believe that Barth's way of arguing his case is wrong-headed and confusing. No historical line can be drawn from Schleiermacher

ll2Hans W. Frei, "An .Afterword: Eberhard Busch's Biography of Karl Barth," *Karl Barth in Re-View,* ed. by H. Martin Rumscheidt. (Pittsburgh: The Pickwick Press, 1981), p. 109.

2s "Lutherfeier," *Theologische lflwistenz Heute,* 4 (1933), p. 20.

and Ritschl to Joachim Hossenfelder and Emanuel Hirsch. And yet there is, I am now convinced, more to Barth's charge than one might immediately assume. The connections between neo-protestantism and the Volkish theology of the 1930s are neither as obvious nor as systematic as Barth believed them to be. Indeed, I would argue that the similarities between the movements are limited to a single instance, viz., that both affirm some version of what I have called an eternal covenant between the Christian faith and modern culture. And that similarity is what binds both movements to Barth's contemporary American critics.

Barth's rejection of the eternal covenant is grounded in his distinctive conception of revelation.[24] While Barth's name and reputation will be forever linked with that doctrine, many accounts of his position tend to blur Barth's distinctive contribution to our thinking about revelation. Unlike those twentieth century thinkers with whom he is often lumped, the so-called neo-orthodox theologians, Barth does not conceive- of revelation primarily as the process by which we come to know God. For Barth revelation denotes the content of our knowledge of God, and his reflections concerning the process by which we come to know have a distinctly secondary status. For Barth the category of revelation cannot be separated from God's identity, because revelation is nothing other than the being of God in verbal form. It is, to use Barth's own language, the "reiterated being" of God, i.e., God's inner-trinitarian being made available in word and history. Thus Barth begins his

24 My summary of Barth's position on revelation is derived from a reading of his *Church Dogmatics,* vol. I, pt. 1: *The Doctrine of the Word of God,* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975); *ool. 1, pt. 2 The Doctrine of the Word of God,* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1956); vol 2, pt. 1 *The Doctrine of God,* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1957); vol. 2, pt. 2 *The Doctrine of God,* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1957). The best secondary treatment of Barth on revelation is Eberhard Jiingel's masterful paraphrase *The Doctrine of the Trinity,* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1976). For a critique of the standard modern doctrine of revelation and a contemporary reformulation of the doctrine see, Ronald F. Thiemann, *Revelation and Theology: The Gospel as Narrated Promise,* (Notre Dame, Ind.: Notre Dame, 1985).

reflection on revelation in the *Church Dogmatics* with a section entitled "The Place of the Doctrine of the Trinity in Dogmatics." [25] He does that not simply to appear stolid and old-fashioned in a notoriously faddish discipline but because God's revelation *is* his triune being, or better: his triune identity. If God is identified solely through his revelation, then theology must begin by reflecting upon God's identity, and in Christianity that means beginning with the doctrine of the trinity.

It is a]so noteworthy that Barth almost never speaks of "the problem of revelation." For Barth revelation is never a problem; it is always the solution to a problem, the answer to a question. The human problem to which revelation offers a solution is the problem of proper speech about God. How are we sinful human beings to speak of the holy and transcendent God? Ba.rth captured the essence of that dilemma in his famous 1927 essay, "The Word of God and the Task of Ministry." "We ought to speak of God," Barth writes. "'We are human, however, and so cannot speak of God. We ought therefore to recognize both our obligation and our inability and by that very recognition give God the glory. This is om; perplexity. The rest of our task fades into insignificance by comparison." [26]

In Barth's hands the quintessential modern question, "How is knowledge of God possible?" takes on a distinctive, almost idiosyncratic shape. Most modern theologians, when faced with that question, have sought to show that human beings possess an innate capacity for relation to God. Knowledge of God is possible, these theologians have argued, because we are creatures made in God's image and thus fit for relation with God by virtue of our rationality, our ability for self-consciousness and self-transcendence, or our capacity for language, that

25 *Ohurch Dogmatics,* vol. 1, pt. 1, *The Doctrine of the Word of God,* pp. 295ff.

26 Karl Barth, "The Word of God and the Task of the Ministry," *The Word of God and the Word of Man,* trans. by Douglas Horton (n.p.: The Pilgrim Press, 1928), p. 186.

is, by virtue of some natural human capability. These arguments for *homo religiosis* have a common philosophical structure. Most theologians seek to show by a necessary or transcendental argument that human existence possesses an ontological depth or root which is irreducibly religious. David Tracy, for example, argues that the religious dimension becomes manifest in certain " boundary " or " limit " situations where, in an ecstatic moment, " we experience a reality simply given, gifted, happened ... The objective referent of all such . . . experience is that reality which religious human beings mean when they say ' God.' " [21] To be human is to be religious, and to be religious is to be in relation to God. The possibility for knowledge of God is thus grounded in some universal quality of human being.

Such arguments are clearly manifestations of belief in the eternal covenant. Knowledge of God, or a relation to God, is an eternai. human possibility. God and humanity are bound to one another in an eternal covenant grounded in human nature. Barth's rejection of such arguments, that is, his rejection of every form *of* natural theology, is based on his conviction that the eternal covenant, in all its forms, finally limits the utter graciousness of God. The possibility for knowledge of God, Barth argues, is grounded not in any human capacity or capability but within God's own trinitarian being. The possibility for relation to and knowledge of God is primarily and properly God's own possibility. That assertion once again brings the doctrine of the trinity to the fore in Barth's thinking. The triune God lives in self-differentiated relation. The differentiated " persons " of the triune reality are unified precisely as they participate in one another. And that participation establishes a relation of mutual love and self-knowledge within God's being *ad intra.* Thus God is knowable *in se,* i.e., in God's own inner being. So also God is in loving relation *in se,* independent of any relation to reality external to God.

[21] David Tracy, *Blessed Rage for Order* (New York: Seabury Publishing House, 1978), p. 106.

God's knowability is not established by his relation to human beings, for God is knowable in himself. But God does in an act of sheer grace deign to share his knowability with us. In Christ and in the gospel which proclaims him God shares with us that possibility which is properly his own-that possibility for knowledge of God and for a loving relation with God.

How does this trinitarian view of revelation help us address the problem of the possibility of theological language? How does this bold assertion of the priority of God's grace assist us in speaking of God? Barth argues that God's revelation provides the only possible basis for proper speech about God. Because God has made himself available to us in the one Word, Jesus Christ, we are now enabled to undertake an interpretation of that revelation. Our speech is truly speech about God if we follow the path which God himself has laid out for us in his revelation. Theological interpretation is always an act of faithful obedience in which we submit our powers of mind and imagination to the guidance of the spirit through the scriptural text which witnesses to Christ. The interpretive relationship between text and reader is complex, for it involves both the guidance of the Spirit and the free but obedient act of theological interpretation. Thus Barth sometimes speaks of revelation as " God's self-interpretation," almost as if to suggest that our interpretive faculties play no role in understanding that revelation. In the same way he so stresses our obedient response to revelation that he seems to deny completely any moment of freedom in the interpretive act. So he writes in a wonderful early essay entitled " Fate and Idea in Theology": "Faith is not the kind of knowledge in which we can see ourselves as creative. In this knowledge we must rather see ourselves as obedient ... Obedience here must be pure obedience . . . There can be no question of reciprocity between God's action and our own." [28]

[28] Karl Barth, " Schicksal und !dee in der Theologie," *Theologische Fragen und Antworten,* (Evangelischer Verlag, 1957). This passage (pp. 32-33) and all subsequent quotations are from George Hunsinger's typescript translation of this essay.

On the other hand, Barth can acknowledge the need for full engagiement of our intellectual faculties in the task of interpreting God's revelation. In *Evangelical Theology* he writes, "The central affirmations of the Bible are not self-evident; the Word of God itself, as witnessed to in the Bible, is not immediately obvious in any of its chapters or verses. On the contrary, the truth of the Word must be *sought* precisely, in order to be understood in its deep simplicity. Every possible means must be used ... not the least, the enlistment of every device of the conjectural imagination." [29]

Theology is for Barth a hermeneutical activity in which the theologian in the context of the Christian community seeks to give, in Hans Frei's helpful phrase, a faithful redescription of the biblical narrative. Theology is a human activity through which God's revelation manifests itself in human speech. "Thinking and speaking humanly, all too humanly, yet nevertheless letting God's Word be said-that is the task of theology. It is the task of a theology which, granted God's grace, thinks and speaks not about [the] boundaries of human thought, but with all possible obj:ectivity about God." [ao] Christian theology must always have that dual emphasis on God'e guiding grace and free human inquiry, but if priority is to be given (as Barth believes it must) to God's free grace then the two elements of interpretation can never be systematically correlated. Theology must reflect the dialectical character of the revelation it seeks to redescribe. Our knowing of God must conform to God's knowability, i.e., to the very structure of God's being as made known to us in his revelation. Though God can truly be known in our act of interpretation, he remains in sovereign control of his own knowability. In his act of revelation God is simultaneously revealed and hidden-revealed because he truly makes himself available to us, hidden because he remains in sovereign control of his self-manifesta-

[29] Karl Barth, *Evangelical Theology,* trans. by Grover Foley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963), p. 35.

[so] Karl Barth, "Fate and Idea in Theology," p. 9.

tion. Since God's prior movement to us is the necessary condition for our knowing, we can discern his being only in the place where he has freely chosen to share himself with us. Moreover, we can interpret rightly only as we seek to conform our knowing to his knowability, i.e., as we fashion our thinking according to the pattern through which he has shared himself. Revelation is thus both God's self-interpretation and our interpretation of God. But our interpretation of revelation can be true only as it seeks to conform itself to the pattern and structure of God's being as shown in his revelation. Theology is the search to discern the being of God in the words of the biblical text.

Barth, of course, does not simply equate the being of God and the biblical text, for that would be a denial of God's hiddenness. For Barth all knowledge of God has a " sacramental " quality, because we come to know God through a creaturely medium which is not God, an external reality which he has chosen as the vehicle for revelation, namely, the humanity of the man Jesus. We cannot know God in any and every piece of creaturely reality, but only where he has freely chosen to reve:il himself. In choosing the humanity of Jesus, he has provided a sacramental and thus indirect access to himself. But there is a further element of indirectness which affects the nature of the theological task. Jesus Christ as God incarnate is God's sacramental presence among humankind, but even that sacramental presence cannot be known directly, for God is known in Jesus Christ only through the witness of the biblical narrative. As the history of God's action (and thus his being) in Jesus Christ is narrated in scripture, we come to know the of Jesus Christ and thereby to know God. Such knowing and consequent speech of God is a reliable reflection of God, because God's being is always in his Christological acts. But this knowing process is always indirect, and thus theology must always rely on the all-too-human traits of imagination, intellect, and wisdom as we strive to offer a faithful account of God's revelation in Jesus Christ.

Theologians will and should continue to have their quarrels with Karl Barth. Those in the Catholic tradition in particular will remain dissatisfied with Barth's refusal to extend his notion of the sacramental to include the earthly elements of bread, wine, water, and words. Barth's adamant restriction of God's sacramental action to the humanity of Jesus will appear to some to be an unhappy restriction of the notion of church as the body of Christ. So too many theologians will remain cool to Barth's characteristic Reformed emphasis on election and the peculiar Christological ontology which emerges from his distinctive view of God's predestinating activity. As Robert Jenson has so clearly shown, a little more emphasis on promise and futurity offers a salutary corrective to Barth's fascination with primal beginnings.[81]

But none of these matters, important as they may be, imply a criticism of Barth's basic view of the theological task. On that question, it seems to me, Barth is exactly right. Barth is the great modern defender of the Augustinian/ Anselmian view of theology as *fides quaerens intellectum.* Theology in this mode is faith's endeavor through the use of reason to offer a " conceptual redescription of the biblical narrative." Theology in Bru-th's understanding is located squarely within the Christian e:ommunity and begins its reflection with the "objective credo " of the Christian church, its confession that God is known in Jesus Christ. For Barth theology is a hermeneutical task which begins with a text which must be interpreted in the context of a living tradition. But this does not in any sense imply a " stark separation " between church and world or the gospel and human culture. Nor does it mean that contemporary philosophical and cultural resources cannot be used in the theological task. They can and must be used, though they must always be used in a way that allows the distinctive logic of the Christian gospel to guide and shape that use.

It is important to remember that for Barth the hiddenness

a1 Robert Jenson, *Alpha and Omega: A Study in the Theology of Karl Barth* (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1963).

of God is an inescapable presupposition of theology's hermeneutical task. The theologian's job is to reflect upon that which has been confessed in the church's credo in an attempt to bring the being of God to speech, to trace its internal logic, to redescribe it conceptually. The accomplishment of that task requires an act of human interpretation, and all interpretation requires the use of reason, imagination, and their conceptual and aesthetic resources. Precisely because the knowledge of God is indirect, a space is opened which can only be filled by the jmaginative act of the theologian. The theologian does not simply repeat the biblical narrative but rather interprets it or conceptually redescribes it. For that task, as Barth himself says, " every possible means must be used " including the resources of philosophy and contemporary culture.

It is this view of theology which, I believe, makes Karl Barth such an important figure for the contemporary theological task. His view of the theologian as one who responds faithfully to God's reconciling grace, his conception of theology as faith seekiug understanding, his rejection of any form of the eternal covenant: these are the qualities which establish the continuing significance of Barth's theology. The reasons for Barth's continued relevance are both perennial and contemporary. His view of theology in my estimation gives the most appropriate methodological shape to the Christian doctrine of justification. No other contemporary view of theology gives such consistent witness to the primacy of God's grace in the theological task. In his greater Galatians commentary Luther characterizes the doctrine of justification as follows: "We continually teach that knowledge of Christ and of faith is not a human work but utterly a divine gift . . . What the Gospel teaches and shows me is a divine work given to me by sheer grace." [82] I know of no other modern theologian whose work gives such eloquent witness to that perennial Christian teaching as does the theology of Karl Barth.

s2 *Lectures on Galatians,* Volume 26, *Luther's Works,* ed. by Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis : Concordia, 1963) , pp. 64, 72.

But Barth's theology also offers resources for responding to the peculiar problems of our contemporary age. And I want to conclude with a few remarks on that topic. The greatest challenge of post-Enlightenment theology has been to restate the Christian Gospel under the changed conditions of the modern world, that is, in an intellectual and cultural atmosphere in which the reality of God, and perforce of his grace, has been decisively questioned. Not only has the theistic consensus of Christendom collapsed in our day but powerful non-theistic alternatives have been proposed. Modern theologians are confronted not only by the logical possibility of atheism, but by its apparent instantiation in those who claim with Pascal's interlocutor, " I am so made that I cannot believe." [33]

Most modern theologians believe that the challenge of atheism is most aptly met by once again asserting the eternal covenant between the Christian faith and rationality. The problems with this approach are manifold. I have already discussed some of those difficulties in my treatment of Barth's criticisms of neo-protestantism, most importantly the failure of this approach to give sufficient emphasis to the primacy of God's grace. But I want to conclude by suggesting that a theology which asserts the eternal covenant is particularly ill-suited to meet the peculiar problems of our post-modern age.

There is widespread agreement that contemporary Western culture has become radically pluralistic. Most theologians accept cultural, religious, and theological pluralism as the inevitable context within which theology must operate. Yet for all the recognition, celebration, and/or bemoaning of pluralism, there is precious little serious analysis of the nature and consequences of the phenomenon. Clearly I have neither the time nor perhaps the competence to develop such an analysis, but I do want to point to two characteristics of our pluralistic situation which raise serious questions to those theologies committed to the eternal covenant.

[33] Blaise Pascal, *Pensees,* trans. by A. J. Krailsheimer (New York: Penguin Books, 1966), p. 152.

American public life has been significantly influenced by the rise of cultural pluralism. The national political debate has been greatly enriched by the lively positions and arguments put forward by women, blacks, hispanics, native Americans, and others who had been previously excluded from political influence. Advances in the areas of civil and economic rights would have been inconceivable without the feisty pressure of such diverse groups. The American constitutional system has demonstrated its resilience by including these competing parties within the political process without rupturing those tender bonds which hold the nation together. And yet it cannot be denied that the fabric of our common national life has come under increasing pressure and may not long withstand opposing tugs of competing interest groups. Even more distressing is the fact that we seem to be losing our ability to engage in common discourse about the important political and moral issues facing the republic. The debates concerning abortion provide the most evident and painful example of the collapse of any apparent consensus on the most basic ethical questions. Do we call that which the woman carrier a fetus or an unborn child? Do we call the act of abortion" termination of pregnancy" or the taking of innocent life? Our failure to reach linguistic consensus on these matters indicates that a deep moral pluralism underlies the current debate about abortion.

The depth of our current cultural division can be seen in the recent debates within the medical profession and the Department of Health and Human Services concerning Federal guidelines for the treatment of severely handicapped newborns. The Federal government developed these guidelines following the famous " Baby Doe " case in which an infant born with Down's syndrome and a digestive system blockage was allowed to die, in accordance with the parents' wishes, without receiving corrective surgery. Following that incident the government issued regulations requiring hospitals to give the same life-preserving care to handicapped infants as they would to

the non-hadicapped. In the March I, 1984 issue of *The New York Review of Books* Peter Singer and Helga Kuhse develop a sharp critique of the Federal government's guidelines. Their objections do not focus primarily on matters of government intervention into private familial decisions or on the complex questions concerning the limits of extraordinary or heroic care. They rather oppose the underlying principle which they suggest motivates the government position, viz., the belief that " all human lives are of equal worth." The authors state their conclusions straightforwardly. "We cannot coherently hold that it is all right to kill a fetus a week before birth, but as soon as the baby is born everything must be done to keep it alive. The solution, however, is not to accept the pro-life view that the fetus is a human being with the same moral status as yours or mine. The solution is the very opposite: to abandon the idea that all human life is of equal worth." [34]

The rationale for the authors' position is especially important. They argue that the belief in the equal worth of all human life is a particular Christian conviction which is not shared by all participants in American public life. To organize Federal guidelines around a specific religious belief is to introduce " a special brand of ideological or religious zeal " into the public sphere. If Christian convictions are considered to be just one more set of religious beliefs in a pluralistic culture (and increasingly that is what they will be), then our liberal constitutional tradition of the separation of the religious and the political would seem to support the authors' position. I use this example not because I think the Federal guidelines are without difficulty but to illustrate practically the nature of the new American pluralism. Our lack of a consistent public vocabulary to discuss issues of domestic and foreign policy portends a deep and growing moral pluralism within American public life. And that pluralism, if not balanced by some countervailing movement toward a common good, may result in a corrosive moral relativism, i.e., the conviction that there

[34] *The New York Review of Books,* (March I, 1984) XXXI: 3, 22.

can be no rational decision procedures for adjudicating those deep moral and political disagreements within our culture. Such a stance asserts that opposing positions regarding abortion or nuclear disarmament or social welfare programs are simply equally unjustifiable opinions which express the personal preferences of those who hold them. To believe that ethical positions are nothing more than expressions of personal preferences or cultural differences, to believe that our deepest beliefs and convictions are simply non-rational opinions, is to despair of the possibility of any significant common life within the republic. People who hold these beliefs have no motivation to participate in the common good of the nation. They have no reason to listen to the arguments of those with whom they disagree. And finally they have no reason to curb their own excesses in defending those positions which most accord with their own personal preferences-no matter how harmful those positions may be to the community as a whole. This new American pluralism thus portends a crisis of community.

What does all this cultural analysis have to do with questions of theology and particularly the theology of Karl Barth? Just this. The depth and pervasiveness of our moral pluralism makes the assertion of an eternal covenant between theology and culture implausible. The two partners in that relationship are both in a state of disarray, and it is difficult if not impossible to speak of either in a unitary fashion. The goal of establishing some common ground between the Christian faith and secular rational inquiry is surely a noble one, but at this moment in our history the best we can hope for is a series of temporary and *ad hoc* alliances between theology and the resources of our culture. Any more permanent covenant between, for example, Christian belief and rational inquiry becomes suspect in large part because rational inquiry has increasingly sought to identify itself with unbelief. The defense of atheism by figures like Feuerbach, Marx, Nietzsche, and their twentieth century descendants has given the new pluralism a powerful intellectual justification. The most basic be-

lief of Christendom, belief in God's existence, has been systematically denied by this tradition of radical atheism. Consequently we can no longer assume that belief in God is part of our common human heritage.

Nonetheless, contemporary theologians continue to seek to demonstrate the essential religiousness of every human being, thereby reasserting the eternal covenant. Arguments for *homo religiosus* are alive and well, particularly among those theologians most sharply critical of Karl Barth. I have already referred to David Tracy's attempt to offer a transcendental argument which will demonstrate that " God " is " the objective referent " of our limit experiences and language. Even more striking is Schubert Ogden's brilliant (though I think finally unsuccessful) attempt to show that atheism is a logical impossibility. Atheism, Ogden asserts, "is not the absence of faith, but the presence of faith in the perverted form of idolatry." [35] While I am perfectly happy to argue that atheism is not the truth about reality, I am surely not ready to affirm that it is simply a perverted form of faith in God. Such a response fails, it seems to me, to take seriously the full radicality of atheism's challenge to Christian faith, and the depth of our current cultural pluralism. Surely a serious engagement in modE::rn culture requires us to acknowledge at least the possibility that atheism may be the truth about reality. Thus the atheist cannot from the outset be considered a perverted or distorted theist but must be counted an equal partner in debate whose particular arguments for a non-theistic interpretation of reality and against theism need to be heard and refuted.

The ease with which the best contemporary theologians assert the essential religiousness of all human beings and argue against the very possibility of authentic forms of atheism is an indication that the full implications of the new pluralism are not yet apparent to most theologians. Though pluralism is a political and cultural reality, it is not, these theologians seek to

[85] Schubert Ogden, *The Reality of God* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 23.

argue, an ultimate religious reality, for in the depths of our humanity, in the religious root of om· being, we are all one. That is a powerfully attractive sentiment, and it may even be a claim Christians are compelled to make on the basis of our doctrine of creation. But it is decidedly not a claim that can be successfully argued, as Tracy, Ogden, and others believe, as a necessarily true universal proposition on general philosophical grounds. The eternal covenant between human rationality and the Christian faith has been shattered by the new pluralism.

The quest for some common ground between Christian faith and secular culture and for some common good in which all citizens can share is extraordinarily important. I have tried to argue, however, in these concluding reflections that if Christian theology is to make a significant contribution to that quest it must forego its commitment to the eternal covenant and seek to engage its culture in a broader and more *ad hoc* fashiun.[86] The end of the eternal covenant may mean the end of systematic theology as it has commonly been understood in the modern era. Radical pluralism calls into question any attempt to ground the meaning and truth of Christian beliefs in a systematic philosophy independent of the Christian faith. But there is another way available to contemporary American theologians, the way pioneered by Karl Barth. I have sought to show that Barth's view of theological method implies no stark dichotomy between church and world or faith and culture but seeks rather to engage the world of culture from within an integral vision of reality as formed by the Christian gospel. For finally the Christian gospel asserts that for all our apparent differences and conflicts all human beings live in a single world reconciled to God by Jesus Christ. But we cannot discover that seamless universe by the exercise of our natural capacities, nor can we use our philosophical skills to demonstrate its wholeness. For now "we see through a glass darkly." But in the biblical

as For an example of such a procedure see William Werpehowski, *"Ad koo* Apologetics," *The Journal of Religion,* 66: 3 (July, 1986) 282-301.

narrative and its culminating event, Christ's death and resurrection, we catch a glimpse of that future which God has prepared for the entire cosmos, a glory not worth comparing to the sufferings of this present time. Until the consummation of thait glory we are called to witness in word and deed to that God who has raised Jesus from the dead and now sends his Spirit to his people. As Christians struggle to fulfill that vocation we can, I believe, receive both instruction and support for our task from the theology of Karl Barth. We will continue to have our quarrels with Barth and his confessing church comrades, but we have much to learn from their courageous witness to "Jesus Christ ... the one Word of God ... whom we must hear ... trust and obey in life and in death." If we can learn from this crucial moment of modern church history, then we will surely be better equipped to be a confessing church today. [37]

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[37] An earlier version of this essay was presented at a conference on "Barth, Barmen and the Confessing Church Today" held at Luther-Northwestern Seminary, June 28-30, 1984.

KARL BARTH AND THE "OTHER" TASK OF THEOLOGY*

I. Introduction

THE RECEPTION of Karl Barth's theology among my students at Virginia Seminary and perhaps on the larger North American scene has taken two principal forms.[1] One group approves Barth for basing Christian theology on God's self-revelation alone. This group accepts Barth's claim that the only task of theology is testing the church's proclamation about God against God's own Word to the church. This group welcomes Barth's restriction of theology to one task: the clarification of faith in the church and for the church. This group affirms Barth's rejection of natural theology, a second way to speak about God based on a general revelation in nature, history, or moral conscience. This

*William Porcher Dubose Theological Symposium Oct. 15-16, 1985; St. Luke's Seminary; Sewanee, Tennessee (I have decided to cite Barth from the *Kirchliohe Dogmatik* rather than from the English text for two reasons. To work with the original text is more responsible according to the canons of scholarship, and at least two differently paginated English translations are in common use.)

1 The *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 28 (1972) published several contributions to a Karl Barth Colloquium held at Union Seminary, New York City, in 1970. The contributions give a flavor of American reception of Barth immediately after Barth's death in 1968. The contrast between the highly critical reading by the philosopher of religion, John Smith, and the more appreciative interpretation by Smith's respondent, Robert Jenson, symbolizes the two groups of Barth readers in North America.

John C. Bennett, another contributor rejects Barth's excessive Christocentrism and disinterest in natural theology. Nevertheless, Bennett acknowledges his " gratitude" to Barth.

Another sampling of American Barth reception is provided by *Karl Barth and the Future of Theology,* ed. David L. Dickerman (New Haven: Yale Divinity School Association, 1969). This volume collects contributions from another Barth colloquium.

first group sides with Barth when he says thait the only true knowledge of God is God's own self-definition in Jesus Christ as witnessed to by Scripture. Since only one revelation of God exists, only one task of theology exists.

A second group of Barth readers in the United States has perceived Barth in much the same way as the first, but for this very reason has rejected his theology.

They find Barth rejecting any dialogue between theology and secular human self-understanding; they see Barth restricting theology to the task of clarifying faith. But rather than affirm these features, this second group dismisses Barth's theology as deeply flawed. They believe that God's Word must be related somehow to secular human self-understanding. This group believes, therefore, that theology has another task, not just clarifying faith, but engaging in dialogue with contemporary human self-understanding outside the church.

This second group of Barth readers doesn't find in him any openness for such a dialogue. Members of this group may acknowledge that Barth performed a useful corrective service when he reemphasized God's sovereignty and freedom against the German Christian ideology of the 1930s. But for this group Barth's theological principles of exclusive focus on God's self-revelation and his reduction of theology's task to understanding faith are not enough. Theology must somehow relate God's truth to contemporary culture and secular human self-understanding.

The great majority of contemporary American theologians and students of theology belongs to this second group. Much more familiar than Barth on the American scene, at least in the majority of our seminaries, university divinity schools and departments of religion, is Paul Tillich.

Tillich did carry on a dialogue with secular human self-understanding with his method of theological correlation. Karl Rahner, John Macquarrie, David Tracy, and Langdon Gilkey have followed a similar path, examining the structures and dynamics of human existence as a way to make relevant and

plausible major Christian doctrines. Wolfhart Pannenberg is also read in this country. He attempts to make Christian truth claims plausible by analyzing contemporary understanding of truth, history, time, and human nature.

The United States' own native grown theology, process theology, argues that God is the fullest exemplification, not the great exception, of the metaphysical principles of our own world. Black, Feminist, and Latin American Liberation theology show their commitment to a theology of worldly dialogue by their focus on church praxis in the context of oppression. Finally, the enthusiastic reception of Hans Kiing's theology, especially with Kiing's interest in dialogue among the world religions, shows the widespread desire in this country for a theology engaged not just in the task of clarifying faith for Christians but in another task, one which engages the secular search for truth outside the church.

Contemporary reception of Barth's theology in the United States, apart from specialists such as members of the Karl Barth Society of North America, therefore, presents this static two-fold picture.

I wish to disrupt this status quo in the reading and reception of Barth in the United States. I want to persuade the first group that Barth's basic theological principles push beyond the one task of clarifying faith within the church toward anather task: engagement with non-Christian search for truth about the human condition.

I wish to persuade the second group that a deeper reading, especially of the later Barth, affirms their concern for the universal cogency and scope of God's truth. I wish to show this second group that Barth has found a place for their legitimate concern in the very center of his theology, i.e. in his christology. So I want to challenge this group to read Barth again, so they can compare their ways of relating God's revelation to the human search for self-understanding with Barth's way.

I will offer this double challenge in two steps. First I will show that Barth affirmed that God's truth is universal in its

scope and relevance, and this implies that theology has a second task of relating God's revelation with secular truth. I will show how Barth built this theological principle into his christology, more precisely into his doctrine of Jesus Christ as true humanity.

The second step is to offer an illustration of the kind of encounter Barth's own theology could have with one aspect of contemporary secular thought. The realm of secular thought I have chosen is linguistics and communication theory. I wish to exemplify the other task of theology which Barth's doctrine of Jesus Christ as true humanity legitimates and encourages.

My ultimate goal in this presentation, then, is to explicate fully Barth's christology nor to explore fully how Barth's theology might relate to contemporary language and communication theory. My underlying goal is to challenge two groups of Barth readers with a more accurate reading of Barth's theology, which, if correct, should lead them to rethink their present way of understanding the task of theology.

If I succeed in proving my case, we will discover a Barth who, like William Porcher Dubose in the opening decades of this century, affirmed the evangelical task of theology to speak not only within and to the church but also within and to the world, without removing Christ from the center.

II. Jesus Christ as True Humanity

Karl Barth consistently understood natural theology to be the assumption of a union and a way of knowing God independent of God's self-revelation in Christ.[2] Note that Barth accepted the terms of the debate about natural theology as

[2] For example, see Barth's discussion of natural theology in K D II/2: 92ff. Here Barth discusses the question of in whom the readiness of knowledge of God is found. The claim that in humanity outside of Christ this readiness can be found, and that this is the basis for a second task of theology, Barth rejects.

Important for an accurate understanding of Barth's rejection of natural theology and "the other task of theology " in the 20s and 30s is the realization that Barth was focusing not on whether God's truth in Christ was

those terms were set especially by the Enlightenment and by post-Tridentine Roman Catholic theology.

According to the terms of that debate the issue of natural theology was whether beside God's special revelation in Scripture a second basis for true knowledge of God existed outside of Scripture's witness to Christ. In these terms the basic issue of natural theology was how do we know God or where does God reveal himself.

universal in its scope and validity but whether a true knowledge of God and a saving relation to God was possible outside of and independently of Jesus Christ. The theological issue was revelation and knowledge of God.

Barth always denied that a saving relation to and knowledge of God was possible independently of Jesus Christ. In 1934 Barth wrote his "Angry Introduction " to his *NO I Answer to Emil Brunner:*

> Ever since about 1916, when I began to recover noticeably from the effects of my theological studies and the influences of the liberal-political pre-war theology, my opinion concerning the task of our theological generation has been this: we must learn again to understand revelation as grace and grace as revelation and therefore turn away from all " true" or " false " *theologia naturalis* by ever making new decisions and being ever controverted anew. When (roughly since 1929) Brunner suddenly began to proclaim openly ' the other task of theology,' the 'point of contact,' I made it known that whatever might happen I could and would not agree with this.

Karl Barth, *Natural Theology* (London: Geoffrey Bies: The Centenary Press, 1946) : 71. This statement shows that Barth's rejection of a second task of theology was related to his doctrine of revelation. Barth's reference to a " true " natural theology could mean that Barth accepted the validity of a second task of theology in theory but rejected this task for himself and his theological generation.

The phrase " the other task of theology " most likely comes from an essay by Emil Brunner, "Die andere Aufgabe der Theologie" *Zwischen den Zeiten* 7 (1929) : 255-276. In this essay Brunner argues for an Eristic Theology, an attempt to interpret God's self-revelation in Christ to modern people in a pedagogical-pastoral context. The presupposition for this Eristic Theology, this other task of theology, was a point of contact remaining in fallen humanity. The point of contact was humankind's capacity for language and sense of moral responsibility.

Barth's antipathy to apologetics remained constant. He reiterated this suspicion in one of his latest pieces, Karl Barth "Concluding unscientific postscript on Schleiermacher" *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 7/2 (1978): 117-135. Cf. 124 "Apologetics is something of which I am deeply suspicious, something alien to me in all its forms. . . ."

Natural theology, however, has taken many forms, been pursued for different reasons as theology moved from the Patristic, through the Medieval, Reformation, Orthodox, Enlightenment, and Liberal theological periods. One concern of natural theology has been to answer the question: how is the special revelation of God in Israel's history and in Jesus Christ understandable to those who stand outside these special traditions of God's revelation? Another concern is how God's truth relates to human truth, the truth in human search for knowledge about the world and human being.

This last question is inescapable because God is the creator of the world and humankind and all human truth must be grounded ultimately in the truth which God is and has disclosed in self-revelation. These two theological principles, God as creator of all and God's saving purposes as relevant to all creatures, make the issue of the universal cogency and applicability of God's truth an inescapable question and make natural theology a permanent agendum for Christian theology.

In his debate and struggle with liberal theology in the twenties and thirties, Barth rejected one aspect of the natural theology tradition which had fully developed only in the eighteenth century. This was the assumption that human reason and/or experience provided an independent basis for a knowledge of and saving relation to God outside of Christ. Barth rejected this claim of natural theology. From the time of his discovery of the " strange new world in the Bible " till his death, Barth insisted that God's self-disclosure in Jesus Christ as witnessed to in Scripture is the one and only source for knowledge of God and theology.

rejected therefore his contemporary, Emil Brunner's, claim that theology also had another task, relating God's revelation to people outside the church by building on a universal capacity for language and a sense of moral responsibility.

Barth's denial that God could be truly known apart from Christ also led him to say that theology should not depend on secular knowledge of human being to corroborate or test theo-

logical understanding. Humans need not and cannot find some standpoint outside of God's self-revelation in Christ to test the veracity and authenticity of God's self-revelation. Theological truth has its own independence and integrity; it need not and cannot he validated hy reference to truth gained independently of it, say in philosophical reason, moral or religious experience, or mystical intuition. That was the principle Barth was defending when he rejected natural theology in the nineteen twenties and when he rejected the concept of *analogia entis*, an analogy of being, as Barth found that represented in standard Roman Catholic theology of his time.

Nevertheless, the later Barth did share a key asrsumption with the broader natural theology tradition. God created all reality, God's reconciling work in Christ concerns all human beings, not just believers; the redeeming work of the Holy Spirit is relevant for all people and not just for the small company of believers.

Even the early Barth, for example in the Tamhach lecture of 1919 and the lecture, "The Church and Culture" of 1926, stressed God's sovereign claim as Creator over even the fallen creation. [8]

a Even in his Tambach lecture of 1919, in which Barth stresses the gulf between God's holiness and human sin, Barth could say:

> Naturally, we shall be led first not to a denial but to an affirmation of the world as it is. For when we find ourselves in God, we find ourselves committed to the task of affirming him in the world as it is and not in a false transcendent world of dream.

Karl Barth, "The Christian's Place in Society" in *7'he Word of God and the Word of Man* Trans. by Douglas Horton (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1957) : 299. In his lecture, "Die Kirche und die Kultur ", held in 1926, we find an anticipation of his later thought about natural theology:

> In der theologia revelata ist die theologia naturalis, in der Wirklichkeit der gottlichen Gnade ist die Wahrheit der gottlichen Schopfung mit enthalten und ans Licht gebracht in diesem Sinn gilt: Gratia non tollit naturam, sed perficit und man kann geradezu den Sinn des Wortes Gottes iiberhaupt darin finden, dass es die verschuttete, vergessene Wahrheit der Schopfung machtig ans Licht bringt.
>
> (Natural theology is contained in revealed theology; the truth of the divine creation is contained in the reality of divine Grace. In this sense it is true that 'grace does not remove nature but perfects it.' And one

The later Barth imhedded this key assumption of natural theology-that God's truth is universal in its scope and applicability- in the center of his theology, namely in his doctrine of Jesus Christ. [4]

I will highlight this aspect of Barth's theology by specifying four aspects of his doctrine of Jesus Christ as true humanity, [5] and indicate briefly the implications of these aspects for dia-

can say that the meaning of God's Word basically is that it powerfully brings to light the scattered, forgotten truth of the Creation.)

Karl Barth, "Die Kirche und die Kultur" in *Die Theologie und die Kirche* (Zollikon-Ziirich: Evangelischer Verlag, n.d.): 375. In section XIV of his 1946 address "Christengemeinde und Burgergemeinde ", *Theologische Studien* 20 (Zollikon-Ziirich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1946), Barth could speak of the state as an allegory, correspondence and analogue to the Kingdom of God. When discussing the *vestigium trinitatis*, Barth rejects these as a second basis for a true knowledge of God but affirms them as a new way of looking at the world in the light of revelation of the triune God. See K. D. I./l :364-365. This theme of experiencing and " seeing" the wor Id in a new way in the light of revelation reappears in the important doctrine of Christ as the Light of Life. See K.D. IV/3:40-188. This continuity may substantiate Barth's claim in conversation with the author that his later work was not a "Wechsel ", a cross-over, from his earliest thought.

4 In 1961, Barth referred to his "Christological revision" of natural theology as follows:

> One should never tie oneself to things which one says in a situation of confrontation. Just as the biblicistic talk of my father lead me finally to Liberalism, so later Liberalism had to be rejected . . . . And that is how my sharp No against E. Brunner came about . . . . Later I recovered natural theology by way of Christology . . . (Spater holte ich dann die theologia naturalis via Christologie wieder herein. Heute wurde mein Kritik lauten: Mann muss es nur anders, eben christologisch sagen.

Karl Barth, "Ein gesprach in der Briidergemeine. Protokol des Gespraches zwischen Prof. K. Barth und Vertretern der Brudergemeine " in *Oivitas Praesens*, Nr. 13, Mai 1961 (Sondernummer) 7f., in Hermann Fischer, 'Natiirliche Theologie im Wandel" *Zeitschrift filr Theologie und Kirche* 80 (1983) : 86.

5 Barth develops these points especially in K D III/2, his theological anthropology. In Paragraph 43, section two, Barth distinguishes theological anthropology from speculative (philosophical) and exact-scientific anthropologies. Theology, in contrast to the other two, deals not with the *phenomenon* of the human but with the *reality* of human being (K D III/2 :27). That Jesus is the norm of true humanity Barth develops throughout his theological anthropology. For example, K D III/2 :47 and the whole of Paragraph 44.

logue with those who search for truth about the human condition outside the church.

One aspect of Barth's doctrine of Christ is his insistence that the person of Jesus of Nazareth embodies not only true divinity but true humanity. Here Barth affirms, on the basis of the biblical witness, the Chalcedonian Formula of Faith that Christ was truly divine and truly human. Jesus is true humanity because he fully lived out covenant partnership with God, which was God's original intention for human beings.

A second aspect of Barth's doctrine of Christ is basic to our concerns in this presentation. Barth stands out in modern theology in the extraordinarily high place he gave to the doctrine of Jesus's true humanity. For Barth, Jesus's true humanity was not real in and for Jesus alone. Rather, what was true and real in Jesus applied to others. Barth drew this theological principle of Jesus's humanity as representative humanity from Paul's letter to the Romans, and Barth published a small study of Romans chapter five under the title of *Christ and Adarn.*[6] Barth's point was that according to the biblical witness, Jesus's humanity is a representative humanity. This principle of Jesus as representative humanity is one aspect of his fundamental doctrine of Christ as the man for others. Jesus's status as truly human, a status grounded in God's will and power, is the truth of others and for others.[7]

s Karl Barth, "Christus und Adam nach Romer 5" *Theologische Studien* 35 (Zollikon-Zurich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1952). Two quotes from the English translation:

> Jesus ia the secret truth about the essential nature of man, and even sinful man is still essentially related to him. (41)
>
> The nature of Christ objectively conditions human nature and the work of Christ makes an objective difference to the life and destiny of all men. (42)

Karl Barth, *Ghrist and Adam: Man and Humanity in Romans 5;* Translated by T. A. Smail (New York: Harper and Bros., 1957.)

1 Barth also developed the theme of Jesus as true humanity in several lectures and addresses. For example, see "Die Wirklichkeit des neuen Menschen" *Theologische Studien* 27 (Zollikon-Ziirich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1950) and "Evangelium und Bildung" *Theologische Studien* 2 (Zollikon·Zurich: Evangelischer Ver lag, 1947) .

As Barth developed his *Church Dogmatics,* he emphasized more and more the concept of Jesus' representative humanity. In his 1956 essay, "The Humanity of God," Barth admitted that his early work gave a one-sided stress to the doctrine that in Christ God reveals his transcendent otherness. But later, especially in his theological anthropology in III/2, Barth emphasized that Jesus's human nature is the locus of God's mercy and grace.[8]

A third aspect of Barth's doctrine of Christ as true humanity is his insistence that in Jesus true humanity has fully occurred, has achieved the most real possible actualization. This is a very important point for my argument. Barth rejected the notion that Jesus's humanity was true merely in the sense of being a transhistorical idea, some kind of Platonic archetype of true humanity. On the contrary, true humanity is a history which has occurred in the birth, life, and death of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus's humanity is not an idea waiting to be realized; it is a history which has taken place. Jesus's true humanity is a fact of time and place as well as of eternity.

Also, Barth roundly rejects the idea that Jesus's humanity is true humanity as a prolepsis of some future evolutionary or cultural development. Jesus's humanity is not waiting to be actualized as the result of an evolutionary or cultural process which his life inaugurated two thousand years ago. Jesus lived and died as God's true covenant partner, as the human being

s Karl Barth, "Die Menschlichkeit Gottes" *Theofogisohe Studien* 48 (Zollikon-Ziirich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1956) : 9:

> Where did we actually go wrong? Where should a new turn be made? I think we were wrong precisely where we were right, that the new insight about God's Godness which so excited us and others was by far not carefully and completely enough thought through ... Then we were fascinated by the image and the concept of a "totally other", so that we should not have identified this divinity with the one whom the Bible calls J aweh-Lord-that in the isolation, abstraction and the absolutization, in which we considered it and opposed it to man, that poor thing, not to speak of beating man over the head with it-(we made it) more similar to the divinity of the God of the philosophers than to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

God intended all of us to be; his true humanity is a completed accomplishment.

Jesus's history, authored by God, is more real than the history of sin and deformation in which all other human beings are involved. Compared to Jesus's real history, our history is not fully true or real; being fallen from God, it cannot be as real and true as Jesus' s is.

A final feature of Barth's doctrine of Jesus's true humanity is that Jesus's humanity is the truth of *every* other person's humanity. Barth rejects the idea that Jesus represents only Christian believers or only those who believe in God or onlY. those who do the best they can. No, Jesus represents every past, present and future human being. This is how Barth interpreted Paul's idea of Jesus as the second Adam. Everyone is included in the reality of Jesus's true humanity.

This notion is startling and offensive if one holds that each individual's own self-understanding should have the final say about who he or she is in God's eyes. Barth simply rejects such anthropocentrism out of hand. Part of the meaning of God's sovereignty for Barth is that God determines our reality in Jesus Christ. In Christ, that divine determination of human existence proves to be gracious and merciful. God thinks more highly of us than we are likely to think of ourselves.

Having reviewed four aspects of Barth's doctrine of Jesus as true humanity, let us now ask what they might imply for our question of whether Barth's theology allows for a concern of natural theology, namely a dialogue or engagement with non-Christian truth about the human condition.

One implication of Barth's doctrine of Jesus as true humanity is that Christ is the norm and criterion of what is truly human. For this reason, in his *Church Dogmatics,* Barth always developed his theological understanding of human nature in the light of Jesus Christ as true humanity. Theology should, said Barth, seek true humanity in God's revealed Word, in Christ. Therefore, Barth consistently claimed that the social sciences and the philosophical investigation into the

nature of human being can at best provide us with aspects of the *phenomenon* of the human but never with assured insight into the reality of humanity. True humanity is what God shows us to be in the light of Christ, not what sinful people think about themselves in their distance from God and their blindness to God's truth about themselves.

Therefore, Barth refused to seek in contemporary psychology, sociology, anthropology, or philosophy any confirmation or corroboration of what human nature is revealed to be in Jesus Christ. Indeed Barth never saw any essential need to carry on a dialogue with philosophical anthropology or with any of the human sciences as a constitutive element in his theological method and writing. In actual practice, Barth provides brilliant synopses of and numerous references to modern views of human nature, for example Nietzsche's and Descartes's, Heidegger's, and Sartre's, in the process of developing his own theological anthropology. [9] But Barth referred to these non-Christian views of human being rhetorically to highlight the contours of his own theological view of human nature. Barth didn't view the discussion of these non-theological views of human nature as an essential agenda required by his theological method. These reflections on non-theological views of human nature functioned sermonically as contrast figures to make more visible what theology had to say from its own resources about human existence.

On some occasions Barth comes close to making a discussion of non-theological views about human being an essential theme, In 1949 in Geneva, at a meeting of European intellectuals, Barth gave a lecture entitled " The Christian Message and the New Humanism. [10] " In this lecture Barth did not deny that secular views could speak truly about human being, but

[9] For example, K D III/2: 22 Descartes; 133 Jaspers; 276 Nietzsche; 333 Feuerbach; 736 M. Heidegger and Sartre.

[10] Karl Barth, "The Christian Message and the New Humanism" in *Against the Stream: Shorter Post-War Writings 1946-52* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1954).

unles'l humanity's status as redeemed creatures of God was affirmed, the essential truth about humankind would be missed. Barth in that lecture also pointed out that true humanity as revealed in Christ contradicts modern ideas of individuality as conceived by Nietzsche and contradicts modern ideas of community as conceived by Marx. But again, the thrust of that lecture is that Christian faith frees one from false views and illusions about true humanity. References to Descartes, Nietzsche, and Marx are made in passing and function to provide a contrast to Christian insights.

What I have said so far, therefore, seems to support the position that Barth's theology really does not legitimate or even encourage a dialogue with non-Christian search for truth about the human condition. Those readers who believe theology should do this seem to have read Barth correctly when they reject him for not legitimating such an engagement. And that other group of readers seems in the right who perceive Barth as a theologian in and for the Church alone, whose gift it was to clarify faith for believers but who restricts theology to a dialogue within the community of faith.

I must concede that Barth's *practice* as a theologian confirms the two kinds of readings of Barth, the one affirming the other rejecting, which I have described. Barth never showed any interest in carrying on a dialogue with those outside the church about human nature and existence. Perhaps his reason for this theological practice was a mortal fear of that Enlightenment form of natural theology which attempts to move from humanity to God, from sinful human self-understanding toward God's self-revelation, which sought a relation between creatures and the Creator independent of the relation God established as creator and redeemer in Jesus Christ.

Nevertheless, despite Barth's practice, I believe two facts shake the claim that Barth's theology does not legitimate a real engagement and dialogue with non-Christian thought about human life.

First, I cite Barth's vital personal interest in all things

human, quite apart from theology and the church. No one could meet Barth or read him without sensing his passionate interest in the human phenomenon. The contemporary playwright, Karl Zuchmeyer, sensed this aliveness to human existence as immediately perceived and experienced.[11] Another piece of evidence is Barth's love for Mozart's music, for the music of one whose Christian credentials were dubious but one in whom Barth found a joy for life which corresponded to the optimism which faith in God's grace breeds. One could mention also in this regard Barth's hobby of history reading which often surprised experts with its depth and precision. Also relevant was Barth's constant ethical concern which manifested itself not only in his early repudiation of National Socialism but later in his political-theological letters concerning post-War Europe.

These features of Barth's personality and activity suggest that his doctrine of Christ as true humanity opened his eyes and his heart to the phenomenon of the human, predisposing him to engage in dialogue with life as experienced and lived outside of theology and the church.

But the real basis of my argument is the theological principle of Jesus as true humanity which I have just explicated. Jesus Christ is the true humanity of all persons, more real and determinative of who we are than our own self-perception or our own existence considered outside of Christ. Every per-

11 See *A Late Friendship: The Letters of Karl Barth and Karl Zuchmeyer.* Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromily (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982) 65, Commenting on Barth's written response to his *Als war's ein Stiick von mir,* Zuchmeyer says:

> There was something remarkable about this exposition-not only in understanding and warmth, but also in an almost childlike and unconcealed wonder. It was as if somebody had visited a zoo for the first time.

Zuchmeyer reports Barth's describing himself in the same letter thus:

> I value the presence of loving women, good wine, and a constantly burning pipe . . . I say all this so as to tell you something about who is writing and who it is that takes such pleasure in thinking about you (66).

In this same letter Zuchmeyer reports Barth's estimation of Mozart.

son is created through Jesus Christ and redeemed in Jesus Christ and is intended by God for covenant partnership with Jesus Christ. Jesus's true humanity is more real than our sinful deformation and negation of God's intention for us. That is a bedrock principle of Barth's mature theology.

Barth articulated this principle of the universal validity and scope of God's truth in Christ in his concept of the analogy of faith and the analogy of relation.[12] The analogy of faith and of relation is a complex notion in Barth. He speaks of correspondences between God the Father and God the Son in the trinity, between God and humankind in the covenant; between God and man in Jesus Christ, between God and humankind and man and woman, between Jesus Christ and the Church and between the Kingdom of God and the State.

For our purposes, the important point is that in Barth's later theology the image of true humanity disclosed in Christ was a lens through which Christians could view all creaturely life. And because Christ was God's agent in creation and redemption, Christians should be open to finding in the profane world partial correspondences and analogies to God's truth in the light of Christ. In a section entitled "the Light of Life", within his doctrine of reconciliation, Barth speaks of the " true words", the "testimonies" and "signs" which the Christian should be ready to see and hear in the profane world because God's truth and rule in Christ is not only the basis of creation

12 Barth devotes attention to the notion of analogy in K D II/I: 254 ff. A discussion of analogy of relation can be found in III/I : 262f. The context is the doctrine of human being. In his doctrine of analogy of relation, Barth put the stress on the relationship in distinction to stressing the word "being", as in analogy of being. No analogy or similarity is inherent in God's *beilng* and creaturely *beiing.* But similar or analogous *relations* exist, say, between God the Father and God the Son in God, and between God and humankind through Christ. Also, for example, the freedom with which God is gracious to humanity generates a freedom in human beings to know and love God and the neighbor. The relation of God to human nature in Jesus Christ is the focus of Barth's doctrine of analogy of relation. Christ therefore is the light which illuminates correspondences, parables, analogies anywhere in the creation to the truth about human being revealed in Christ.

but has triumphed over the darkness of the world in the resurrection.13

Barth never changed his original critique of the theory that a way existed from humanity to God apart from Christ. Barth never affirmed the possibility of correspondences between creaturely reality and divine reality other than those based on and discerned in Jesus Christ. Barth did not believe that the world, independently of its basis in Christ, could disclose even fragmentarily, God's truth and God's glory. Here he probably differed even from John Calvin, Barth's primary theological progenitor.14

Yet, in recent years European and American specialists in Barth's theology have drawn the conclusion that Barth's later theology does not in principle exclude an engagement with non-Christian thought.15 I would go even further.

13 Barth develops his notion of creaturely lights and " true human words " corresponding to the light of Christ in K D IV/3.1 Paragraph 69, section 2. See, for example, page 137. This section of the Church Dogmatics is important for the thesis of this presentation. Barth speaks here of the lights and true words which creatures are or can be due to their being creatures of God. The truth of creaturely things is an inner-wordy truth, truth discerned in the interrelation between humankind and the world. This worldly truth is characterized as continuities and dynamic rhythms as well as law of nature. These worldly truths are not a second revelation of God. Yet seen in the light of Christ they can witness to truth revealed in Christ and serve the Christian identity of believers. In the light of truth in Christ, worldly truth is both relativized and legitimated. The theological foundation for both this relativization and legitimation is that the world is created and redeemed through the Word of God.

14 Hendrik Berkhof, in " Barth's Lichterlehre in Rahmen der heutigen Theologie, Kirche und Welt" *TkeoZogisohe Studien* 123 (Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 1978) argues that Barth's final position was much closer to Calvin's concerning the glory of God shining fragmentarily even in the fallen creation. In this latest phase, Berkhof believes Barth breaks out of his Christocentrism and makes a theologically ungrounded concession to what Barth in fact experienced, namely, that the world could teach him true words quite apart from Christ's revelation. My argument in this essay is that even Barth's Christocentric theology legitimates and even encourages a "second task of theology", an engagement with secular human self-understanding. See Berkhof, pp. 35-36.

u See the article, important for this essay, by Hermann Fischer "Natur-

Barth's theological principles, specifically, his doctrine of Jesus as true humanity, not only legitimates an engagement and dialogue with non-Christian thought but encourages it. The failure to do so would imply that the truth of Jesus's reality is relevant only to Jesus or is relevant only to Christian believers. But that would flatly contradict a fundamental theological principle which Barth held about Christ. The principle of the universal scope of Jesus's humanity should drive theologians outside the circle of the faithful into engagement with secular, non-Christian views of human existence.

Furthermore, if the theologian believes as Barth did that what is true and valid in all human life is grounded in Jesus Christ, the theologian is encouraged to move toward secular experience in the light of Christ and gain fresh insights into the daily life of both Christians and non-Christians.

Finally, if the theologian really believes, as Barth taught, that Christ underlies the truth and reality of all human life, the theologian can and should with theological integrity move from issues and themes real and important to people today and expect to discern new insights into the truth about human life disclosed in Christ. Barth's theological principles thus encourage not only moving from the light of Christ out toward the world but also letting secular, non-theological thought about human life set themes and questions which theology then takes to Christ for deeper theological insight.

Dialogue requires a willingness of non-Christians to express their views in a theological setting and to listen to the views of theology in their own secular setting. Barth's theology may legitimate and encourage such a dialogue, but of course theology cannot guarantee a secular dialogue partner. In principle, however, Barth's theology legitimates and encourages

liche Theologie im Wandel " *Zeitschrift fiir Theologie und Kirche* 80 (1983). Also helpful for this essay was a North American Barth scholar who has investigated Barth's theology of culture, Robert J. Palma. See Robert J. Palma, *Karl Barth's Theology of Culture* (Allison Park, Pennsylvania: Pickwick Publications, 1983). Palma addresses the theme of culture in the broad sense, including theological, political, and artistic culture. My focus is on the human sciences as a primary form of secular human self-understanding.

the Christian theologian, the Christian student of theology, the Christian pastor and the Christian lay person to engage secular thought about the human condition and to seek dialogue insofar as that is possible. And they can do this without denying the centrality of Jesus Christ.

III. God's Revelation and Human Communication

The purpose of the last section was to show that Barth's theology is not, in principle, closed to engagement and dialogue with non-Christian search for truth. Barth's theological principles, if not his practice, legitimate and encourage a second task of theology: besides the clarification of faith for believers, the task of engaging in non-Christian attempts to understand the human phenomenon.

Now I wish to take a second step. Rather than merely cite the theological basis for a Barthian engagement with non-Christian thought, I want to illustrate what an engagement between Barth's theology and one field of non-Christian thought might look like. For my example I have selected the phenomenon of human language. Our guiding question in this section is how might Barth's theology engage current thought about human being as communicator. My purpose, again, in this section, is to illustrate the kind of engagement Barth's theology legitimates and encourages with a non-theological discipline which searches for truth about human being. Indeed, I must define my aim even further.

Human language and communication is, needless to say, an immensely complex aspect of human life.[16] Contemporary

16 Since I am using linguistics and communication theory as an illustration, I do not document all my assertions about this field. .Among my resources for this aspect of the human sciences are: Terence Hawkes, *Structuralism and Semiotics* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977); Heidrun Pelz, *Lfnguistik fiJ,r Anfanger* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe Verlag, 1975; Gunther Bentele and Ivan Bystrina, *Semiotik* (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1978); Gerhard Nickel, *Einfiihrung Vn die Linguistik* (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 1979); Jurgen Habermas, *Communication and the liloolution of Society,* translated by Thomas McCarthy

linguistics and communication theory distinguish different frameworks: for example, the one-to-one dialogue; the one-to-many political speech, sermon, or lecture; small group discussion; and mass communication through electronic media. Within these frameworks, communication can be analyzed at the level of semantics, i.e. the relation of language to reality; at the level of syntactics, i.e. at the level of language codes themselves; at the pragmatic level, i.e., at the level of the relation of language to people as agents. Communication theory and linguistics contain several subdivisions: sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and anthropology. The study of the relation of verbal to nonverbal codes and of human language codes to non-human animal codes is yet another aspect of linguistics and communication theory. Linguistics also borders on philosophy in the discipline of semiotics, the study of human interaction through many different codes, and borders on literary criticism in the use of linguistic theory in the interpretation of texts. Linguistics, physics and engineering relate to one another in the fields of information theory, data processing, in systems analysis and cybernetics.

Given the bewildering complexity of human communication and the disciplines which study it, om goal in this section cannot be a comprehensive discussion of contemporary linguistics from the framework of Barth's theology. Nor, for our purposes, does it need to be. Our goal is much more modest: we wish to illustrate how Barth's theology might begin to engage one area of contemporary human science. Having shown that Barth's theology is in principle open to such an engagement, we wish to give at least an indication of some forms that engagement might take in one field.

We begin with the question, why might theologians in general and students of Barth's theology in particular seek some form of engagement with secular communication theory? I would answer that a striking correspondence exists between the centrality of human being as communicator in Barth's

(Boston: Beacon Press, 1979); Ferdinand de Saussure, <*Jours de linguistique generale* (Paris: Payot, 1981).

theology and the central place much modern philosophy and the human sciences are currently giving to human language.

The French linguist Ferdinand de Sausssure and the American philosophers Charles Sanders Peirce and Charles Morris promoted the study of human interaction through structured codes, the paradigm of such codes being language. Ludwig Wittgenstein symbolizes an important stream of contemporary Anglo-American philosophy which makes language the entree into philosophical issues. Max Weber defined human communicative interaction on the basis of shared codes to be the focus of sociology. George Herbert Meade stressed the significance of communication in the socialization process and in the development of the individual ego. The French philosopher and psychiatrist, Jacques Lacan, has reexamined Freud's writing from the perspective of therapy as a communicative and hermeneutic interaction. In modern cultural theory, great stress is given to the centrality of information processing in contrast to the former dominance of industrial production. All these disciplines view communication as central to the nature of human being and the existence of human being in the world.

This acknowledgement of the centrality of language and communication in contemporary philosophy and the human sciences corresponds to the centrality which human communication has in Barth's theological vision of human being in the light of Jesus Christ. Human existence, viewed in the light of Christ, is constituted by communication, for in the light of Christ, human nature is constituted by hearing and responding to the Word of God. The domain of language is where true humanity is actualized.

Barth can actually say that human existence is real as word, that is, in the activity of communication. [17] In Jesus Christ, the ground of our existence is not merely our potentiality for language. The ground of our existence is God's Word to us and for us. This Word is Jesus Christ, through whom every

11 Cf. K D III/2: 176 where Barth discusses human nature in the light of Christ as constituted by God's call (Anruf). "Das menschliche Sein ist ein Aufgerufensein, ..• (182)

creature is made and in whom God chooses to be gracious to his creation. Our word, the communication in which we actualize our humanity, is a secondary, responsive word. Our word can be a word of thanks corresponding to God's mercy to us. And our word, our existence as truly found in Christ, can be also a word of responsibility corresponding to God's choosing us to be his covenant partners. Our existence as communicators is secondary and dependent in relation to God; but in that communicative situation we actualize our identities as free persons.

In Jesus Christ, God reveals and actualizes true humanity as receiving and responding to God's address and as entering into real communication and community with one's neighbor. Above all, human being is revealed in Christ as actualizing authentic self-hood in and through communication. As hearers and responders to God's Word and as those in dialogue with our neighbors, we actualize the deepest root of our humanity.

The correspondence between Barth's theological view of the centrality of communication and language for human life and several contemporary philosophical views of human nature is striking. Martin Heidegger, Paul Ricoeur, Hans-Georg Gadamer, the contemporary representative of the Frankfurt School, Jurgen Habermas, and, in the fields of linguistics and semiotics, authors such as Umberto Eco, Roland Barthes, and Michel Foucault describe human being as essentially determined by linguisticality.

This correspondence between the theological vision of human existence in the light of Christ and the secular study of human existence is what one would expect if one begins with Barth's theological assumption that Christ reveals the most actual and real truth about human existence.

In addition to a massive correspondence between theology and secular knowledge at this point, differences also exist. As Barth said, profane truth about human existence is fragmentary. This indicates a second way theology can engage secular study of human existence: theology can question and chal-

lenge contemporary secular self-understanding in the light of revelation.

One question Barth's theology could pose to contemporary communication theory and linguistics is why do these disciplines persist in defining the uniqueness of human being as the *potential* or *capacity* for language rather than the actuality of human communication itself. Barth's theology finds true humanity, as measured by Christ, to consist in the actuality of dialogue and communication between God and human beings and among human beings. Human existence is real, measured by Christ, in the act of communication, not in the mere potential for communication. Human being, as defined in Christ, is the actual history of the communication between God and human creatures, not the abstract possibility or potential for such communication.

A pervasive trait of contemporary linguistics, however, is that it defines human linguisticality as the capacity or the potential for communication. Noam Chomsky, the M.I.T. linguist who has done most to develop the sub-discipline of transformational-generative grammar, locates the distinctive human trait in linguistic competence, the potential for producing well-formed sentences after an individual has internalized the vocabulary and syntax of the community's language. Ferdinand de Saussure, the pioneer of modern structural linguistics, acknowledged that acts of speaking were basic to the phenomenon of language but insisted that the science of linguistics must make the language code, the level of *Langue*, not the level of acts of discourse, the level of *Parole*, the object of its study. And, again, Jurgen Habermas defines communicative competence, the ability to persuade another of the validity, authenticity, and appropriateness of one's speech, as the key to the hope for a non-coercive society.

Thus a pervasive trait of modern linguistics and communication theory is its location of the essence of human linguisticality at the level of competence rather than performance, at the level of code rather than discourse. The only exception I

know of is the work of John Austin and John Searle on performative utterances, which does move from the level of potential for discourse to the level of discourse itself.

From the point of view of Barth's theology, the tendency in modern linguistics and communication theory to locate the essence of human linguisticality at the level of competence and potential reduces human existence to an abstraction, an abstract potential or competence unrooted in the time and space in which people actually live.[18] Barth might diagnose this tendency as the danger of social scientists distorting the truth of human existence in order to obtain an object for scientific study. At this point theology should challenge and question the human sciences and philosophy in the name of the historical actuality of human existence as subject and not merely object.

Thus far we have seen two ways Barth's theology can enter into a dialogue or at least engage with the secular disciplines of linguistics and communication theory. The first has been theology's affirmation of the massive correspondence between its vision of the centrality of language and communication and that found in these secular disciplines. The second is challenge and question, when theology finds in some aspects of the secular discipline a distortion of the integrity of human nature and existence.

A third sort of engagement I would illustrate is an ethical involvement. Since, according to Barth, Christ represents true humanity, theology can derive norms or criteria for authentic human actions from the vision of human being discerned in Christ. In our example this would mean norms for truly human communication.

A convenient way to derive ethical norms for truly human communication from Barth's theology is to draw from his analysis of Acknowledgement.[19] Barth chose this term to name

18 Cf. K D III/2: 190ff.

19 See Barth's discussion of the Experience of God's Word and his discussion of Acknowledgment. For the sake of illustration, I have drawn only four criteria from several more which Barth discusses in K D 1/1 215-218.

the essence of human being's true response to God's Word in Christ. Acknowledgement is the essence of the truly human answer to God's address to us and thus forms the model and provides the criteria of human communication not only in relation to God but analogously in our relation to one another. For illustrative purposes I will select four criteria of truly human communication derived from Barth's concept of Acknowledgement.

One feature of true humanity's response to God's Word is that this response includes a *knowing* of God. In German Barth plays on the verb *erkennen,* to know, which is contained in *anerkennen,* the verb meaning to acknowledge. True human communication in relation to God is by no means reducible to verbal, cognitive, rational interaction. Nonverbal, preverbal, emotional and voluntary components exist in faith. Yet, God in Christ does not relate to us as a blind, irrational, incomprehensible force. Rather, in Christ, God relates to us with a human face and voice which enlighten our understanding.

Drawing the ethical implication we can say in line with Barth's theology that communication is fully human only when it includes and even makes central knowledge and understanding. Communication that plays only to the emotions, communication which seeks to bypass the mind and affect only the will would undermine human integrity. This has ethical implications for advertising, political discourse, and also religious education.

Secondly, truly humane communication, as measured by God's revelation in Christ, must keep human personhood central. Communication as disclosed in Christ, calls us as persons in relation to God. In Christ God presents himself *as* a person and calls forth a personal response, a response of ourselves as subjects of our own history. God does not, in Christ, relate to us as an impersonal force, an astral necessity, as a blind fate, or as a subpersonal drive. God's address to us has a personal face and voice.

This criterion of personhood needs to be affirmed in the face

of communication which as ideology reduces other people to objects by stereotyping them or communication which reduces persons to things, as in the case of pornography.

A third criterion derived from Barth's analysis of Acknowledgement as the essence of truly human response to God's Word is meaningfulness. God's self-communication in Christ reestablishes human beings in a comprehensive context of relationships, to God, to neighbor, to world and to self. In Christ, communication is meaningful in the sense of opening the receiver to a context of interrelationships which the receiver can and should freely affirm.

Meaningfulness in this sense is, therefore, a theologically derived norm of truly humane communication. Truly human communication ought be more than the transmission of data with no thought about the larger significance of the information. Communication in teaching, for example, to be truly human should relate bodies of knowledge to one another and show the implications of one body 0£ knowledge to different aspects of human life. Truly human education, for example, should help students and teachers see the relation of the part to the whole, of the center to the periphery, of the action to the consequences. Communication reduced programmatically and exclusively to the transmission of data is dehumanizing.

Finally, drawing a final criterion from Barth's analysis of acknowledgement, faith perceives in God's self-communication an enablement and a demand for decision. Communication should issue in choice, the exercise of freedom, of decision. In Jesus Christ, God's self-disclosure is also a choosing of humankind. God chooses to be God not alone but with and for human beings. Correspondingly, truly human response to God, disclosed in Christ, involves a choosing of God and a choosing of the neighbor as God has chosen us as neighbor and partner.

Generalizing this ethically, we can say that communication is truly humane when, beside nourishing understanding, affirming personhood and providing meaning, it enables human decision. For example, in the sphere of education, whether poli-

tical, academic, or aesthetic, communication should enable and evoke from learner and teacher the act of choice.

Uninformed choice, premature judgments, and hasty decisions are wrong. But the posture of passively giving and receiving ever more information without ever coming even to a preliminary and provisional choice between options and values is finally dehumanizing. True scholarship is not merely amassing information but should crowd teacher and learner to conclusions and judgments, no matter how preliminary. Teachers and students should, according to this criterion of truly human communication, challenge one another to overcome the illusions of complacent rationalism, gathering ever more information in order to avoid drawing conclusions or making choices. In Christ, we see God choosing for humanity in need; in our communication we can do no less.

I have derived four criteria for truly human communication from Barth's discussion of acknowledgement to illustrate a third kind of engagement Barth's theology legitimates and encourages with the phenomenon of human communication and the disciplines of communication theory and linguistics. My purpose in this section, again, has not been a full discussion of human communication in the light of Barth's theology. My purpose was to provide a concrete example of the engagement with nontheological thought about the human condition which I have argued Barth's theology theoretically legitimates and encourages.

IV. Conclusion

My basic purpose has been to challenge two prevailing ways Barth's theology has been received in the United States. Both these North American readings of Barth share the belief that his theological principles do not legitimate or encourage a dialogue with secular human self-understanding outside the Church. One group applauds this feature of Barth's theology, seeing in it the mark of authentic Christian theology based upon God's Word alone and not adulterated by the flawed as-

sumptions of human philosophy or the human sciences. This first group agrees that theology has only one task, the clarification of faith within the church and for the church.

Against this, I have argued that Barth's doctrine of Jesus Christ as true humanity implies a claim of universal applicability and relevance. Hence this first group can and should engage secular human self-understanding and can do this without sacrificing the vital principle of the priority and primacy of God's revelation in Christ, which gives Barth's theology its remarkable focus and robust vigor. Indeed, the evangelical nature cf the church obligates those who know God in Christ to engage secular self-understanding in the light of Christ. Theology, for evangelical reasons, cannot remain a single task done only with and for Christians.

Further, the first task of theology, the clarification of faith for Christians in the church, needs the second task. The second task of theology helps to purify the first task from unwelcome traits of irrelevance to contemporary Christian life, from the danger of superstition and from the impression of triumphal possession of all truth.

Against the second group of Barth readers, those who reject him for not relating God's truth to the secular search for truth, I have argued that Barth's doctrine of Jesus as true humanity recovered the very principle that this second group misses in Barth.

Barth offers this second group a way to engage secular truth without claiming that secular truth about the human condition is actually revelation. Barth offers, in one sense, a nonreligious interpretation of secular truth about the human condition. Barth's theology offers a way to engage secular human self-understanding very different from natural theology in the sense of a second avenue for knowing God and different from Brunner's notion of an Eristic Theology. Barth thus offers a fresh way to engage secular thought in contrast to the neo-Liberal approaches of those in the second group I have referred to in this presentation.

In relation to both groups of readers, I have argued at two levels. At the theoretical level, I have attempted to analyze the Christological foundation on which Barth built the principle that God's truth is universal in its scope and application. And I have presented an illustration of the kind of engagement Barth's theology might evoke in relation to one area of human life, namely language and communication.

If my presentation has been successful, both kinds of readers of Barth will have to question the adequacy of their positions. They will need to discover, as readers of Barth constantly do, that he cannot be forced into the categories we ordinarily use to organize the theological landscape. Barth's theology can't be contained by the usual contrasts between a church vs. secular theologian, the contrast between a theologian from above or a theologian from below, between a liberal or conservative, between a theologian of special revelation vs. a theologian of natural revelation. Barth exceeds our common categories, and that is one measure of his greatness.

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CHRISTOLOGICAL INQUIRY: BARTH, RAHNER, AND THE IDENTITY OF JESUS CHRIST

HOW, CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY asks, can we intelligently inquire into the identity of One we also aim to follow and glorify? The central issue at stake in this christological inquiry is whether " Christ is the adequate context of Christian theology " or whether this Christ can only be intelligible and practical in some prior conceptual, cosmic, social, liturgical, existential, or other context.[1] This, it may tum out, is simply modernity's way of posing choices about the Chalcedonian " person " and " natures." But, insofar as a field can be identified by its essentially contested issues (i.e., those issues on which even a field's best practitioners disagree), these different ways of inquiring into Jesus Christ constitute the essential divide of twentieth century theology- a divide, I suggest, represented by Karl Barth and Karl Rahner.[2] The case I aim to make is that Barth and Rahner,

1 See Walter Lowe, "Christ and Salvation" in Peter Hodgson and Robert H. King, eds., *Christian Theology: An Introduction to Its Traditions and Tasks* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), p. 217.

2 The following are the abbreviations for the very select (but, I believe, representative) texts cited:

CD = Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics,* eds. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance, trans. G. W. Bromiley, T. F. Torrance, et al., Four Volumes (!-IV) with various Parts (I/1-IV/4) and Halves (IV/3,1), paragraphs (e.g., IV/3,1, # 69), and pages (e.g., IV/3,1: 1). (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, Ltd., 1936-1975). I use the revised translation of I/1 (1975).

CL= Karl Barth, *The Christian Life: Church Dogmatics IV/4. Lecture Fragments,* trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1981).

DT =Karl Rabner and Herbert Vorgrimler, *Dictionary of Theology,* trans. Richard Strachen, et al., 2nd Edition (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1981).

FCF =Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith. An Introduction*

despite stubborn differences on the *context of* christological inquiry, agree on *doctrinal claims* about Jesus Christ-although this agreement is seriously jeopardized by their *theological claims* about Jesus Christ.

Because the risks of this enterprise are considerable, I do well to mention a bias that drives the essay. I am convinced that, if we focus our attention on thf well known, characteristic features of Barth's and Rahner's theologies (e.g., revelational versus transcendental theology), their christological inquiries will turn out to be irremedially opposed, if not incommensurable. Candor would require us to admit that they must engage each other across a divide of affections and worship, churches and traditions, schools and political institutions. However, my argument will suggest that a focus on the characteristic features of their individual theologies fails to deal with Barth and Rahner *on their own terms.* This means that the complexities of Barth and Rahner themselves will have to take priority over a rich body of secondary literature. [3] **Fur-**

to the Idea of Christianity, trans. William V. Dych (New York: The Seabury Press, 1978). Translation of GdG.

GdG =Karl Rahner, *Grundkurs des Glaubens: Einfuhrung in den Begriff des Ghristentums* (Freiburg: Herder, 1976). Translated as FCF.

SM= Karl Rahner with Cornelius Ernst and Kevin Smyth, eds., *Sacramentum Mundi: An Encyclopedia of Theology,* 6 Volumes (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968-1970).

SzT =Karl Rahner, *Schriften zur Theologie,* 16 volumes (Zurich: Benziger, 1959-1984). 14 volumes are translated as, for the most part, TI.

TI =Karl Rahner, *Theological Investigations.* Various translators, 20 volumes (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1961-83; New York: Seabury, 1974-1983). Translation of SzT.

I will take CD and TI to be Barth's and Rahner's central texts; in the case of conflicts within these texts, I will read the earlier volumes of CD in the light of later volumes and TI in the light of FCF. This hermeneutical presumption will generate a "hardest case" which could be scaled back depending on how we take Barth's claim that CD has "no important breaks or contradictions" (CD IV/2: xi) and Rahner's claim that FCF is not a synthesis of his theology (FCF xv; TI XIX:3-15 [Foundations of Christian Faith]).

a For the handful of books on Barth and Rahner, see Albert Raffelt, "Karl Rahner Bibliographie Sekundaerliteratur 1948-1978" in *Wagnis Theologie:*

ther, because my aim here is to explore the logic of distinct kinds of christological inquiry, I frequently do not elaborate (although I will be candid about) my own appraisal of Barth and Rahner. Perhaps the centenary of Barth's birth and the recent death of Rahner justify risking an experiment on their different brands of christological inquiry. But the ultimate test of whether these risks are worth taking will have to be the essay itself.

I. Christological Inquiry and Theological Methods

The most difficult chore in mapping Barth's and Rahner's christological inquiries is doing justice to the different contexts of their proposals on their own terms. They often have such different concerns that it is tempting to suggest they are not engaged in the same enterprise; claims that they agree can seem, if not false, then at least trivial and perhaps irrelevant when cast against the background of the diverse sensibilities exemplified in the rhetorical worlds of the *Church Dogmatics* or the *Theological Investigations.* However, I believe there are analogies between four key moves Barth and Rahner make-analogies essential to setting the contexts of their theologies.

There is, first, what I will call a " theo-logical " difference between Barth and Rahner.[4] Both agree on the *priority* of *God's graciousness* to Scripture and Tradition, Church and World: their focus is on the prevenience of God's self-attestation or self-impartation. For Barth the "ground of our knowledge" *(Erkenntnisgrund)* of all things is the *self-attestation*

JJrfahrung mit der Theologie Karl Rahners, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler (Freiburg: Herder, 1979), pp. 598-622. But a full bibliography of the literature on Barth and Rahner would have to take into account a number of texts and articles which deal with Barth and Rahner in the course of focusing on other topics.

4 For further textual evidence for these large claims about Barth and Rahner, see James J. Buckley, "Karl Rahner as a Dogmatic Theologian," *The Thomist* 47 (# 3, July, 1983) 364-94, especially 383-84; James J. Buckley and William McF. Wilson, "A Dialogue with Barth and Farrer on Theological Method," *Heythrop Journal* XXVI (# 3, July, 1985), pp. 274-93.

of Jesus Christ-a self-attestor who (like the God of Anselm's *Proslogion)* cannot not be. For Rahner, on the other hand, God is holy mystery who *imparts self* in Word and Spirit (in grace and glory) in the original event of revelation in Scripture, the self-traditioning of Jesus in tradition, and in myriad utterances of the word of God in Church and world. The notion of" self" at work here raises a common problem for Barth and Rahner. [5] Yet their main differences do not concern the priority of God's graciousness but its *character-Barth* focusing on the self-attestation of *Jesus Christ* and Rahner on God's self-impartation in *Word and Spirit.* Or the same point might be put this way: their differences on the doctrine of " grace " are primarily a function of their different doctrines of the One who is gracious.

This theo-logical contrast is the central contrast between Barth and Rahner. We can see it at work in the architectonic contexts of Barth's and Rahner's christologies. The central way Barth unpacks his presiding claim is that Jesus Christ is "(1) very God, that is, the God who humbles Himself, and therefore the reconciling God, (2) very man, that is, man exalted and therefore reconciled by God, and (3) in the unity of the two the guarantor and witness of our atonement" (CD IV/1: 79). Such is Barth's answer to the question "Who is Jesus Christ?" (CD 1/2: 122). What makes this claim unusual are the transitions within and between each member. Jesus Christ is rightly proclaimed when who Jesus *is* is proclaimed inseparably from what Jesus *does* and *when* Jesus does it and *in relation to whom* Jesus Christ has this identity. More technically put, to proclaim this one with this proper name is to describe this one's " person," " natures," " work," and "states" *extra nos, pro nobis,* and *in nobis* (CD IV/

[5] See Avery Dulles, S.J., *Models of Revelation* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1983) and Ronald F. Thiemann, *Revelation and Theology: The Gospel as Narrated Promise* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1985) for the problems raised by " self-revelation." The central problem, as I see it, is that the notion of God's, Christ's, or our "self," when made systematically central, cannot help but abstract that self from its web of concrete (trinitarian and other) relations.

1: 123-124, 127-28, 132-35; IV/5: 4ff, l 7ff). And once this One's identity as the One who is for us is in place, Barth goes on to unfold how it is that we are those for whom Jesus Christ is in our transition from sin to salvation (IV/1, # 60-61; IV/2, # 65-66; IV/3,1, # 70-71) and in our constitution as church and individuals by the power of the Spirit (CD IV/1, #62-63; IV/2, # 67-68; IV/3, 2, # 72-73).

The overall pattern of FCF is quite different. Chapters I to III deal with the anthropological "presuppositions" both presumed and created by the Gospel (FCF 24). Chapters IV and V begin dealing with "what the Christian message is really all about" *(das Eigentliche der christlichen Botschaft),* focusing on the specifically theological notions of God's trinitarian self-impartation and revelation (FCF 116 = GdG 122). God's self-impartation, Rahner claims, "graciously fulfills" human self-transcendence. Chapters VI through IX focus on the specifically Christian, beginning with Jesus Christ ("what is most specifically Christian in Christianity" *[schlechthin Christlichen des Christentums]* FCF 264 = GdG 178)-the longest chapter in the book-and concluding with eschatology (or specifically Christian futurology). Rahner's reflections here are cumulative. Thus, the chapter on Jesus Christ (FCF, c. VI) recapitulates the pattern, moving back and forth between the anthropological presuppositions of christology and "plain historical testimony about what happened in Jesus" (FCF 177) as these are held together by a (or the) "starting point" in the believing Christian's "actual faith relationship" to Jesus Christ (FCF 177, 203, 305).

The content of these architectonics surely needs unpacking. But the point here is to suggest that Barth's and Rahner's theological claims are quite distinct; while there is no reason to think that each would deny the other's central claim, there is reason to think that each would locate the other's claim differently within his own theology.

We can pursue the consequences and contexts of these theological differences by noting further parallels. Thus, second,

both Barth and Rahner insist on the centrality of "the kerygma" or "Church proclamation." God's self-impartation is *proclaimed* in the kerygma of Scripture, tradition and eucharistic practice. Rahner calls thif' kerygma "the primary source and norm of dogma and theology" (DT 263 [Kerygma]; any dogma or theologoumenon which is not also kerygmatic-i.e., the "efficacious" Word of God-is simply infelicitous discourse (TI V: 42-66 [What is a Dogmatic Statement?]). For Barth, the words and deeds of the Christian community witness to Jesus Christ's self-attestation. This is the" Church *proclamation"* which is the" stuff" of dogmatics or what Barth came to see as the full range of words and deeds which constitute the ministries of the Christian community (CD I/l: 47; IV/3,1: 110, 113-14; IV/3,2: 879). "Church proclamation" is the *applicatio* which is the goal of theology (CD I/l: *5;* I/2: 736; cp. IV/3,2: 879).

Lest this agreement seem trivial, it is important to note that both Barth and Rahner use "proclamation" to cover a number of communal practices. For example, it includes not only preaching but also sacraments (CD I/l: *56;* TI IV: 266 [The Word and the Eucharist]). For Rahner, to speak kerygmatically is "to speak prophetically, to persuade, to announce, to transmit, to recall, to utter the (sacramental) word of life, to judge, to give testimony" (TI IV: *265 [ibid.])*. In Barth's case proclamation eventually came to include the whole range of the Christian community's words and deeds-praise and prayer, preaching and pastoral care, instruction and saintly examples, evangelization and diaconate, mission and prophetic action, theology and liturgical fellowship (CD IV/3,2: *865*-901). I will call this common ground between Barth and Rahner "kerygmatic," although I believe that they ask "kerygma" and "proclamation" to do too much work. Such notions can fool us into thinking that Barth and Rahner are referring to a single thing or event, whereas kerygma and proclamation are much more diverse: they are what Barth and Rahner take to be the paradigmatic samples of Christian life

and language, i.e., ordinary, commonsensical, and idiomatic examples of Christian discourse and practice.[6] Barth's and Rahner's christological inquiries are contextualized not only by their theological differences but also by (what they take to be) such paradigmatic samples.

This means that we ought read their christological inquiries against the background of the Christ presumed and rendered in such idiomatic life and language-their "kerygmatic Christs," as it were. One convenient example of such idiomatic practices is provided by their preaching. Thus, on Good Friday 1957, Barth focused on the story of the crucifixion condensed in Luke 23:33 (They crucified him with the criminals). This story, Barth claims, "contains the whole history of the world and, what is more, of God's dealing with man and hence of our dealings with God, including the life history of each of us here." Here we find Jesus in bad company, and criminals in good company-the first Christian community. But, as God, Jesus reconciled all by taking on himself the full load of evil. The criminals, by their participation in this, are promised life on the basis of this reconciliation.[7] Rahner, for a Good Friday in the mid-1950s, draws a parallel between" the picture which God has set before our eyes in the death of his Son on Good Friday " and " the picture of a dying man " which is always avoided by, yet intrinsic to, our makeup. The former is the answer to the question raised by the latter, but it is the miracle of the former which enables us to accept the latter (Tl VII: 136-39 [See, What a Man!]) .

We can sense here a difference in Barth's and Rahner's idio-

6 George Lindbeck calls this move Barth and Rahner make the task of picking samples of "competent speakers" of the Christian idiom *(The Nature of Doctrine. Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984), pp. 79, 82, 99-100); Francis Schussler Fiorenza calls something similar the task of picking "paradigms " of "Christian identity and praxis" *(Foundational Theology. Je8'Us and the Ohurch* [New York: Crossroad, 1984), pp. 304, 306.

7 Karl Barth, *Deliverance to the Oaptives,* trans. Marguerite Wieser (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1978), pp. 75-84.

matic sensibilities. Although Barth and Rahner each engage in the task of reshaping the "kerygma," they do so with different samples in mind. For example, Barth's appeal to Jesus's " story " and Rahn er's appeal to parallel " pictures " are differences which (as we shall later see) are part of the cause and effect of their different christocentrisms. In Barth's appeal we cannot help but hear the application of his massive redescriptions of the witness of Scripture as a *narrative* of Jesus Christ surrounded by the disciples and all humanity and the cosmos as well as pre-figured in the story of Israel and the nations. This is " the world of the Bible," God's world and therefore ours.[8] And in Rahner's appeal to parallel pictures we might hear his pastoral use of Scripture as a set of poetic *symbOls*-once again, God's as well as ours.[9] The central point here is that, if Barth and Rahner are to be analyzed and evaluated on something like their own terms, their christological inquiries must be read against the background of their sundry exercises in the Christian idiom. Both agree that it is not only their theo-logical claims but also such ordinary, idiomatic, and everyday samples of Christian life and language that set the

s For Barth such narratives are *sui generis* stories in which character and circumstances and plot cumulatively depict " the one and only world " which embraces " the experience of any age and reader "; Hans Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrativ*e. *A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Oentury Hermeneutics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), p. 3. I must presume here some familiarity with what Hans Frei, above all, has noticed: Barth's " primary first-order depiction was narrative " ("An Afterword. Eberhard Busch's Biography of Karl Barth" in *Karl Barth in Re-view. Posthumous Works Reviewed and Assessed*, ed. H.-Martin Rumscheidt [Pittsburgh, Pa.: The Pickwick Press, 1981], p. 112.) For an explication of Biblical narrative with attention to what Barth might call its "secular parables " in modern novels, see Frei's *The Identity of Jesus Ohrist. The Hermeneutical Bases of Dogmatic Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975).

9 See "Karl Rahner as a Dogmatic Theologian," pp. 367-69, for analogies between the kerygma and poetry. These references to realistic narratives and poetic symbols are only *representative* samples of the Christian idiom. Even if some might argue that we do not have to choose between the two (Buckley and Wilson, "A Dialogue with Barth and Farrer," pp. 283-84), Barth's and Rahner's ranking of them is typical of the way they appeal to Scripture, sacraments, and other communal practices.

contexts for their inquiries. And each of their idioms is quite distinct.

Third, both Barth and Rahner are concerned with distinctively Christian "doctrine," "teaching," or "dogma." For Barth, the specific function of theology is to raise "the question of truth" about Church proclamation (CD I/1:4), to pose "the critical question about dogma" (CD I/1: 248), or "to point the community of a given time to the norm of its thought and speech...." (CD IV/3,2: 880). For Rahner, distinctively Christian teachings in New Testament theology (also called "derived revelation") and the "dogmas" of tradition articulate the teachings of the Church (TI V: 23, 26 [Theology in the New Testament]). Their doctrinal concern arises from these sorts of questions: given the diversity of and conflicts within the kerygma, what shall the Christian community, confess, teach, and do? What is it that "norms" Christian speech and action (cp. CD IV/3, 2: 880). What does the Christian community need to claim is "true" praise and prayer, *liturgia* and *diakonia* (cp. TI V: 43-48)? When Barth discusses individual topics in the *Church Dogmatics,* such "loci" (CD I/2: 870-84) are abstractions of various characters and scenes of a plot (or features of the circumstances) from their narrative context for the purposes of seeking "a suitable denominator" (CD IV/3,2: 880) for testing the coherence of the life of the Christian community with the free love of God. "Doctrines," one might say, are normative redescriptions of narratives, and theology orders such redescriptions in ways that maximize the self-attestation of Jesus Christ. Similarly for Rahner, Scripture is a set of properties and functions ranging from the *experience* of the original event of revelation through *proclamation* of (kerygma) and *reflection* on (derived revelation or New Testament theology) this original event to reflection on non-revelatory matters (TI V: 23-41 [Theology in the New Testament]). When Rahner discusses individual doctrines, such Christian truth-claims are internal to Scripture, abstractions from and even "a deficient mode" of (TI XIV: 140 [What is a Sacrament?]) the sacramental kerygma.

Such doctrines are important so that we can distinguish between *everything* Barth and Rahner teach about Jesus Christ and what Barth and Rahner propose as *peculiarly Christian* teaching about Jesus Christ. The point is not that it is always possible or necessary to cut such a distinction-or that Barth or Rahner always do it successfully. Both are less concerned with doctrines or teachings in themselves than with locating them in relation to God's self-attestation or self-communication and the Christian idiom (and, we shall soon see, the truth-claims of other ways of life and language). But it was some such distinction that Barth and Rahner saw at work in the Definition of Chalcedon; it was some such distinction that Barth tried to put to work at Barmen and Rahner at Vatican II. And it was some such distinction that seemingly enabled Barth and Rahner-at least sometimes-to issue a *placet iuxta modum* to each others' theologies.[10] Thus, whatever their differences, both Barth and Rahner agree that specifically Christian doctrines do not aim to teach anything and everything but only aim to specify what we, the Christian community, ought teach. It is, then, the distinct ways Barth and Rahner identify distinctively Christian teaching about Jesus Christ that is another cause and effect of their different christocentrisms.

Fourth and finally, Barth and Rahner agree on the importance of relating (without identifying) and distinguishing (without separating) "doctrine" and what Rahner calls philosophy and the sciences (or what Barth calls " the lights of creation" [CD IV/3,1: llOff]). The product of an overlap between these two Barth calls " secular parables " and Rahner calls "theologoumena" (SM 6: 232-233 [Theologoumenon]). "Secular parables" (CD IV/3,1: 115 *[Gleichnis profaner Worte]* are those lights of creation of which God makes " cri-

[10] See Barth's letters to Rahner in *Karz Barth Letters 1961-1981,* ed., Juergen Fangmeier and Hinrich Stoevesandt; ed. and trans., Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1981), pp. 278-82 and 287-88. Rahner's longest analysis of Barth is TI IV: 189-218 (Questions of Controversial Theology on Justification).

tical yet also positive and positive yet also critical " use and which theology uses as "extraordinary witnesses" to Jesus Christ's self-attestation (CD IV/3, I: 118, 153, CL 122). " Theologoumena " in Scripture, Tradition, and contemporary theology propose analogies and other patterns of relationships between distinctively Christian teachings and the variety of other things we know and experience via philosophy as well as the historical, natural, and social sciences.[11]

Even more than in the case of the theo-logical and kerygmatic and doctrinal areas, differences in lexicon alone can generate confusion. Barth's notion of "secular *parables"* highlights Barth's insistence that theology remain bound to those narratives which (he claims) constitute the paradigms of the kerygma; what Rahner calls " theologoumena " are one species of what Barth calls secular parables. Rahner's notion of "theologoumena" highlights his insistence that theology track the relationships between Christian doctrines and " the whole of secular experience and all a man-or an age-knows " (SM 6: 232 [Theologoumenon]) ; what Barth calls " secular parables " are similar to those poetic symbols Rahner takes to be analogous to the kerygma (TI IV: 357-67 [Poetry and the Christian]) . One way to prevent such lexical differences from overshadowing the common ground is to remember that the import of this issue is broader than the abstract issue of the relationships between theology, philosophy, and the sciences. What Rahn er calls " philosophy and the sciences " (which can he theologoumena) and Barth calls " the lights of creation " (which can become " secular parables ") stand surety for the

11 See also "Karl Rahner as a Dogmatic Theologian," especially the evidence that "theologoumena" is a technical term for part of what Rahner envisions going on in Scripture and Tradition as well as contemporary culture (p. 384); "A Dialogue between Barth and Farrer," especially the suggestion that Barth thinks Scripture also makes use of such " secular parables " (pp. 280-283); and the analysis of secular parables by William Werpehowski in this issue of *The Thomi.st.* The ways Rahner distinguishes dogma and theologoumena are as infrequently noticed as the ways Barth relates doctrine and secular parables.

full range of common human experiences and actions and truth-claims with which Christian experiences and actions and truth-claims are interwoven. How, for example, can we address a pluralistic (or fragmented) culture comprised of autonomous individuals-therapists, managers, and others? [12] In the case of christological inquiry, answers to this question have aimed to weave Christian proclamation and teaching about Jesus Christ into other claims about Jesus in three particularly problematic cases: 1) the quest for the "historical Jesus," 2) the quest for divine agency, 3) the quest for human "autonomy." [18] It is as theology is or is not willing to describe and evaluate the meaning and truth, the "possibility" and "actuality" of the overlap between Christian teachings about Christ and the claims of 1) history, 2) philosophy, and 3) the sciences that theology proposes and makes use of "theologoumena" and "secular parables." It is, then, the different ways

12 I have in mind here the analyses of modernity in texts as diverse as William A. Clebsch, *Ohristianity in European History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979): Alasdair Macintyre, *After Virtue: A Study m Moral Theory* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981); and Robert Bellah, Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swidler, and Steven M. Tipton, *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Oommitment m American Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985). Clebsch's religious history suggests that modern christologies are fragmented into activist and apologist and authoritarian; for Clebsch's ac·tivists and apologists we could substitute Macintyre's and Bellah's "managers" and "therapists"-whether we are optimistic (Bellah) or pessimistic (Macintyre) about our ability to address the impact of such character-types on our public and private lives.

13 See not only Clebsch's *History of European Ohristianity,* c. VI, but also Barth's *Protestant Theology Vn the Nineteenth Oentury: Its Background and History,* n.t. (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1973), p. 560. Some might identify the first quest with Strauss, the second with Feuerbach or William James, and the third with Darwin, Marx, or Freud, but this would very in·felicitously restrict what Barth and Rahner mean: secular parables/theologoumena deal with "other" claims, not always "opposed" claims. For example, one could plausibly take "the quest for the historical Jesus" to be either a quest for *links between* Christian and historical claims about Jesus Christ or afl a quest for an *alternative to* those Christian claims about Christ; here I concentrate on the former.

Barth and Rahner handle these issues that is another cause and effect of their different christological inquiries.

The next section will be organized around these three issues. Although Barth and Rahner (despite differences in lexicon) agree that such secular parables or theologoumena are part of the theological task, there is little doubt that they disagree on the audience and aim of such parables and truth-claims. Barth (like Rahner) insists that the Christian community "must" attend to such "secular parables", even though he also insists (unlike Rahner) that such parables are usually "extraordinary," i.e., are usually accepted as authoritative only by certain groups at certain times and places (CD IV/3,1: 118, 126-35). Barth, as Rahner astutely notes with partial approval, has no "systematic principle which claims to be so primary and unique that everything else is reduced to a dependent function of it" (TI IV: 193-94 [Questions of Controversial Theology on Justification]). Rahner (like Barth) insists that it is "a priori improbable-more we cannot say-that a dogma can only be formulated and understood in dependence on a well-defined philosophical system" (TI IV: 290 [The Presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper]), even though Rahner also insists (unlike Barth) that such theologoumena "are absolutely necessary" (SM 6: 232 [Theologoumenon]). We do well, I think, to turn to the sort of difference these disagreements make on a particular issue rather than risk generalizations unrelated to Barth's and Rahner's practice of theology.

In sum, theological reflection on Jesus Christ's self-attestation or God's self-impartation in Word and Spirit takes place in certain ("kerygmatic") contexts in ways that generate particular kinds of ("doctrinal") claims which overlap and sometimes conflict with the claims non-theological domains make about Jesus Christ. Thus, Barth and Rahner agree that an adequate christological inquiry must be

a) "Theo-logically," the response to the self-attestation

of Jesus Christ or the self-communication of God in Word and Spirit,

and b) shaped by and shape

(i) "Kerygmatically," the Christian idiom with its analogues in secular parables or poetic symbols),

(ii) Beliefs and actions-guides, in the form of

(a) "Doctrinally," specifically Christian teachings,

(b) "Theologoumenally," those truth claims generated by weaving Christian doctrine with the truth-claims of the world in which we live.

At this point I believe much more could be made out of the overlap and difference in each of these four areas.[14] A complete analysis of the ripple-effect of each area on the others would yield a more adequate description of the contexts of Barth's and Rahner's christological inquiries. But, we rightly ask, who is Jesus Christ? How are these theo-logical, kerygmatic, doctrinal, and theologoumenal moves brought to bear on the identity of Jesus Christ? Barth and Ra:hner were equally suspicious of methodological discussions (e.g., CD I/1: *fl5*-44; FCF 18-14); they preferred to engage in christological in.., quiry and leave analysis of their performance to others. The best way to further probe their christological inquiry on their terms is by considering how their methodological claims do and do not turn into concrete ways of dealing with the identity of Jesus Christ.

14 For example, I think that Barth's and Rahner's strategies are a theological instance of the claim of Toulmin et al. that all kinds of reasoning (commonsensical and professional) take place in a *contea:t,* that different contexts generate different kinds of *claims,* and that these contexts and claims *overlap* and sometimes conflict; see Stephen Toulmin, Richard Rieke, and .Allen Janik, *An Introduction to Reasoning.* Second Edition. (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1984), especially Chapters 1, 12, 21, 23, 30. .A complete description of these contexts and claims would provide the setting for debates over analogy-debates which (as Rahner suggests) are frequently side-tracked by abstracting them from their theo-logical, idiomatic, and doctrinal context; see Rahner's remarks at TI V:59-60 [What is a Dogmatic Statement?].

II. Christological Inquiry and Christian Doctrine

One way to discipline Barth's and Rahner's material discussions of Jesus Christ is to select and unpack two typical texts. In Rahner's case, consider a text in TI and FCF.

> . . . Christology is the beginning and the end of anthropology, and this anthropology in its most radical actualization (*radik<Wten Verwirklichung)* is for all eternity theology. It is first of all the theology which God himself has spoken by uttering his Word as our flesh into the emptiness of what is not God and is even sinful, and, secondly, it is the theology which we ourselves do in faith when we do not think that we could find Christ by going around man, and hence find God by going around the human altogether. (FCF 225-26= GdG 223; TI IV:117 [On the Theology of the Incarnation])

What is at stake in this set of claims? If we read it against the background of Rahner's theo-logical and kerygmatic and doctrinal and theologoumenal ambience, we can distinguish three notions (or, others might say, species) of "agency" at work. First, in Rahner's anthropology, "person and subject" is constituted by the act of self-consciousness or (more accurately) co-consciousness of self in every act of consciousness (FCF QO = GdG 31). Self-consciousness is itself constituted by the self-transcendence (radically threatened by guilt) of spirit (intelligent and free) in matter toward the absolute mystery of God, indeed toward an " absolute savior " (FCF 24-116; 193-5).[15] This is the anthropology which "in its most radical actualization is for all eternity theology"; this anthropology is " the theology we ourselves do." This *a.ct of self-transcendence* is "a moment within *and* a condition of the possibility " for every possible experience and thus a " presupposition " of the Christian message (FCF 20, 24. My emphasis.). Analyzing Rahner's "transcendental anthropology" not only in terms of its content but also in terms of its audi-

[15] For Rahner's case that the technical concepts self-transcendence, spirit, and matter require each other, see "Karl Rahner as a Dogmatic Theologian," pp. 369-373.

ence, we might say it is addressed to Bellah's and Macintyre's "therapists," Clebsch's apologetic revolutionaries of our private lives, Lindbeck's "experiential expressivists ".[16] Rahner's aim in addressing this audience is not to reduce God's self-impartation to our self-transcendence but to suggest that grace can perfect even the most autonomous (or what others might call " individualistic") subject. Such is the first step in Rahner's response to the quest for autonomy: accept it on its own terms and argue that it must transcend itself if it is not to contradict itself. In the technical terms typical of christological *Wissenschaft,* such transcendence "mediates" history (FCF 140).

Second, God is holy mystery who imparts self in Word and Spirit. This *act of self-impartation* is an act whose surface grammar parallels the act of self-transcendence in matter and spirit; but it is distinct in at least two respects: i) self-impartation is "absolutely gratuitous " and " unmerited" whereas self-transcendence is constituted by" the created act of acceptance" (FCF 117, 118, 123) ; ii) the self-imparting God is "not subject to change in himself," whereas self-transcendence is changeable (e.g., FCF 219-23). These differences imply that self-impartation creates (rather than simply" presumes") the act of self-transcendence (FCF 24). God's self-impartation in Word and Spirit is the origin and goal of self-transcendence. This is " the theology which God himself has spoken " and which renders Christology the " beginning" of anthropology. It is this notion of holy mystery imparting itself in Word and Spirit that is the first step in Rahner's answer to the quest for divine agency: the God who imparts self is a God who acts "in Word and Spirit." In technical terms, this history "mediates " this transcendence.

If Rahner went no further, the problem at this point would

[16] See notes 6 and 12. If Bellah and Macintyre are right, even those who doubt there are any such events as " transcendental experiences " (FCF 20) cannot deny there are people who think and (more importantly) act as though there are. Rahner's optimism about addressing these character-types is closer to Bellah than Macintyre, Clebsch, or Lindbeck.

be obvious. We have seen that one of Rahner's central theological claims is that God is holy mystery who imparts self in Word and Spirit as the gracious fulfillment of this self-transcendence. But can Rahner sustain these *differences* between the acts of self-transcendence and self-impartation without sacrificing his claim that God's self-impartation fulfills human self-transcendence? In other words, given the differences between self-impartation and self-transcendence, can Rahner make good his axiom that self-transcendence and self-impartation, human and divine freedom, grow in direct and not inverse proportion? How is christology both the "beginning" *and* the "end" of anthropology? How is theology both God's *and* ours, both "what God has spoken" and "what we ourselves do"? How is anthropology both what we do in not "going around man" *and* "actualized" in theology?

It is at this point that we find a third notion of agency at work in Rahner. The unity of self-transcendence and self-impartation is constituted not simply by the "immediacy" of self-transcendence or by the "mediacy" of self-impartation but by an act of "mediated immediacy" provided in what Rahner calls the act of a *Realsymbol,* e.g., those acts in which things "express themselves in order to attain their own nature" (TI IV: 224 [The Theology of the Symbol]). And "the incarnate word is the absolute symbol of God in the world" precisely as the humanity of Christ "is the self-disclosure *[Selbstverlautbarung]* of the Logos itself, so that when God, expressing himself *[sich selbst aus-sagend],* exteriorizes himself *[sich selbst entaeussert]* that very thing appears which we call the humanity of the Logos" (TI IV: 237, 239 = SzT IV: 294, 296). It is the complex internal dynamics of Rahner's theological ontology of the symbol-particularly the interaction of self-impartation as divine self-expression *[Selbstaeusserung]* and self-giving [*Selbstentaeusserung]* (FCF 196f, 224f) -that generates not only his doctrines of creation, Incarnation, and grace but also yields the first step in his answer to "the quest for the historical Jesus": historical claims must

somehow be read as " deficient forms " of the appropriate "kerygmatic" (or, as we have seen, "symbolic") background.17

It is not always easy to distinguish the doctrinal and theologoumenal aspects of this interplay between self-impartation and self-transcendence and symbol. But, before addressing this issue, we need to sketch Barth's positions on agency. In the final and fragmentary volume of CD, Barth argues against both "christomonism" and "anthropomonism" by claiming that the history of Jesus Christ is *extra nos, pro nobis,* and *in nobis.*

The history of Jesuh Christ is different from all other histories .... Having taken place *extra nos,* it also works *in nobis,* introducing a new being of every man. It certainly took place *extra nos.* Yet it took place, not for its own sake, but *pro nobis: qui propter* ⊓<>'s *homines et salutem nostram descendit de coelis.* ... Since he is the righteous, merciful, and as such almighty God working in the history of Jesus Christ, what takes place is thus quite simply that *in nobis,* in our heart, at the centre of our existence, there is set a contradiction *[Widerspruch]* of our unfaithfulness ... , by which it is not merely forbidden but prevented and rendered impossible. (CD IV/4:20-22; cp. the translation in this issue of *The Thomist,* p. 508 above)

This "line of argument" about Jesus Christ's self-attestation, Barth says at one point, " is informed by the true spirit and import of the ontological proof' of Anselm of Canterbury " (CD IV/3,1: 85) .[18] We might say that, if Rahner's theological

17 For an analysis, see James J. Buckley, "On Being a Symbol: .An Ap· praisal of Karl Rahner," *Theological Studies* 40 (1979) 453-73. It is now clearer to me how Rahner's ontology of the symbol is a metaphysical version of the Christian idiom; his discussions of prelinguistic self-transcendence would then be an effort to lead Christians and others into this symbolic idiom.

18 *A·nselm: Fides Quaerens Intelleotum. Anselm's Proof of the JiJroistenoe of God in the Oonterot of his Theological Boheme,* trans. Ian W. Robertson, 2nd ed. (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1960). For a powerful argument that Barth makes the .Anselmian " line of argument" doctrinally essential rather than theologically crucial but doctrinally adiaphoral, see Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth,* [trans. abridged] John Drury (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972), c. IV.

ontology of the symbol hinds self-transcendence and self-impartation, Anselm's "ontological proof" binds Barth's christology and theology and anthropology. It provides a way of aptly relating Jesus Christ's self-attestation, the narrative kerygma, Church doctrine, and a full range of " lights of creation." Consider Barth's use of the Anselmian mode of reasoning. Jesus Christ is the One "than whom a greater cannot be conceived," and divine and human agency are thought in correspondence to this One's action and passion. The Anselmian " proof " works in no other case than this one; " the history of Jesus Christ," says Barth's typical quotation," is different from all other histories "-different precisely in that it takes place *pro nobis.* Thus, the One who is "very God" ("divine nature ") is so *only* as " the reconciling God " (" work ") -particularly in the crucifixion (" states ") as " the action and therefore the passion of God Himself" (CD IV/1: 245, 254). The One who is " very man " (" human nature") is so only as " exalted man " (" work ") –'' *humanitas* . . . in motion " from beginning to middle to end (" states ") , the homecoming of the Son of Man as the history of the humanity of God (CD IV/2: 29) . The uniqueness of this One ("person ") is this One's identity as "guarantor and witness" ("work") of our atonement *("pro nobis* and *in nobis* ") in Jesus Christ's resurrection and final return ("states"). Jesus Christ is not only "with us" but "for us in Himself" and "in Himself 'for us'" (CD IV/1: 229). The central sections of CD are constituted by such thick descriptions of this identity of Jesus Christ, the One who " can thus be described only in the form of a narration" (CD IV/3,1: 168f; cp. IV/1: 223f; IV/2: 193f) . Clearly the relationship between the concepts " person," " natures," " work," " states," and *"pro nobis"* are parasitic on the narratives of Jesus Christ we found in Barth's proclamation of the Gospels. There is, then, a loose fit between Barth's use of Anselm and his narrative depictions: we cannot abstract this character from this plot and these circumstances, and the central theological task is to order narrative redescriptions of

this One who cannot not be. Such is Barth's response to " the quest for the historical Jesus": there is no reaching behind these narratives for a large or small set of historical facts on which the narratives are " based," although historical claims about Christ can (and for some must) function as "secular parables" illuminating the narrative once the narrative is in place.[19]

Analogously for divine agency, the actuality (CD II/I, # 25) and the possibility (CD II/I, # 26) of the knowledge of God *as well as* the transition between the two (CD II/I, # 27) are given in God and by God alone. The history of Jesus Christ is *extra nos* as well as *ίγτο nobis.* The " as well as " is crucial. It matters not whether one " begins with" questions of actuality or possibility; no fear addressing those who think we are constituted by self-transcendence, as long as such apologetics remain "supplementary, incidental, and implicit" (CD II/I: 8). The central issue is the character of the transition, viz., that it is provided by the God whose being is that of the One who loves in freedom in the richness of the perfections of love and freedom (CD II/I, # 28-# 3I). Such is Barth's response to the quest for divine agency: as the One than whom a greater cannot be conceived, God is the One who loves in freedom preveniently, particularly in Jesus Christ's "obedience unto death" (CD IV/I: 199) and exaltation to fellowship with God (IV/2: 69f).

Human agency is, then, constituted by its analogy and cor: respondence to this graciously prevenient God. The transi-

[19] The warrant for saying " for some must" is in the summary of Barth's notion of " secular parables " above. Barth's jousting with historical claims about Jesus Christ thus normally takes place in the small print sections of CD, moving *from* the narrative *to* such claims (and never the reverse) precisely to contrast them with the Gospel narratives positively and negatively. For example, Rahner's concern with Jesus "self-consciousness" (how Jesus " saw" or "understood" or " experienced" himself [FCF 249-55]) becomes a very secondary matter (like, we might say, Jesus's sexuality): "What we learn of the inner life of Jesus is certainly not little, but it is definitely not much, and it falls far short of all that we should like to know" (CD III/2: 329; cp. 209) .

tion from the claim that" Jesus Christ is for us" to the claim that" We are those for whom Jesus Christ is" is provided by the fact that "Jesus Christ Himself is in transition" from an identity " as the One who has come and is present" to his form "as the One who is present and has still to come" (CD IV/1: 333; IV/3,1: . It is thus constituted by the history of our " being-in-act" in covenant relation with God and humanity as " bodily soul " and " besouled body " (CD III/2: 157, 271, 350) precisely because it is depicted as the agency of those for whom Jesus Christ is. Jesus Christ's *pro nobis* and *extra nos* identity is also *in nobis.* Such is Barth's response to the quest for human autonomy: true freedom is freedom before God and neighbor over the course of time, a freedom which the Christian community and individual Christians ought provisionally to represent for all humankind (CD IV/1: 643; 614; IV/3,2: 681).

We might summarize these different christocentrisms this way. For Barth, Jesus Christ is the One who is for us, and so we are those for whom Jesus Christ is. For Rahner, Jesus Christ is the irreversible, historical, and eschatologically victorious climax of God's self-impartation as the gracious fulfillment of human self-transcendence.

What is *dootrina:Lly* at stake between Barth and Rahner, I would say, is the *sort* of " christological maximalism " that is and/or ought be distinctive of Christian identity.[20] This disagreement must be stated in a variety of ways (technical and non-technical) or risk losing itself in some brand of sloganeering. In its most technical form, both agree that Jesus Christ has unrestricted primacy but disagree on the *mode* of this primacy.z[1] For Barth, Jesus Christ (not any doctrine or con-

[20] On "christological maximalism," see George A. Lindbeck's *The Nature of Doctrine,* p. 94. I think this segment of Lindbeck can be used without dealing with the issues raised by the symposium on his book in *The Thomist* 49 (# 3, July, 1985) 392-472.

[21] .An "unrestricted primacy valuation" is a claim that something or other has primacy in any category (e.g., "Nirvana is the supreme goal of life"; "God is holy.") ; see William A. Christian, *Oppositions of Religious Doc-*

cept, symbol or story but the One with this proper name), as reconciling unity of Lord and Servant, is that than which a greater cannot be conceived. Jesus Christ is maximally important without reference, then, to any other object or subject.[22] Jesus Christ's importance, of course, is not primarily a "religious valuation" we add to Jesus Christ but inheres in this figure's storied identity (CD IV/1: 161-63). "This means that all the concepts and ideas used in this report (God, man, world eternity, time, even salvation, grace, transgression, atonement and any others) can derive their significance only from the bearer of this name and from His history, and not the reverse. . . . They can serve only to describe this name-the name of Jesus Christ" (CD IV/1: 16-17). Christ's *extra nos* thus has priority over Christ's very real *pro nobis* and *in nobis.* Whatever we are to say about our relationship to God or Christ is subordinate to the claim that Jesus Christ is for us and we are those for whom Jesus Christ is. We might also summarize the doctrine at stake here by using Schubert Ogden's three questions: Barth's focus is on the question "Who is Jesus Christ?" rather than "Who is God?" or" Who are we?/Who am I? "[23] Or we might use fragments of a theory of value: Jesus Christ is of unrestricted importance by being of "inherent value."[24] Using the conclusion of the Eucharistic prayer, we might say that, if Barth's focus is on the priority

trines: A. Study in the Logic of Dialogue among Religious (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972). William Christian's categories permit a more disciplined use of the otherwise vague label "christocentrism ": unrestricted primacy valuations have some right to be called "basic religious valuations " for "such a valuation tells us what some scheme of doctrines places *at the center* of the orientation to life it recommends" (pp. 73-74: my emphasis).

22 The " other " here is crucial. Barth was suspicious of "Christology" and " Christocentricity" in part because such abstractions tempt us to deny that Jesus Christ is always "Christ for us"; see Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth: His Life From Letters and Autobiographical Tewts,* trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), p. 411.

2a See Schubert Ogden, *The Point of Ohristology* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1982), p. 28. Needless to say, Ogden does not order the questions the way either Barth or Rahner does.

24 See William A. Christian, *Oppositions of Religious Doctrines,* p. 60.

of Christ's *extra nos* to Christ's *pro nobis* and *in nobis*, then our eucharistic prayer ought to grant priority to the" in Him [Christ]" over the" through Him" and" with Him." In still other words, like (Barth says) the Latin and Reformed and unlike the Greek and Lutheran traditions, the Chalcedonian "person" presides over the "natures" (CD I/2: 161; IV/2: 79).[25] Here Christ has, we might say," unrestricted primacy".

For Rabner, I suggest, Christ has such unrestricted primacy only in the context of two other claims. It is, for example, noteworthy that Rahner's own " Brief Creedal Statements" (FCF 448) are theological and anthropological and futurological, not christological-and yet christology is crucial *within* each *Kurzformel*. Thus, theologically, Jesus Christ is important because this Christ is the Word made flesh, the image and Son of the Father become one of us; Christ's unrestricted primacy, then, depends on ascribing primacy to God's trinitarian self-impartation. The question " Who is God? "-at this moment of Rahner's theology-takes precedence over the questions "Who are we?/Who am I?" and "Who is Jesus Christ? " In still other words, Christ is important precisely because he is " instrumental to " our vision or other experience of God. Jesus Christ is of "contributory value."[26] Christology and anthropology are "based on " theology at this "moment" in Rahner. Again, if this is so, our eucharistic " through Him " has priority over the " in Him " or " with

[25] What is involved," Barth says, "is a serious opposition between two schools of tradition, not an opposition of faith"-reminiscent of the differences between the Synoptic and Pauline-Johannine renditions of Jesus Christ (CD 1/2:162).

[26] See William Christian, *Oppositions of Religious Doctrines*, p. 60. As in Aquinas, the notion of "instrument" is quasi-technical here. Indeed, in C. I. Lewis (on whom William Christian relies at this point), instrumental values are essential to the temporal quality of life; a story, as Lewis says, links instrumental and what he calls intrinsic value. See C. I. Lewis, *An Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation* (LaSalle, Illinois: Open Court, 1962), pp. 384-85. Aquinas's or Rahner's notion of Christ as instrumental cause is a second level comment on his reading of Christ's life and death and exaltation.

Him." In still other words, the Chalcedonian " natures " preside over the Chalcedonian " person " to protect the latter from monophysite and mythological misuses (FCF TI I: *158-85* [Current Problems in Christology]). Here God is given unrestricted primacy and Christ is of contributory value.

But we also saw Rahner make another claim. Jesus Christ is important, Rahner *also* claims, because our experience of Jesus Christ is important. The question" Who am I?/Who are we?", asked by Christians, takes priority over the questions "Who is God?" or "Who is Jesus Christ?" Jesus Christ is not of mere contributory value or of inherent value but of "intrinsic value." [27] In this sense, theology (God's unrestricted primacy) and christology (Christ's unrestricted primacy) are based on anthropology-not just any anthropology but the anthropology of a subject shaped by " the personal relationship of a Christian to Jesus Christ" (FCF *305,* 177). Or, to once again appeal to the *lex orandi,* our eucharistic prayer " with Him " has priority over our " through Him " or " in Him." Here the experience of Christ (where the genitive is objective) has unrestricted primacy.

Now it is noteworthy that neither Barth nor Rahner rules out granting unrestricted primacy to Christ, God, or our experience of Christ. In still other words, neither rules out the christological *extra nos, pro nobis,* or *in nobis;* neither doctrinally rules out a theological focus on the Chalcedonian "person" or "natures "; neither rules out that we are simultaneously and successively " in Christ," " through Christ," and "with Christ." Indeed, both think they have ways of weaving these three modes together. [28] It is, I believe, an

[21] For Lewis, it is only some actual or possible *emperirmce* which is " intrinsically valuble "; the value of " object," whether inherent or contributory value, is always "extrinsic"; see *Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation,* p. 385-92.

[28] We might also say each has ways of holding together christologies "from above" and "from below" in unified renditions of Christ. However, I agree with Nicholas Lash that the metaphors "from above/from below" are used in such diverse and question-begging ways that we should stop us-

ecumenically important and theologically plausible argument that, since neither rules out the other two positions and even intends to embrace them, each could issue at least a *placet iuxta modum* to the other's christology. In other words, on the level of the Christian teaching or doctrine Barth and Rahner agree is so important, their christologies are not church-divisive. Such, it would seem, is what each has in fact asserted in the fragmentary ways each has written about the other. Such is what we can also assert, once we place their christological inquiries in their idiomatic contexts and clearly distinguish distinctively Christian teachings about Jesus Christ from other sorts of claims about this Christ.

III. Theology and Christological Inquiry

Such doctrinal agreement is plausible only if we can distinguish (in Rahner's terms) the doctrinal and theologoumenal features of Barth's and Rahner's claims, without downplaying the importance of the latter. I think this can be done by showing that, while Barth and Rahner do not disagree on their central claims taken individually, they do differ in the *order* in which the three claims are ranked-and this difference jeopardizes their doctrinal agreement. Barth's order is i) Christ has unrestricted primacy in the mode of inherent value, ii) God has unrestricted primacy in the mode of intrinsic value, iii) the experience of Christ has unrestricted primacy in the mode of contributory value; on the other hand, Rahner's order is i) God has unrestricted value in the mode of inherent value, ii) the experience of Christ has unrestricted primacy in the mode of intrinsic value, iii) Christ has unrestricted primacy in the mode of contributory value. There is little doubt that Rahner would worry that Barth's position is tempted to so subordinate the experience of Christ to Christ's and God's primacy that this experience of Christ is rendered irrelevant;

ing them; see Lash's "Up and Down in Christology," *New Studies in Theology*, vol. 1, Stephen Sykes and Derek Holmes, ed. (London: Duckworth, 1980), pp. 31-46.

there is little doubt that Barth would worry that Rahner is tempted in the opposite direction, i.e., to so subordinate the primacy of Christ to the experience of Christ and God's primacy that Christie primacy is rendered irrelevant. Some brief warrants for these worries will amount to a description of how the oppositions between Barth and Rahner can be stated without undercutting their doctrinal agreement.

Barth was not unimpressed with anthropologies of self-transcendence, although there is little doubt he viewed them as rivals as much as resources for Christian anthropology (CD III/2: 109-121). Why, Barth asks, does self-transcendence need a gracious fulfillment "from without"? (III/2: 119) Does not Rahner's focus on "the experience of Christ "-because and despite the reciprocal relationship between "experience " as something we *do* and something that *happens to* us-ultimately focus on a moment of reception which fulfills our subjectivity at the expense of our autonomous agency? (III/2: 126-8) [29] And, even if this is not the case, does not self-transcendence toward an absolute savior remain a mere "possibility " which must be graciously " contradicted " as well as "fulfilled" if the self-transcender is to stand before God (not to mention the civil and ecclesial body politics) .[30] Before and as theology and christology " actualize " anthropology, they contradict an unfaithful humanity. Those for whom Jesus Christ is (i.e., all humanity) are constituted not as self-transcending embodied spirits but as self-transcending agents (cp. CD III/4: 473) situated by the *sui generis* Scriptural narra-

[29] For an argument that "the turn to the subject" avoids "the hard questions" about the relationship between divine and human *agency*, see David Kelsey, "Human Being" in *Christian Theology: An Introduction to Its Traditions and Tasks*, eds. Peter C. Hodgson and Robert H. King (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), p. 165. I find Kelsey's argument persuasive, although not his reading of Barth and Rahner in this article.

[30] As in the case of Barth's deployment of Biblical narrative (note 8 above), I must here presume some familiarity with the political debates between " right-wing" and " left-wing" readings of Barth's socialism; see George HunBinger, ed. and trans., *Karl Barth and Radical Politics* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976).

tives of individuals and groups, disciples and crowds, enemies and strangers moving toward and away from Jesus Christ.

Further, Barth could only assent to the way Rahner (as we have seen) builds gratuity into the notion of self-impartation, although Barth preferred to subsume traditional claims about immutability under God's perfect constancy (CD 11/1: 490f). The central issue at this point is whether Rahner's dialectic of self-impartation as self-expression (emphasizing God's self-*fulfillment* in the incarnation) and self-giving (emphasizing God's *self-sacrifice* in the incarnation) can embrace the obedience unto death which constitutes the humiliation and exaltation of Jesus Christ. More bluntly put, does the rich dialectic of self-impartation, self-expression, and even self-sacrifice call so much attention to God's "self" that Rahner cannot adequately deal with the incarnation as a response to an "other"-an *obedience* to the Father which is and becomes a *fellowship* with humanity even unto death?

The key christological issue, however, is not the existence or nature of self-transcendence and self-impartation but how they do or not help in depicting the identity of Jesus Christ. Does Rahner's "theological ontology of the symbol" handle the problem Rahner intends it to solve and thus leave room for Barth's christological primacy? What, we can hear Barth ask, can account for the actuality of the christocentric revelation Rahner asserts in his "ontology." Even *if* Rahner can make good his claims about self-transcendence and self-impartation, on what grounds are they linked to the concrete figure Jesus Christ?

Surely we need the sort of appeals Rahner provides in his discussion of "the empirical concrete structure *[Gestalt]* of the life of Jesus" (FCF 246 = GdG 244). But how do Rahner's theses-that Jesus was a radical reformer" who saw himself in radical solidarity with social and religious outcasts, because his 'Father' loved them," who gradually came to experience the conflict entailed by his mission and faced his death resolutely as imposed by God, and "intended to gather dis-

ciples who 'follow' him" (FCF 247-49)-amount to a depiction of the unique character of this One? Where is what Albert Schweitzer called the " thread of connection " between Jesus of Nazareth's supposed character and circumstances, consciousness and words and deeds, life and death, resurrection and promised return in relation to Jews and Gentile, slave and free, man and woman that justifies the" risk" Christians take (FCF 310)?[31] Are we not left perched on the boundary of a kerygmatically disclosive event which makes not Jesus Christ but our relationship to Jesus Christ "self-validating." And does not this replace the "Jesus Christ for us" and "We are those for whom Jesus Christ is" with "We are those related to Jesus Christ?" Is not all this the result of making the systematically central question " How do I account for my faith in this Jesus as the Christ?" rather than "Who is Jesus Christ?" (FCF 230)? Does not this way of addressing transcendentally self-conscious therapists undercut the very self-impartation, kerygma, and dogma which makes it possible to address them? In sum, if not read *in meliorem partem,* does not Rahner's weave of nature and grace compound the mistakes of scholastic dogmatics (e.g., on natural theology and the teaching office) with the mistakes of" pietistic-rationalistic modernism " (i.e., doing theology on the foundation of " a comprehensively explicated self-understanding of human existence") (CD I/1: 36-40)? Christ here "actualizes" our humanity *in nobis* at the expense of Christ's *extra nos* and *pro nobis-a* price we do not have to pay if the Christ who is *extra nos* sets in our hearts *(in nobis)* a contradiction on our behalf *(pro nobis)* .

If the problem with Rahner is whether the complexities of his dialectically disclosive *Realsymbol* can relate self-impartation and self-transcendence to the concrete figure Jesus Christ, the problem with Barth at this point is whether the Anselmian

[31] Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus: A Critical Study of Its Progress from Reimaros to Wrede,* trans. W. Montgomery (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1968), pp. 6-7.

logic does not render Jesus Christ so utterly unique that the links between the agency of Jesus Christ (on the one hand) and God's activity in us or our ongoing activity (on the other hand) -all usually (I think) powerfully *displayed* in Barth's redescriptions of Biblical narratives-are *explicated* only in the perplexing event in which our " naming of His name " is one " He Himself pronounces " (CD IV/ 3,l: 46, 231) . The climax of this problem comes in Barth's periodic claims that Jesus Christ is *Erkenntnisgrund,* the ground and foundation of our knowledge of God and humanity. In this "foundationalism" [32] we can see the Anselmian logic drive Barth to contradict his own insistence that" secular parables" remain ad hoc. Do we have here an example of what Rahner called " a too narrowly Christological approach " which verges on " a mere biblicism," making philosophical and systematic theology " a very secondary matter" (FCF 13-14)?

Theologically, "the primary axiom" of theology is "the infinite Incomprehensibility of God" (TI I: 18 [The Prospects for Dogmatic Theology]), a God before whom we ultimately stand in "the attitude of trembling and silent adoration" (TI XI: 112 [Reflections on Methodology in Theology J) . This is not the place to pursue Rahner's *latens deitas* (any more than earlier we could pursue Barth's ever bounteous perfections of God's loving freedom). The point here is this: can Barth's God of obedient suffering-a God who obviously " cannot be shaped to our needs "-become "through his self-gi.ft the being who alone is fitted to us " (TI XVI: 239 [The Hiddenness of God])? Does Barth's focus on God's other-regarding obedient suffering (in contrast to God's self-expression and *self*-sacrifice) yield a God whose work in Word and Spirit requires a

a2 For background for this label, see Fiorenza, *Foundational Theology,* p. 285·89; Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine,* pp. 128-34; and Thiemann, *Revelation and Theology,* especially chapters 1-4. There are clearly moments of christological foundationalism in Barth-and anthropological foundationalism in Rahner. But these, are developed against the backgrounll of such rich versions of the Christian idiom and doctrine that I do not find it helpful to cast the issue in these terms.

humanity other than who *we* are? Could this not be remedied by a God who acts in Word *and* Spirit shaping humanity into the body of Christ?

The same question could be addressed to Barth's depictions of people by granting Barth's re-descriptions of the Gospel narratives and asking for the link between the narrative shape of the world of the Bible and our own world. Anthropologically, perhaps Rahner might admit that his notion of "person and subject " does not and was not intended to address the issues of political autonomy. But neither does it rule out such a focus. In a culture of mutually re-enforcing autonomies, do we not have to go *through* our individualisms in order to reconstruct our body politic? Why claim that at *this* point we should lose our confidence that "grace perfects nature," i.e., that we can lead therapeutic individualism toward the Gospel on that individualism's own terms-perhaps even by taking narrative to be a set of symbols condensing self-transcendence and self-impartation? Why not take advantage of a culture of " do it yourself christs," showing that their self-transcendence is graciously fulfilled only in God's self-impartation? [33] God's and our " contradiction" of these individuals takes place against the background of the "actualization" of a good creation.

IV. CONCLUSION

These questions (to which Barth and Rahner would surely have potent responses) suggest that the oppositions between Barth and Rahner are massive and real. If the case could be made that Barth ruled in the Anselmian mode of argument or ruled out addressing the transcendentally self-conscious on doctrinal (not just theologoumenal grounds-or that Rahner

[33] For an analysis of a culture of "do it yourself Christs," see Clebsch, *Clwistianity in European History,* p. 242. See TI XI: 84f [Reflections on Methodology in Theology], XII: 229-49 [The Function of the Church as a Critic of Society], and XIII: 56-59 [Possible Courses for the Theology of the Future] for samples of the way Rahner weaves transcendental subjectivity into political agency.

ruled in his theological ontology of the symbol and ruled out addressing humanity as agents for whom Jesus Christ is on doctrinal (not just theologoumenal) grounds-the patterns of relationship between Barth and Rahner would look very different than I have proposed.

What would it take to further advance this inquiry? We would need to locate their christologies (including their theologies and anthropologies) against a broader background of paradigmatic samples of Christian and other lives and language, isolate more of those distinctively Christian doctrines which norm the Christian idiom, and explore more ways these contexts and claims overlap with the narratives and symbols and teachings of our common humanity, and thus further test the correspondence (or lack thereof) between such features of life and Jesus Christ's self-attestation or God's self-communication in Word and Spirit. This would have to be done without expecting that we agree or disagree with Barth and Rahner simply because we (dis) agree with one feature of their contexts or claims. However, what distinguishes Barth and Rahner from lesser theologians is that they bequeath not primarily a method or a set of axioms or theorems but a world for which the reader is claimed or to which the reader is invited. We do them justice by taking them at their word: they are to be explored as part of a broader world of idiomatic practices and Christian teachings, overlapping as well as opposed theologoumena and secular parables-a world which, we believe and know, is our world because it is God's world. That they merit this analysis (and, surely, other analyses) is the Spirit's gift to us; that we take them as finite exemplars of all of our christological inquiries is our act of thanks. [34]

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THE HARNACK/BARTH CORRESPONDENCE: A PARAPHRASE WITH COMMENTS

IN ADOLF VON HARNACK published an open letter to the despisers of scientific theology-by which he meant the emerging new group of "dialectical theologians"-and this letter was to initiate the climactic phase of his history with Karl Barth. That history had begun years earlier in the winter semester of 1906-07, when the young Karl Barth had moved as a student to Berlin. To his surprise Barth soon came to think more highly of Harnack than of any other professor. Attaching himself to the great theologian as a pupil, he became the youngest regular member of Hamack's seminar in church history, in which he worked with great diligence. Harnack regarded Barth as a promising student.[1]

The second phase of their history was one of which Harnack knew nothing, but which for Barth was that now famous moment of theological disillusionment shortly after the outbreak of the First World War. Finding the names of his most revered teachers attached to a manifesto acclaiming Germany's war policy of aggression, Barth was so shaken that he felt a need to break decisively with their liberal theological presuppositions. Prominent among the signatories was none other than Adolf von Harnack, whom Barth always mentioned explicitly, among others, when recalling the impact of the manifesto upon him.[2]

1 Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth* (Phila.: Fortress Press, 1976), pp. 38-39.

2 In a recent article Wilfred Harle has attempted to cast doubt on the significance of the 1914 manifesto for Barth's break with liberalism. Harle documents that there was not one such manifesto but two and that they did not appear in .August, as Barth years later would recall, but in October. These facts by themselves would be of marginal interest. Harle goes on to argue that no evidence can be found in contemporary documents that the capitulation of Barth's teachers in general and the manifesto in particular

The third phase of their relationship, a kind of prelude to the 1923 correspondence, occurred when both men spoke at a student conference in 1920. Barth lectured on " Biblical Questions, Insights and Vistas." [3] He declared God to be " wholly other," dismissed historical method as a means to theological knowledge, and denounced all organic connections between human culture and divine revelation as contrary to the cross of Christ. The effect of Barth's lecture on Harnack was, according to Harnack's biographer, staggering. "There was not *one* sentence, not *one* thought, with which he could agree." Harnack could acknowledge Barth's deep seriousness, but Barth's theology "made him shudder." [4] Horrified that the

played as significant a role for Barth as Barth later attributed to them. Although this question deserves further investigation, a document not available to Harle has since been cited by Busch *(Karl Barth,* p. 81 n. 104) which *is* contemporary and which pertains to the fundamental point of the impact on Barth of the capitulation of Barth's teachers. Harle goes on to make two further points which in my opinion make his argument dubious. First, although he correctly observes that Barth's break with liberalism "·as starting to become visible prior to 1914, he not only mistakenly assumes that these prior developments must rule out a decisive shock of recognition in 1914, but he also mistakenly reads Barth's assimilation of religious-socialist motifs as evidence of Barth's break with liberalism. *Theologically,* however, the assimilation of these motifs was more nearly a supplement to than a break with Barth's early liberalism. The second dubious move occurs when Harle engages in psychological speculations pertaining to Barth's relationship to his father. Even if such speculations were not dubious, they would not necessarily rule out the shock of recognition in 1914 nor would they explain the theological motives for Barth's break with liberalism. See ·wilfred Hiirle, "Der Aufruf der 93 Intellektuellen und Karl Earths Bruch mit der liberalen Theologie," *Zeitschrift fii,r Theologie und Kirche* 72 (1975), pp. 206-224. For a summary of Barth's early break with liberalism, see my essay "Toward a Radical Barth," in *Karl Barth and Radical Politics,* ed. by George Hunsinger (Phila.: Westminster Press, 1976), pp. 192-211.

BThe lecture may be found in Karl Barth, *'l'he Word of God a,nd the W01·d of Man* (N.Y.: Harper & Row, 1957), pp. 51-96.

4.Agnes von Zahn-Harnack, *Adolf von Harnack* (Berlin: Hans Bott Verlag, 1936, 1951), p. 532. I am borrowing the translation made of this passage by G. Wayne Glick, *The Reality of Christianity: A S tiidy of Adolf von II arnack as Historian and Theologian* (N.Y.: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 223. For a study of the Harnack/Barth correspondence which pays special attention to its prelude in 1920, see Peter Henke, "Erwiihlung und Entwicklung, Zur Ausein-

new theology continued to gain ground, Harnack at last threw down the gauntlet in 1923.

The debate, which took place in the pages of *Die Christliche Welt*, occurred in several exchanges. Harnack opened with "fifteen questions," and Barth countered with "fifteen answers." Harnack returned with an "open letter" addressed directly to Barth, and Barth retorted with a very long "answer." Finally, Harnack drafted a "postscript," which drew the debate to a close.[5] Although personal relations between the two men remained cordial, the theological rift between them was too fundamental to be overcome.[6]

The Harnack/Barth correspondence continues to be of interest, not only because it was a historic encounter between the leading liberal and the leading dialectical theologian of the day, but also because of the light it casts on Barth's theology in particular. The questions posed by Harnack have recurred again and again in the reception and assessment of Barth's theology. The answers proposed by Barth, though not final in terms of his development, nonetheless indicated the basic intentions which would undergird his massive life-long theological project. The correspondence thus affords an excellent opportunity not only to observe Barth's theology in process of definition, but also to understand it in relation to the past from which it broke so dramatically. At the same time the correspondence serves as a concise and accessible introduction to continuing themes in Barth's work.

andersetzung zwischen Adolf von Harnack und Karl Barth," *Neue Zeitschrift fiir Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie* 18 (1976), pp. 194-208.

5 An English translation may be found in *The Beginnings of Dialectic Theology,* ed. by James M. Robinson (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, HlGS), pp. Hi5-187. Complete reference to the German original may be found in H. Martin Rumscheiclt, *Revelation and 'l'heology: An Analysis of the Barth-Harnack Corrnspondence of 1923* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 201 n. 2. The German text may be found most conveniently in Karl Barth, *Theologische Ji'ragen und Antworten* Zurich: Evangelisher Ver lag zollikon, l!J57), pp. 7-31.

6 See Busch, *J(arl Rarth,* p. 147; Agnes von Zahn-Harnack, *Adolf van Harnack,* p. 534.

The exercise which follows is intended to be entirely modest. The correspondence as a whole will simply be phaphrased according to Harnack's original format of fifteen topics. Harnack's questions will be reversed into assertions in order to bring out the constructive standpoint lurking behind his critique. Barth's answers will be summarized on the basis of the entire correspondence. Having set forth the course of debate on its own terms, I will conclude with some critical observations. [7]

1. On revelation and reason, especially as they relate to scripture.

Harnack. The Bible's religious content is not unequivocal but quite diverse. If we are to determine it for faith, worship and life, we need a better basis than merely subjective and individual experience. We need to draw upon historical knowledge and critical reflection. How is theology to deal with the diversity of biblical content, if not rationally, by means of historical analysis? Historical knowledge and critical reflection are indispensable if we are to avoid naive biblicism.

Barth. God's revelation is unitary, not incoherent. The content of this revelation is autonomous, suprarational and self-communicating. Knowledge cannot be "historical," properly speaking, if it fails to recognize precisely this living and transcendent quality of God's revelation. No knowledge which denies or reinterprets this quality can properly be called " historical." The concept of history is, in effect, to be critically subordinated to the concepts of theology. This understanding of God's revelation-as unitary; as autonomous, suprarational and self-communicating; as living and transcendent-is grounded in the relationship of God to humanity as disclosed by God's revelation ("the essence of the subject

[7] A detailed analysis of the correspondence may be found in Rumscheidt, *Revelation and Theology* (n.5). See also Glick, *The Reality of Ohristianity* (n.4) , pp. 222-228.

matter ") . God's revelation, in other words, is all these things by definition-and by event. " Critical reflection " would recognize this event as such and respect it-at least within the context of theology and faith. Theology depends on the remembrance that the object of its reflection-God-had previously been for it the living and sovereign subject. God must become this subject for theology again and again. The event of God's self-disclosure as indissolubly subject has nothing at all to do with an anthropocentric and subjectivist concept of religious experience. Theological method is "scientific "-i.e., appropriate to and governed by its subject matter-to the extent that it recognizes its object as indissolubly subject. In short, revelation transcends, delimits and relativizes reason, including critical historical reason. Is the method to determine the subject matter (Harnack) , or is the subject matter to determine the method (Barth) ?

On the conditions for the possibility of understanding the content of scripture.

Harnack. Historical knowledge and critical reflection need to be used if we are to understand the Bible's diverse content, which is not self-evident and clear in itself. The Bible's content is not so inconceivable and indescribable-so unhistorical-that we must wait upon inner illumination in order to grasp it. Inner openness or empathy may be necessary, but that is no substitute for historical knowledge and critical reflection. In short, biblical content is not self-evident, but neither is it inconceivable. It is accessible to critical historical analysis. An unhistorical transcendentalism goes hand in hand with arbitrary subjectivism.

Barth. The Bible can be understood in the proper (theological) sense of the term only by the power of the Spirit-who is the same as its content. The content of the Bible, in other words, is the person of the living God. This content is acknowledged, and in that sense " understood," only by faith. This content (the living God), its mode of impartation (the

power of the Spirit), and its mode of apprehension (faith) are all *sui generis.* They are all, by definition, in a class by themselves. They are not, in other words, merely particular instances of something more general, nor are they generally (rationally) accessible. They are equidistant from both religious experience and historical reason, and have no essential connection to either, although a contingent connection to either or both may arise. But revelation and faith stand on their own. They do not need either religious experience or critical historical reason to be what they are. They are what they are without them. God's revelation is imparted to us by God, by the power of the Spirit; and it is received by the miracle and mystery of faith (not by this or that mental faculty) . Those who on critical historical grounds develop an *a priori* rejection of miracle and mystery, of revelation and faith, of that which passes all understanding, cut themselves off to that extent from the gospel.

3. On faith, religious experience and preaching, especially whether faith is subject to phenomenological description and preaching to rational control.

Harnack. Awakening to faith cannot be had without religious experience, for the two are not different but identical. Faith, being essentially experiential, is subject to phenomenological description. If the two were different, faith would be indistinguishable from uncontrollable fanaticism. Faith can be so distinguished, however, because it can only come about through the preaching of the gospel, and because such preaching is not possible without historical knowledge and critical reflection. Preaching disciplined by historical reason is therefore necessary for awakening a responsible faith. Faith divorced from historically disciplined experience would be irrational and therefore arbitrary.

Barth. Faith and religious experience are two entirely different things, as different as the earth (the phenomenal) is from heaven (the transcendental, the eschatological, the real). As a

matter of fact, however, faith cannot always be phenomenologically distinguished from " uncontrollable fanaticism " or for that matter from" religious experience." No human experience as such is identical with the awakening to faith, but religious experience can serve as a symptom or sign of the presence of faith. At best religious experience has the status of a witness to faith. But experiences, whatever they might be, are not to be confused with or mistaken for faith. The preaching of the gospel, which properly awakens faith as the response, depends not on historical research or critical reflection, but on the word of Christ. In other words, the condition for the possibility of effective preaching is not human reason but divine revelation. Divine revelation is the object and content of both theology and preaching. Each in its own way is concerned with taking up and passing on God's revelation (the word of Christ). To that extent theology and preaching have the same task. There is no reason why they cannot be assisted in this task in an occasional and auxillary way by " historical knowledge " and " critical reflection."

4. On how one's view of faith pertains to one's view of being in the world.

Harnack. Religious experience is not in a class by itself. It is not contrary to or disparate from all other experience. If it were, the logical result would be either a radical flight from the world or else a lapse into sophistry. The sophistry would arise because even a decision to flee the world would require an act of volition and would still therefore be something worldly. Religious experience qua experience is something worldly, just like all other experience. So far from being exceptional, religious experience is an instance of the general class called historical experience. An ahistorical (religious) experience would in practice necessitate a flight from the world, which is not only impossible but self-contradictory.

Barth. Faith involves not a flight from the world, but a more or less radical protest against this world. Faith protests against

the world we see on the basis of the world's coming transformation, which we do not see, but for which we hope by the promises of God. The fundamental distance of faith from this world is grounded not only in eschatological hope, but also in creation faith-in our acknowledgement of God as Creator. Either way, the cross of Christ signifies the absolute contrast between God and world. It stands as a negative parable for the original and final unity (not identity) between Creator and creation. Not even our (merely human) protest against the world can justify us in God's sight. Only God's protest-the cross of Christ-can do that. All this has nothing to do with sophistry. But sophistry has everything to do with using a trite concept of creation to bypass the cross-trite, because it so readily glosses over everything against which faith must currently protest for the sake of the cross and in the name of hope.

5. On whether the relation between God and the world is essentially mysterious.

Harnack. God and the world do not stand in absolute contrast. Neither do our life in God and our life in the world. If they really were absolute contrasts, we could make no sense of the heart of the gospel. For at its heart the gospel closely connects and even equates love for God with neighbor-love. A logically necessary presupposition for this equation is a high regard for morality in general. The relation between God and the world (as between life in God and worldly life) is therefore morally and rationally intelligible. An absolute contrast between God and the world would be mysterious, unintelligible and contrary to the heart of the gospel.

Barth. The heart of the gospel shows us precisely how strange and incomprehensible is the relation between God and the world. It shows us that they are indeed absolute contrasts. One must not confuse, as happens with Harnack, the heart of the gospel with the moral law. Yet even the law, in its own way, bears witness to the absolute contrast between our life

in God and our life in the world. The law (including "high regard for morality") enjoins us to love our neighbor. But if we do not do this and indeed cannot do this-as is of course actually the case-then what does that say about the state of our love for God? Our life in the world is the very life in which we love neither God nor neighbor. This point, as disclosed by the law, is the first sign of absolute contrast. The second is like unto it-namely, the miraculous event by which the eternal God intervenes on our behalf in order to overcome the absolute contrast established by our lovelessness and sin. This matter, too, is strange and incomprehensible. Indeed, a greater mystery than our failure to return God's love in creating us is the persistence of God's love in the face of our refusal. Therefore, not only does our lovelessness stand in absolute contrast to God's original love (contrast one), but even more does God's persisting love stand in contrast to our hopeless refusal (contrast two). These strange and utter contrasts, especially the miracle of God's persisting love, can be known only by God's revelation, not by mere human reason, regardless of how critical and historical it may be. The God who overcomes our radical lovelessness is the God who reveals these contrasts to us. But this divine overcoming of our sin is not only something strange and mysterious. It is also dreadful. The God who overcomes is not to be trifled with. For we are not made alive unless we are first slain.

6. On the condition for the possibility of leading people to God.

Harnack. Leading people to God is not different from leading them to what is good. This equation also indicates that we are not faced with absolute contrasts, neither between God and the world nor between life in God and worldly life. No genuine spiritual development can occur without historical knowledge and a high regard for morality. Critical reason is therefore the condition for the possibility of leading people to God, for it is critical reason by which we know of history and morality. What we know in general by reason-here the

essence of the good-provides the necessary precondition for what we receive in particular by faith.

Barth. The condition for the possibility of leading people to God is not reason but revelation. Leading people to God is not something we do, but something God does. It is not a matter of what we think we know about history and morality in relation to God, but of God's history and God's "morality" in relation to us. "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn. 6: 44). Note the themes in this passage: divine sovereignty, christocentrism, eschatology, coming to God as resurrection from the dead. These themes do not confirm and build upon but negate and reconstitute what we know in general by reason.

7. On the relation between religion and culture.

Harnack. Between religion and culture there is an intimate connection. Culture-its development, its knowledge, its morality-reveres God. This reverence for God is necessary if we are to protect our culture from atheism. More especially, religion is necessary for a culture's health, vitality and soundness. The relation between religion and culture is one of mutual immanence. Culture is the bearer of religion; religion is the critic of culture.

Barth. Religion and culture are indeed intimately connected. Religion serves an important cultural function-sanctifying war, mystifying oppression, and euphemizing every collective form of crime. Culture reveres God precisely to the extent that God is useful for such purposes. Is there not therefore something rather suspect about implicitly contrasting the "higher values " or " religious experiences " of our culture to those of " primitive " peoples who have not yet attained to our level? The preaching of the gospel (see # 3 above) has nothing to do with the sacralizing of culture but rather with its desacralization. Whether cultural invocations of God, derived as they are

from polytheism, serve to protect us from atheism or actually to implant it among us remains an open question. ·vvhen culture is the bearer of religion, religion is domesticated by culture. Religion as borne by culture will never be a serious critic, or at least not sufficiently serious, when seriousness is measured by the gospel.

8. On whether religion is continuous with culture, and faith with reason.

Harnack. High cultural achievements, such as Goethe's pantheism or Kant's concept of God, do not stand in simple contrast to true statements about God. If they did, we could not logically distinguish between the value of these statements and barbarism. True theological statements are akin to those of sophisticated cultural refinement, but incongruous with those of barbarism. Faith's knowledge of God completes and purifies the knowledge of God derived from reason (e.g., romantic pantheism, moral theism) . To place faith and reason in stark contrast would make it impossible to distinguish the significance of the barbaric from that of the refined, for both would be equally distant from faith.

Barth. True theological statements have nothing to do with high cultural achievements. Faith does not complete and purify knowledge of God derived from reason. All human statements about God stand under the crisis of God's judgment. No way exists from humanity to God, whether that humanity be barbaric or as cultured as Goethe and Kant. The gospel is discontinuous with humanly or independently derived statements about God. Divine revelation and human culture are separated by a great divide. True theological statements are based on revelation not on reason. They are received and acknowledged only by faith. No way exists from us to God, but a way does exist-the way of God's revelation-from God to us.

9. On the standpoint from which these relations are perceived: critical history vs. divine revelation.

Harnack. From the standpoint of critical history, a general rule may be inferred about all physical and intellectual development: contrasts are at the same time steps, and steps are contrasts. Secular conceptions of God (e.g., Goethe and Kant) stand in such a relation to true (that is, Christian) conceptions. The relationship is relative-not qualitative but merely quantitative. It is a matter of degree not of kind. Historical knowledge and critical reflection make this insight possible.

Barth. From a standpoint based on divine revelation, the difference between faith and reason, or between God's truth and our truth, is exactly the reverse of what Harnack says. It is not a matter of degree, but a matter of kind. Revelation is a transcendent reality such that God's truth always stands in contradiction to our truth. We cannot build from strictly human statements about God, among which there are certainly differences of degree, to the content of the gospel. We can only move from the content of the gospel to an assessment of human statements about God. The condition for the possibility of uttering true statements about God is not to be found in themselves. When true theological statements are uttered, it is always a matter of grace. It always depends on God's free decision from moment to moment, and hence it is always an event. Over this event we have no disposal. The Spirit blows where it will. Our part in it begins and ends in humility, longing and prayer. By our own efforts, by quantitative stages, we cannot pass from the old world to the new. Only by God's action, whereby we are slain and born anew, do we make the truly qualitative transition.

10. On the relation between experience and eschatology.

Harnack. The highest and final knowledge of God is the insight that " God is love." The sphere of God is one of love, joy and peace. Transitional moments of terror are not unknown

to Christian experience. But one ought not to remain suspended in them throughout the course of this life. These moments are not independent of God's love, and in view of God's love they ought not to be prolonged. The transition is to be completed by entering here and now into the love, joy and peace God has prepared for us. The terror of crisis and judgment is momentary and transitional, not a prolonged and repeated Christian experience. God is primarily a God of love, not a God of wrath. Christian experience is primarily of love, joy and peace, not of crisis and dread. The law's terrifying accusations are but the portal through which we pass on the way to receiving the gospel's consolation.

Barth. The insight that " God is love " only goes to reveal that between God and us there yawns an infinite qualitative difference. As our highest and final knowledge of God, the insight is really eschatological. It represents the promised future. It points not primarily to our present experience but to that which is yet to come. It points to the future of God's love as something already disclosed to us but not yet possessed. For now we live between already and not yet, memory and hope- we live between the times. Until the promised future arrives we will always be in transition. Until then our existence will always be paradoxical. Our belief, for example, will always also be disbelief. We do not believe in the conditions of present reality, not even in our present experience of faith. Faith is faith precisely when it points away from itself toward its object-toward the God who is love, and therefore toward the promised future. Faith lives by the promises of God, and we are saved in no other way than by hope.

11. On experience, reason and revelation.

Harnack. According to the biblical injunction, we are to think on those things which are true, honorable, just, gracious, excellent and worthy of praise. To meditate on these things is liberating. Our experience of God can thus not be divorced from our experience of all that is good, beautiful and true.

How are we to devote ourselves to uniting these things with our experience of God if not by historical knowledge and critical reflection? How do we know of the good, the beautiful and the true if not through critical historical reason? We need this reason in order to have these things upon which to meditate and thus to nurture our experience of God. Once again it would seem that reason is indispensable to faith and to fostering Christian maturity.

Barth. We are not to move from experience and reason to revelation, but from revelation to experience and reason. The former is untroubled and organic; the latter is laden with dialectic and crisis. This crisis is itself the condition for the possibility of the biblical injunction to think on those things which are true, honorable, just, and so on. Revelation is the crisis of all that we call good, beautiful and true. It is the negation out of which they are to be reconstituted on a higher, critical plane. What their final reconstitution is to be is beyond our capacity to say. What we can say is that all our experiences and judgments of the good, the beautiful and the true are continually to be assessed in light of their crisis. In other words, such experiences and judgments themselves cannot be normative; but when critically tested in light of revelation, they can at best have the provisional status of parables and therefore witnesses. Their relation to the content of revelation will never be more than likeness in the midst of great unlikeness. It will be a relation of limited correlation, never a relation of organic synthesis.

m. On sin in relation to the form and content of preaching.

Harnack. Sin may be defined as a lack of respect and love. Our lack of respect and love can be brought to an end only through the preaching of God's holy majesty and love. In this preaching there is no place for mixing in every sort of paradox and arbitrary expression. The integrity of preaching-the very means by which our sin is to be overcome-is threatened severely by the use of paradox and arbitrariness. The content of

preaching is neither irrational nor antirational. Paradox and arbitrariness therefore have no place in it. Preaching otherwise will be ineffective, and we will be left alone in our sin.

Barth. Sin is rather more serious than mere lack of respect and love. It is enmity with God and estrangement from God. It is our being lost in an alienated and superficial likeness to God. It is a condition which can only end in our annihilation. Given the radical negativity in which we exist, the affirmations of preaching cannot be made without taking unexpected turns and without resorting to paradoxical modes of expression. To suppose otherwise is to be a spectator rather than a participant. A simpler solution would be wonderful, but in this life is not to be our lot. If anything is to be learned from historical knowledge, it would be that none of the great theologians of the church-not at any rate Paul or Luther-were able to offer a simpler solution to the problem. Can we say that their preaching was "ineffective"?

13. On the danger of irrationalism in theology.

Harnack. The raw material of religious life-everything subconscious, everything nonrational, fascinating, numinous, etc. -remains less than human so long as it is not disciplined by reason, so long as it is not rationally apprehended, understood and purified. Only in that way is it protected in its own proper character. Therefore, we ought not to wish to belittle or even reject reason, for reason is a humanizing force in our existence. If the rash work of destroying reason is brought to completion, we can only expect the worst. For reason, again, is a bulwark against dehumanization. On the smouldering ruins of this onslaught against reason, a Gnostic occultism is already arising. In short, reason humanizes everything religious, and to attack reason is to move toward the occult.

Barth. Which theology is it that stands in danger of irrationalism and of succumbing to dark psychic impulses-the one that merely brings reason to the crisis of its limit, or the one

that divinizes "feeling"? Which theology is it that thinks critical reason can finally be circumvented by the discovery of a source of religious knowledge within the depths of human self-consciousness? And if we are to worry about occultism, which theology is it that may lose its most gifted adherents to anthroposophy at any moment?

14. On the condition for the possibility of knowing Jesus Christ.

Harnack. The person of Jesus Christ stands at the center of the gospel. Our basis for attaining reliable and common knowledge of this person is critical historical investigation. Without this basis of knowledge we are in danger of exchanging the real Christ for an imaginary one. The real Christ can be retrieved only by historical criticism, and therefore only scientific theology deals with the real Christ.

Barth. The real Jesus Christ can he known only by faith, not by critical historical reason. Critical reason by itself leads only to skepticism. Historical skepticism merely confirms the ·biblical teaching that we no longer know Christ according to the flesh. Since we need to become aware of this again and again, the more radical and terrifying the criticism, the better for revelation as the real and exclusive basis of our knowledge of Jesus Christ. Revelation is self-authenticating and occurs without external support. Historical criticism, by inspiring fear and trembling, reaches its categorical limit. Precisely this is its service to theology.

15. On scientific method in theology.

Harnack. We are frail creatures subject to sloth, myopia and numerous other ills. Isn't this all the more reason to maintain an intimate connection between theology and science (historical criticism)? Without a firm connection to historical science we would have no theology at all. Without the discipline of scientific method, theology would have no power to convince

and would be of no value for us today. Theology divorced from scientific method threatens to dissolve into illusion. It will lose its ability to be convincing in the modern world.

Barth. Theology is scientific and objective not when it imposes a method on its subject matter, but when it allows its subject matter to determine its method. For what does it mean to be scientific if not to be relevant to the subject matter? Only when theological method reflects the fact that its subject matter is the living God, is it "scientific" in any meaningful sense of the term. In view of this subject matter, the appropriate method is for theology to become a witness to the Word of God-to God's revelation of judgment and love. Theology as witness lets its norms be determined by its object and not by methods derived from elsewhere. Our theological work will find its value and its power to convince-even in the modern world-not by relying on alien methods but by being faithful ology deals with the real Christ.

* * * * * *

Although a full analysis of the Harnack/Barth correspondence would be beyond the scope of this essay, the foregoing paraphrase allows its main themes to come into focus. Harnack's criticism may be summarized as contending that Barth was subjectivist in method, obscure in conceptuality, and sectarian in ethical implication. By contrast Barth's countercharge seems to have been that Harnack was scientistic in method, reductionist in conceptuality, and acculturationist in ethical implication. I will briefly explore these distinctions.

Harnack believed Barth to be subjectivist in method. Again and again in describing Barth's theological procedure, Harnack argued that Barth leaves everything to "subjective experience," that he verges on "uncontrollable fanaticism," that his arbitrariness gives carte blanche to "every conceivable fantasy." [8] All of these dire consequences followed, as far as Har-

s See *Beginnmgs* (n. 5), pp. 165, 166, 174.

nack could see, from Barth's refusal to grant historical-critical method a normative status and indispensable role in Christian theological reflection. Historical-critical method was for Harnack the touchstone of scientific objectivity.

Barth, in turn, believed Harnack's method to be scientistic. " Scientism" occurs by conflating scientific method as a fruitful way of thinking with an ideology which presumes this method to have established the conditions for the possibility of all that is meaningful or real. It is a worldview which takes the procedures and structures of science to be monolithic so that they become canonical for all inquiry and knowledge. [9] Support for Barth's critique emerged when Harnack insisted science presented " the only possible way of mastering an object through knowledge," that the task of theology was "the same as the tasks of science in general," that " each age possesses only one science," and that " as there is only one scientific method, so there is only one scientific task." [10] By contrast, Barth proposed that scientific method was not monolithic but discrete from case to case, more nearly regional than global, never more than a heuristic device to be determined by the peculiarities of its object of investigation (its "subject matter"). Why should it be so surprising, he wondered, if the mysterious subject matter of theology turned out to require a procedure materially (though not formally) different from those of other disciplines-even a procedure which by comparison seemed logically odd? Conformance to the revelation of the living God was for Barth the touchstone of objectivity. Since this revelation was not " historical " in any ordinary sense of the term, it could not be apprehended by historical-critical method as Harnack conceived it, even though historical

o I lrnve followed the definition of "scientism" provided by Alasdair MacIntyre, " Philosophy, the 'Other' Disciplines and Their Histories: A Rejoinder to Richard }forty," *Soundings* 65 (1982), p. 144. See also the exceptionally lucid discussion by Thomas F. Tracy, "Enacting History: Ogden and Kaufman on God's Mighty Acts," *The Journal of Religion* 64 (1984), pp. 29.:rn.

10 *Begiunings,* pp. 171, 174, 186.

criticism had a subordinate and propaedeutic role to play in carrying out the theological task.

That Barth was right about the scientism of Harnack's method there can be, it seems to me, no doubt. Not only did Harnack openly assume scientific method to be monolithic, but as G. Wayne Glick has shown conclusively, Harnack also unconsciously incorporated into his understanding of " science" a great many " axiological principles" or value judgments beyond the scope of scientific method itself.[11] But was Harnack right about Barth? Was he right that "revelation is not a scientific concept"?[12] Was he right that Barth's concept of revelation in itself merely opens the door to every kind of arbitrariness and subjectivism? From Harnack to Pannenberg such charges about Barth's theology have repeatedly been made. Although the issue remains unsettled and cannot be decided here, recent work by Honald F. Thiemann has shown that at least some versions of the charge must be dismissed.[13]

It is ironic that Harnack should accuse Barth of "subjectivism," for subjectivism was of course one of Barth's deepest worries about the liberal theological tradition as represented by Harnack. **It** is worth noting that Barth had not ans>vered Harnack here to his own satisfaction. At the time of their correspondence Barth based his claim to theological objectivity on an appeal to divine revelation as attested in scripture and on a dialectical method designed to break free of liberalism's own special brand of " subjectivism." Dialectic was the instrument of Barth's assault against the fundamental premise *of* liberalism-namely, its insistence on finding the possibility for talking about God strictly in the subjective conditions of religious experience (regardless of how disciplined by " science ") or in

11 See Glick, *'l'he Reality of Christianity,* pp. 7, 80, 89-93, 101-104, 225-227, 332-334, 337-338, 340, 345-349.

12 *Beginnings,* p. 186.

1:1 See Ronald F. Thiemann, *Re1;clation and 'I'heology: 'l'hc Gospel as Nrirrrited Prornfae* (Nutre Dame, Incl.: l1ni 1·ersity of Notre !lame P1·ess, ms;; I. See also *idem,* "Hevclation and Imaginative Construction," *'l'he ,Journu.l of Religion* ul (1981), pp. 242-203.

some related anthropological phenomenon. Not until his breakthrough in studying Anselm, however, would Barth feel that he had adequately come to display the objectivist logic alien to liberalism but internal to the Christian faith.[14]

Harnack's perception of Barth's method as subjectivist was compounded by his perception of Barth's dialectic. For although Barth intended his dialectic to work in favor of objectivism, the dialectical conceptuality struck Harnack as totally obscure.[15] Harnack's difficulty is not surprising, for an implicit contradiction seemed to exist between Barth's concept of " crisis " and his concept of " parable." " Crisis " designated the absolute contrast between God and the world. It meant divine judgment against sinful humanity, against every identification of the human with the divine. It meant flat contradiction between God's truth and every human attempt at truth, high or low, cultured or uncultured.[16] "Parable," on the other hand, stood for relative correspondence. It meant likeness in the midst of great unlikeness between our words and God's Word, our deeds and God's deed, our protests and God's protest.11 Clearly, the concepts of absolute contrast and of relative likeness cannot be logically reconciled. How can there be a " parable " in the midst of such a " crisis," or if there can be, how can the "crisis" be so severe?

No wonder, to Barth's express dismay, Harnack focused exclusively on the rhetoric of absolute contrast (which stung him most deeply) and ignored the rhetoric of relative likeness. Barth seemed to be tearing apart every unity Harnack held dear and to offer nothing but chaos to replace it. Barth for his part did not deny the inconceivability of " parable " in the midst of " crisis." Instead, he argued for inconceivability

14 See Karl Barth, *Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum* (London: SCM Press, 1960). "Among all my books I regard this as the one written with the greatest satisfaction." (Barth, *How I Changed My Mind* [Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1966], p. 43.)

15 *Beginnings,* pp. 165-166, 171-173.

16 *Beginnings,* pp. 168, 169, 180, 184.

11 See especially *Beginnings,* p. 183.

mediated by "miracle." Once "crisis " had destroyed all possibility of human conditions for speaking of God, divine " miracle " dialectically called forth " parables " and " witnesses" without in any way slackening the "crisis." The condition for the possibility of such likenesses was humanly incomprehensible and lay solely in the hands of God.[18]

A further reason for Hamack's professed puzzlement may be found in Barth's failure adequately to distinguish at this time between the normative and the valid. Harnack understandaibly perceived Barth to be saying that any theological statement was completely invalid which claimed a basis other than God's revelation as attested by scripture. Barth's position was more complicated, though it has commonly been interpreted that way. Interpreted in light of his later development,[10] however, what Barth wanted to say was something like this: All theological statements derived and grounded independently of God's revelation must be subjected to a process of *Aufhebung.* In and of themselves such statements can never be normative, and therefore theology can never build upon them or enter into synthesis with them, not even critically. At the level of norms and criteria we meet with an absolute contrast.

However, whatever particles of truth we might find in such statements-and we should e:x:pect to find some to a greater or lesser degree-will always be embedded in a larger abstraction (because independent of revelation) , and the abstraction as a whole will falsify these particles of truth insofar as they participate in it. The particles of truth can be seen for what they are only from the standpoint of revelation, and they can be liberated only by a process which subjects the abstraction to

18 *Beginnings,* pp. 180, 183, 184.

10 See especially the discussion of " secular parables " in Karl Barth, *Ohurch Dogmatics,* Vol. IV, Part 3, First Half (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1961), pp. 87-135. See also Barth's procedure in dealing with Christian and non-Christian anthropologies he considers inadequate in *Church Dogmatics,* Vol. III, Part 2 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1960). Barth characteristically subjects these anthropologies, which he regards as " abstractions," to a kind of *Aufhebung.*

a kind of death and resurrection, or complete cancellation and then reconstitution on a higher or different plane. At the level of truth, therefore, we meet with both absolute contrast and the possibility of relative likeness. The dialectic of *Aufhebung* allowed Barth to say a complete No or a partial Yes (or both), depending on the needs of the situation. [20] In short, theological statements independent of revelation can never be normative and never be valid in themselves. But they can contain particles of truth which, once liberated, can function as likenesses (but no more) to the truth of God's revelation. The rudiments of this dialectical conceptuality were all present in Barth's correspondence with Harnack, but not with sufficient clarity for Harnack to make them out.

Barth for his part was convinced that the scientism of Harnack's method resulted inevitably in a reductionist conceptuality. You rob faith and revelation of content, he wrote to Harnack quite pointedly. [21] Harnack's "simple gospel" was all that was left over once " scientific method " had purged theology of its theme. The reconciliation between the gospel and science was purchased at the expense of the gospel. The simple gospel was a domesticated gospel, causing no offense because it could no longer speak of cross, resurrection, faith and so on as anything other than the realizations of human possibilities.22 The scientific method had in effect reduced the gospel to a faith without God.

The reductionism enforced by Harnack's method has become a standard item of critique, articulated against Harnack by critics as diverse as Alfred Loisy, H. Richard Niebuhr and James Orr. [23] Such reductionism seems to be endemic to liberal theology as a whole, and, if Alasdair Macintyre is correct, it has had exactly the opposite effect from what Harnack ex-

[20] *Cf.* Edgar Thaidigsmann, "Aufhebung, Eine theologische Kategorie des friihe Barth," *Evangelische Theologie* 43 (1983), pp. 328-349.

[21] *Beginnings,* p. 183.

[22] *Beginnin!Js,* p. 179; cf. pp. 177, 183, 185.

[23] Sec the summary in Glick, *The Reality of Christianity,* pp. 280-290.

pected and hoped. "The abandonment of theistic content in favor of secular intelligibility," comments Macintyre, " leads away from even the remnants of theistic practice." [24]

At the time of their correspondence Harnack was 71 years old and Barth was 36. The old liberal thought Barth was in danger of "sectarianism;" the young radical thought Harnack had capitulated to " acculturation." [25] The old liberal compared Barth to Herostrates, destroyer of the temple by fire, for the pyrotechnics of Barth's dialectic threatened to topple the twin pillars of " science " and " religion " by which the old liberal's great cultural synthesis was upheld and in which his highest aspirations were enshrined. [26] The young radical was convinced that Harnack's failure to appreciate the desacralizing significance of the cross was as the root of his readiness to become a " war theologian " who had made a " religious experience" out of experiences during the war. [27] The old liberal represented H. Richard Niebuhr's " Christ of culture" with all its strengths of relevance and sophistication and its weaknesses of capitulation and confusion. The young radical represented not Niebuhr's sectarian " Christ against culture," but his "Christ transforming culture "-although he knew as did

24 Alasdair :Macintyre, "The Fate of Theism," in *The Religious Significance of Atheism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), p. 29.

25 Harnack's worry about "sectarianism" is implicit throughout the correspondence, for example, in his remarks about flight from the world. For an explicit use of the term outside the correspondence, see Glick, *The Reality of Christianity,* p. 225. Barth's corresponding worry appears in nos. 4 and 7 of his "Fifteen Answers." See *Beginnings,* pp. 165, 168.

26 The reference to Herostrates is suppressed in our English translation *(Beginning8,* 166). See Rumscheidt, *Revelation and Theology,* p. 31.

21 *Beginnings,* p. 168. That more was at stake when Harnack signed the two 1914 manifestos mentioned by Harle than the mere *"Dummheit"* to which Harle would like to reduce it (see n. 2 above) may be gauged from Agnes von Zahn-Harnack's defense of her father, fraught as it was with ominous implications for Germany's future. The dialectical theologians, she writes, had a viewpoint from which the war "had shown only its terribleness, its sinfulness, its destructive rage, lrnt nothing of the exaltation which thrills a people ready to give its life as a sacrifice for its brothers" *(Adolf van Harnack,* p. 530.

Niebuhr that the latter cannot really be had without an incorporation of the former.[28] Unlike both Harnack and Niebuhr, however, the young radical regarded the *direct* locus of cultural transformation to be not *primarily* the society at large, but rather a particular community called the church.[29]

In conclusion it seems fair to suggest that Harnack was incapable of recognizing Barth's theological proposals as legitimate, ultimately because what Barth was proposing vis-a-vis Harnack was a revolutionary theological paradigm. As in the case of the paradigm shifts described by Thomas S. Kuhn,[30] Barth's arose as an attempt to explain certain anomalies and to avoid them. The anomalies were basically two: theologians who defended a war of aggression; a theological method which eviscerated the content of the gospel. The radical explanation was that both depended at bottom on making anthropological phenomena the condition for the possibility of talking about God. The revolutionary solution was a new paradigm with content inspired by the Reformation, thought-form inspired by Hegel,[31] and counter-cultural ethic inspired by religious socialism.[32] These would eventually be supplemented by a procedure and logic inspired by Anselm. Together they were to provide a safeguard against liberal capitulations to scientism, reductionism and acculturation.

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2s H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951).

29 See, for example, Karl Barth, "Church and Culture," in *Theology and Church* (London: SCM Press, 1962), pp. 334-354.

30 See Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions,* 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

a1 See Michael Welker, "Barth und Hegel," *Evangelische Theologie* 43 (1983)' pp. 307-328.

32 For Barth's relationship to "religious socialism," see Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquardt, *Theologie und Sozialismus: Das Beispiel Karl Earths* (Munich, Chr. Kaiser, 1972), pp. 70-83, 114-126, 200-207. See also *Karl Barth and Radical Politics* (n. 2), pp. 209-211; Busch, *Karl Barth* (n. 1), pp. 68-124.

JUSTIFICATION AND JUSTICE IN THE THEOLOGY OF KARL BARTH

I

IN THE PREFACE to the first volume of his *Church Dogmatics,* Karl Barth declared: " I am firmly convinced that, especially in the broad field of politics, we cannot reach the clarifications which are necessary today, and on which theology might have a word to say, as indeed it ought to have, without first reaching the comprehensive clarifications in and about theology which are our present concern. I believe that it is expected of the Church and its theology ... that it should keep precisely to the rhythm of its own relevant concerns, and thus consider well what are the *recil* needs of the day by which its own program should be directed." [1] The passage is characteristic. Barth always seems to be " firmly convinced " of something or other, and especially about the wide-ranging significance of the task of theology. In addition, the text typically displays Barth's dialectical complexity-sometimes brilliantly subtle, sometimes maddeningly ambiguous, and almost always inviting a second (or third) look. On the one hand Barth is saying that theological clarification has a certain priority to clarifications in politics; on the other, he suggests that the Church and its theology must keep to its " own concerns " thus to consider those political and other needs by which the concerns are to be directed in the first place. To the question of the primacy of theological theory or political praxis, Barth here might fairly be read as asserting " both and

[1] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics,* I/l, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975), p. xvi. Further references to volumes of the *Church Dogmatics,* hereafter CD, will appear in the text.

neither." And that, as Robert Jenson has noted, would be a very Barthian thing to say.[2]

It is nevertheless instructive to see significant sections of Barth's *Dogmatics* as efforts to establish theological clarity for political action, given the former's conceptual priority. This claim of priority is ultimately grounded in a conviction about the prior reality of God's being-in-act for us in Jesus Christ. God's being precedes theological inquiry after this being, and the inquiry in its subsequence sets Christians along a path of thinking about God's praxis. God's praxis itself proceeds along this path, and our praxis, shaped by our theological acknowledgment of God's prevenience, shall conform to it.[8] But since God's priority also means that the world's story has as its presupposition the history of Jesus Christ in his will to be for his sisters and brothers, there can be no doubt regarding the appropriateness and necessity of asking about the worldly political implications of theological inquiry after God.[4] What powerfully comes forth from this vision for the purposes of political action is a methodological rejection of any combination of the knowability of God in Jesus Christ with God's knowability in nature, reason, or history. The significance of the first article of the Barmen Declaration for Barth lay in its expression of opposition within Germany to such an effort at combination, and beyond that to " the little hyphen as such and therefore [to] no more and no less than the condominion of natural theology in the Church" (CD, II/I: 175). The Church, in the words of that article, must not recognize as God's revelation " other events and powers, forms and truths, apart from and alongside" the one Word of God in Jesus Christ. So Barth's argument for the priority of theological inquiry itself includes an important negative criterion for Christian political thought and life, with a corresponding insistence that that thought and life be fully grounded in God's Word.

[2] Robert Jenson, *God After God* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969), p. 151.

BEberhard Jungel, *The Doctrine of the Trinity: God's Being Is in Becoming* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), p. xix.

[4] Jenson, *God After God,* pp. 68-73.

The criterion and the insistence remain important and effective today, standing against the temptations of Christians on both the left and the right to give some ideology or cultural eJq>ression a devotion untested by the one Word of God.[5] I am concerned in this essay, however, to address the matter of criteria relating positively to political life and the political order. To be sure, Barth did try to show that the Christian's moral witness to God's gracious work requires a definite" political attitude" of responsibility to the "threatened innocent, the oppressed poor, widows, orphans, and aliens" (CD, II/1: 386), i.e., to those marginalized and vulnerable and needy in human society. This attitude is but a correspondence to the righteousness of God, who offers help and salvation to " the poor, the wretched and the helpless." Even while Barth allows that the biblical picture of Jesus must include his confrontation of and judging freedom from our *entire* world in its estrangement, he will argue nevertheless that as this one standing against humanity Jesus remains the poor man who is partisan of the poor (CD, IV/2: 179-80). As such, he is image and reflection of God, and the measure of human righteousness. From this analysis Barth concludes that the faithful person "can only will and affirm a state which is based on justice. By any other political attitude he rejects the divine justification" (CD, II/I: 387).

Yet to be satisfied with this reasoning as it stands is premature, for the account offers little that describes the character of the political order to be achieved through solidarity with the needy, or that points out a direction indicating how that solidarity should be socially expressed. The leap from a bias for vulnerable victims to the invocation of a category of justice relevant to the arrangement of political life is too quick because it is too formal. We need to think further about the more specific meaning of justice in the political order as it is linked to normative relations among citizens who are to receive their

s George Hunsinger, "Barth and Liberation Theology," *The Journal of Religion* 63 (July 1983)): 247-63.

due. This means that we need to discover some further theological grounding pertinent to the more specific question, a grounding still solidly connected to " the divine justification." In what follows, I shall develop an argument that advances material criteria for political assessment which, while inadequately stressed in Barth's thought, are already implicit there, and which complement concretely the positive criterion of solidarity with the vulnerable. Hence my use of the term "justification" will often refer to the way in which reasons are offered in Barth's theology to warrant or" justify" a particular normative proposal about the political order. The relation of these warrants to an account of God's justification of sinners will emerge in due course. "Justice" will refer to what John Rawls calls " the first virtue of social institutions," the realization of which effects the appropriate assignment of social benefits and burdens to citizens who share an interest in how the basic institutions of their society affect their life prospects.[6]

II

Barth defines political states or political systems as

> the attempts undertaken and carried out by men [and women] in order to secure the common political life of man by certain coordinations of individual freedom and the claims of the community, by the establishing of laws with power to apply and preserve them.[7]

The order set up, valid for and binding on all persons within a particular region or country, is guaranteed by the threat of coercion which operates as a last resort in securing the common political life. At the same time the political order "must be supported by the free responsibility of its members."[8] Barth

6John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 3.

7 Karl Barth, "The Christian Community in the Midst of Political Change," in Karl Barth, *Against the Stream: Shorter Post-War Writings,* ed. Ronald Gregor Smith (New York: Philosophical Library, 1954), p. 80.

s *Ibid.,* p. 95.

often declares that political systems exist to preserve the common life from chaos, and to that extent they

> create and preserve a space for that which must happen in the time between the beginning and the end . . . a space for the fulfillment of the purpose of world history, a space for faith, repentance and knowledge. They create a space for the life and mission of the Christian Church and therefore a space for something the whole world needs.[9]

As an ordinance of God in God's patience and wisdom, the political order may give the Church time for the proclamation of the Gospel. Barth takes Pilate's duty as a political sovereign to have been the acquittal of Jesus, whom Pilate took to be a "just man." That he did not do so, that he misused his power and permitted Jesus to die in spite of the law of the state-nothing here hides the truth that "real human justice ... would inevitably have meant the recognition of the right to proclaim divine justification, the Kingdom of Christ which is not of this world, freely and deliberately." [10]

This position, expressed most powerfully in Barth's 1938 essay "Church and State" *(Rechtfertigung und Recht)*, in essence holds that the state's purpose has a Christological foundation; it is bound to maintain freedom for the proclamation of the Gospel through laws which are backed by the sword, and which thereby protect the innocent and bring evildoers to justice. It is bound as well not to make any inward claim upon its subjects in terms of some particular philosophy of life.[11] Barth thus seeks to display an "inward and vital connection" between the political order and the order of redemption. He wants to move away from an abstract and autonomous conception of God as Creator and Preserver as a basis for Christian political commendation, because such a basis invariably inter-

[9] *[bid.,* pp. 80·81.

[10] Karl Barth, "Church and State," in Karl Barth, *Oommunity, State, and Ohurch,* ed. Will Herberg (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1968), pp. 113-114.

[11] *[bid.,* pp. 131-32, 137, 140, 143.

poses the dangerous distraction of natural theology.[12] Note however that this *internal* connection between the political and the redemptive remains a *negative* connection, one seemingly more involved with removal of impediments than it is with a positive witness to redemption. The link is based on the idea that the state must use coercion against (illegitimate) coercion to clear a space for the Gospel to be preached in freedom. And it is this idea which Lutheran theologian Helmut Thielicke takes to be the core of Martin Luther's doctrine of two kingdoms.

> We obviously misinterpret the concern of Luther in this manner if we conclude for him that the state has nothing whatever to do with the Word of God.... For the factual requirements of politics have meaning not in themselves but in relation to the divine purpose toward which they are directed, namely, to preserve man by restraining evil and to give man the physical opportunity to attain to his goal in salvation history. This purpose is that the peace established by the state should make possible the preaching of the Gospel, and thus help physically to preserve the *kairos.*[13]

Many readers of Barth may be unsatisfied with the suggestion that he turns out to be just another proponent of this Lutheran approach. They may try to challenge the comparison implied above by contrasting Thielicke's concern with peace with Barth's language of justice, or by pitting the former's emphasis on restraint against the latter's stress on the freedom of preaching. I suspect that these challenges will not prove much. The uncontented may correctly go on, however, to propose that the theological context within which the respective approaches stand are vastly different. The Luther/Thielicke position relies upon a distinction between " proper " and " alien" works of God, with the latter involving God's con-

12 Barth criticizes Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli for failing to demonstrate the necessary connection between divine justification and human justice in "Church and State," pp. 102-4. It was not enough for them "to make it clear that the two are not in conflict, but that they can very well exist side by side, each being competent in its own sphere."

13 Helmut Thielicke, *Theological Ethics,* Volume I: *Foundations,* ed. William H. Lazareth (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), p. 374.

ditional self-alienation in dealings with fallen creatures within the political sphere. The account also presumes that church and state "stand over against one another in dialectical opposition and connection." [14] For Barth, such a hard opposition (even in connection) runs the risk of jeopardizing an affirmation about the unity of God's gracious work in Jesus Christ. God's decision from all eternity to be for humanity in Christ reaches to humanity even in its political life; it would, it seems, have to govern such life so that the state's internal connection to the work of redemption may also in some way be a positive reflection and anticipation of the quality of God's fellowship with us in Christ. Still, the difference in theological contexts does not undermine the material similarity drawn; rather, it shows that one strain of Barth's thinking on politics fails clearly to conform with his broader theological vision.

The " corrective," if we may call it that, emerges in Barth's essay of 1946, " The Christian Community and the Civil Community." [15] By Barth's own admission, the essay stands as a sort of commentary on the fifth article of the Barmen Declaration, which reads:

> The Bible tells us that according to a divine arrangement the state has the responsibility to provide for justice and peace in the yet unredeemed world, in which the church also stands, according to the measure of human insight and human possibility, by the threat and use of force. The church recognizes with thanks and reverence toward God the benevolence of this, his provision. She reminds men of God's Kingdom, God's commandment and righteousness, and thereby of the responsibility of rulers and ruled. She trusts and obeys the power of the word, through which God sustains all things. [16]

14 Helmut Thielicke, *Theological Ethics,* Volume 2: *Politics,* ed. William H. Lazareth (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), p. 580.

15 In *Community, State, and Church,* pp. 149-91.

16 John H_ Leith, ed., *Creeds of the Churches: A Reader in Christian Doctrine from the Bible to the Present,* rev. ed. (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1973), p. 521. For a lucid theological analysis of the Barmen Declaration, see George Hunsinger, "Barth, Barmen and the Confessing Church Today," *Katallagete* (Summer 1985) : 22-26.

Now the first thing to note is that the approach Barth took in his earlier essay on " Church and State " is *carried over* to the newer writing. The state is said "to protect man from the invasion of chaos and therefore to give him time: time for the preaching of the gospel; time for repentance; time for faith." All of this is afforded through " the threat and use of force." [17] Barth also says, however, that the meaning and purpose of the civil community is " the safeguarding of both the external, relative, and provisional freedom of individuals and the external and relative peace of the community, *and to that extent the safeguarding of the external,,relative, and provisional,humanity in their life both as individuals and as a community."* [18] The safeguarding of this humanity may yield " an external, relative, and provisional embodiment" of the Kingdom of God. The state as" allegory, correspondence, and analogue" to the Kingdom " may reflect indirectly the truth and reality which constitute the Christian community." This is possible even though the state does not know of the Kingdom as the work of Jesus Christ, and even though no appeal is or can be made to the Word of God in the running of its affairs. The state nonetheless needs the Christian community to remind it, on the level of humanization, of its origins, limits, and goals. The Christian community stands as an " inner circle " within the " outer circle " which is the state, and both communities have their common center in Jesus Christ. The Kingdom of God will *surpass* both of these communities, while Jesus Christ is taken *already* to be their source and Lord. [19]

The shift in Barth's thinking is clear, if undeveloped, and an advance beyond the earlier view, even if only by way of supplementation. The political community clears a space for proclamation through a task of humanization, and *that* task, made possible by though not strictly identified with the use of coercion, bears an analogy to the Kingdom of God. The church

11 Barth," The Christian Community and the Civil Community," p. 156.
1s *Ibid.,* p. 150, my emphasis.
10 *Ibid.,* pp. 154-55.

witnesses to the Kingdom by seeking the proper political correspondences. Barth will argue, for example, that the church in its political activity must work for a state 1) which is interested primarily in human beings and not in abstract causes; which is constituted by a commonly acknowledged law from which no citizens are exempt and which protects all; 3) which takes on a special responsibility for those citizens who are socially and economically weak and threatened; and 4) which guarantees its citizens an equality of responsible freedom, i.e., freedom properly balanced by duties to the common good. These directives have as their source the Christian understanding that the one God is for human beings; that God is for them through the claiming of them in the man Jesus Christ, in whom none are excluded and all are protected; that that claim is mercifully directed to those in want and need and misery; and that the fellowship of those called by the Word of divine grace is freely called, so that they may be responsibly bound to their Lord in a common life grounded in the equality of baptism in one Spirit. [20]

These analogies, along with others, are claimed to provide what Barth calls a definite and continuous direction to Christian political activity. But the route is finally not plotted successfully. Perhaps it does, as Barth thinks, establish some sort of Christian presumption for democracy. Beyond that, the analogies are simply indeterminate regarding very different political arrangements. By themselves they could be employed to support any number of disparate strategies and arrangements-libertarian, liberal, socialist-because the crucial categories of "equality," "freedom," and "duties of social responsibility " are not integrated with respect to one another in terms of some concrete vision of the ends of political life in their relation to the human beings who would flourish within it as citizens. Apart from a fuller account of the ends of human political life, to which the categories are ordered and from

20Jbid., pp. 171-75. Cf. his defense of other correspondences, somewhat less pertinent to our present project, pp. 175-79.

which they may be ordered to one another, we cannot grasp *who* the human beings in whom the state should be interested *are.* We cannot grasp how and to what point special responsibility to victims is to be expressed. We cannot begin to understand for the purposes of political judgment what balance to strike between guarantees of freedom and ascriptions, of social duties, let alone the meaning of political equality. The pressing need is for an application of theological anthropology to the political sphere. Barth himself suggests as much when he describes the purpose of the state in terms of protecting the external, provisional, and relative *humanity* of its individual members in their lives together. He nevertheless allows important normative categories to float free of the account of humanization in which they should inhere. The great failure of Barth's political ethics is that this application is never accomplished with clarity or rigor.

III

Of course, nothing said here demonstrates that Barth's theology lacks the resources to remedy the failure; nor does my critique deny that Barth may have glimpsed the path he would have had to take. Simply stated, the path would involve giving political expression to his notion that " humanity is cohumanity" (CD, III/2: 222-85).

A human being is the creation of God. Since the created world has " its place, its existence, its structure, its endurance " from God's revelation in Christ (CD, IV/3: 386), it follows that the human being "is being which originates in the event of its rescue from perversion and its exaltation into fulfillment in the existence of Jesus Christ." [21] So the human creature has his or her reality in being the covenant-partner of God. Creaturely freedom is freedom for the good of a history of relationship with God. But the human creature in his or her own sphere of activity with other humans may reflect and cor-

21Robert Jenson, *Alpha and, Omega* (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1963), p. 98.

respond to this destiny as covenant-partner by living with others in fellowship. The " properly and essentially " human is never expressed in lonely isolation, in which one would seek to find fulfillment in neutrality or hostility toward one's fellows. The normatively human is rather a being-in-encounter in which one's distinctive life is qualified by and fulfilled in connection with the life of the other. Thus all activities are *human* insofar as they are realized in relationship.

> Thus the fact that I am born and die; that I eat and drink and sleep; that I develop and maintain myself; that beyond this I assert myself in face of others, and even physically propagate my species; that I enjoy and work and play and fashion and possess; that I acquire and have and exercise powers; that I take part in all the works of the race either accomplished or in process of accomplishment; that in all this I satisfy religious needs and can realize religious possibilities; and that in it all I fulfill my aptitudes as an understanding and thinking, willing and feeling being-all this as such is not my humanity. In it I can be either human or inhuman ... There is no reason why in the realization of my vital, natural and intellectual aptitudes and potentialities, in my life-act as such, and my participation in scholarship and art, politics and economics, civilization and culture, I should not actualize and reveal that "I am as Thou art." [CD, III/2: 249]

Barth describes the constituents of this form of creaturely covenant as mutual seeing, mutual speaking and hearing, and mutual assistance.[22] Each must first of all be open to the other with a view to the other's benefit. The other is not merely " the surface to which a certain label can be applied,' "[23] or the mere embodiment of this or that cause or group; rather, he or she must be *seen* realistically and concretely as bearing particular needs and a particular point of view. The mutuality of speech and hearing requires that each party try to interpret him or herself to the other, in order for both to discover and specify a relevant and presumed common sphere of life and in-

[22] I discuss these features at some greater length in " Political Liberalism and Christian Ethics: A Review Discussion," this journal (January 1984) :

[23] Bernard Williams, "The Idea of Equality," in Bernard Williams, *Problems of the Self* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), p. 236.

terest. The discovery of this intersubjective space is directed toward assistance, in which each party helps and is helped by the other from within the shared space. One acts not from one's isolated point of view, nor from the associate's perspective, but from a third point of view, a perspective from which one's own good and the other's good are equally in play.[24] As created and summoned for fellowship with God, human creatures are to bear responsibility for their lives; but they are also essentially dependent. In the variety of forms of life, self-responsibility and dependence are witnessed and coordinated through patterns of mutual help, and the " secret " of humanity is that this qualification of the action of humans really fulfills them. As Barth would put it, the relationship is enacted on both sides with gladness (CD, III/2: 267).[25] What is called for, in short, is a differentiated freedom realized in fellowship, a " freedom to be oneself with the other, and oneself to be with the other" (CD, III/2: 272). For Barth, then, only the individuality which welcomes fellowship and the fellowship that preserves free differentiation are good-making, properly speaking. " Individual " and " community " are therefore not separate and potentially antagonistic; to commend the one includes commendation of the other. Since all act within the grace of creation, this freedom, he adds, is a possibility for Christians and non-Christians alike.

The fundamental justification for the proposal that humanity is cohumanity is that it is an implication of the assertion that from all eternity the triune God decided to enact with humanity a covenant of reconciliation. The creation of human beings in the relation of I and Thou, biblically narrated in the creation of male and female (*Genesi,s* 1:26-28), has the covenant as its internal basis, and is accordingly a sign and prefiguration of the bond between Christ and his community. In Barth's words, cohumanity is a " real witness ... to this first

24John Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 143.

23 Cf. Helmut Gollwitzer, *An Introduotion to Protestant Theology,* trans. David Cairns (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982), pp. 98-101.

and final element in the will and decree of God" (CD, III/fl: 318). It is, by an analogy of relationship, the *image of God,* who is I and Thou, the Father of the Son and the Son of the Father, in relation and yet one and the same in the Spirit. Thus the human creature who is also a Christian believer may come to see that he or she is really " at home " in the Word of God.

> The sign given him in and with his own nature assures him that he is the neighbor and confidant of God, that he has not slipped from Him, that marked in this way he has always been regarded by God as His own, and always will be. It tells him that in this nature of his he who stands in this temporal covenant is also called to the eternal, that he may take comfort in and hold to the fact that he is called in this way, and that the Creator is faithful by whom he is called. [CD, 111/2: 828]

By showing the relation of this anthropological datum to the character of the basic will and being of God, Barth is able both to preserve God's sovereignty in the theological account and to display to the human creature a comforting sign of God's covenant loyalty.

Now the logical movement of Barth's position clearly allows and requires that that sign may apply to human activity in the political sphere. Whatever correspondences it may bear to the Kingdom of God will emerge in the humanization which is cohumanity, through the grace of creation internally grounded in the covenant of Jesus Christ. One may say this to correct and complete Barth's political writings, while doing so in Barth's own name. According to this interpretation, the Church's political responsibility would be to work for a state that enables and encourages co-equal fellowship for its members at all levels of activity, including political activity itself. In their active commitment to norms of justice which regulate their major political and economic institutions, and in their compatible lower-level political activities in neighborhoods, schools, the workplace, and local government, citizens may help one another in the advancement of their life plans under conditions of freedom and equality. Through their common de-

liberations about how they, as persons with different visions of the good life, may live together justly, citizens may as well move toward an ideal of public virtue that expresses their nature as free and equal. These kinds of mutual help require the presence of various effective opportunities for citizens' participation in the public business; provision of these opportunities would require the democratization of corporate government, and the decentralization of governmental activity and political movements generally. Efforts to overcome the deprivations of poverty and the excesses of privilege would serve the project of advancing the good of cohumanity among citizens, a good which resists both various capitalist denials of co-determination and certain socialist denials of individuality (CD, III/4: *535ff*.; III/2: 252). Such an arrangement of political life may yield a value which genuinely witnesses to the sovereign God who creates and redeems, and who as such sustains fallen human creatures.

IV

If this internal critique and correction of Barth is supportable, then one more question concerning his political ethics remains. How do we address Barth's juxtaposition of both negative and positive internal connections between the word of justification and the civil community? What relation, if any, is there between the claim that the state's purpose is to preserve us *from* one another through the threat of force and the claim that the state's arrangement may positively witness to the Kingdom of God through making more possible our being *with* one another in mutual assistance? The former claim is at home in a doctrine of two kingdoms, as I have shown, but the latter is often dismissed by adherents of the doctrine for failing to take seriously the distinction between the proper and alien works of God.[26] How can Barth say both?

The first and perhaps best response may be that he could not say both coherently, and that his effort to do so reflects a

[20] See, for example, Thielicke, *Theoiogical Ethics,* Volume 2, pp. 575-83.

lamentable confusion. Yet let me try to show how the two claims may be somewhat compatible on the terms of Barth's theology, and for a society like our own. The first proposition allows that the normative ordering of the civil community necessarily includes coercive elements to restrain and judge fallen humanity for the purposes of preserving that humanity. These elements include the threat of sanctions underpinning a commonwealth's laws; but they also embrace legal and other arrangements which in manifold ways guarantee a complex equilibrium in power among individuals and groups. Thus are the wills of persons set over against one another in order to restrain self-seeking and exploitation. [27] Indeed, it is arguable that this sort of decentralized ordering must be pursued to establish the safety of state-imposed sanctions; for the restraint of sinful self-seeking applies as well to the ones who govern, and their power must find a counterpoise in citizens who may judge and hold accountable.

The purpose of the preserving activity just described is the reduction of conflict and coercion through means which employ and presuppose conflict and coercion. The reduction extends to the removal of privileges which lead to the domination of relationships and projects by sources irrelevant to their realization. The spheres of need, family, office, and political power are not to be dominated by the sphere of the market, for example, since the social meaning of these goods precludes their distribution through buying and selling. Similarly, the plea for limited government reflects the desire not to have various human goods dominated from outside their own sphere by state power, for this is the essence of tyranny. [28] Yet it is important to see that the effort to reduce conflict and coercion while presupposing and employing it does clarify the sorts of loyalties and commitments it is the province of the civil community to

[27] Cf. Reinhold Niebuhr, *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics* (New York: Seabury Press, 1979), p. 38 and elsewhere.

[28] Michael Walzer, *Spheres of Justice* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), *passim.* This is the most important study of the idea of justice in the philosophical literature since Rawls's classic, *A Theory of Justice.*

protect. Persons who hold these commitments will want to have them supported, and will come together with other citizens to deliberate about the manner of that support. Deliberation about the la.ws of the commonwealth must be arranged as much as possible in terms of the rule of reasons. Citizens must enter the political forum " with nothing but their arguments. All non-political goods have to be deposited outside: weapons and wallets, titles and degrees." [29] Otherwise the requirement to reduce as much as possible the conflicts and compulsions of fallen humanity would not extend, as it must, into the political sphere.

All of this-the equilibrium of power, the rejection of the little and larger tyrannies of our lives, the rule of reasons in political deliberation-may protect us from one another, through sanctions of law. But the guarantee of opportunities to exercise power and resist domination through the ascription of political and welfare rights, the protection of the loyalties and relationships of citizens, and the governing of political deliberation by reasons *also* all set up opportunities for a kind of citizenship in which free and equal persons assist one another in the attainment of a just polity. This assistance, made possible by a clearer sense of what citizens share as free and equal and of how institutions may support or impede that sharing, may itself become the proper expression of freedom and equality, as it enables persons to rule and be ruled in turn together.

Hence the protection of humanity for the preaching of the Gospel frees humanity from big and little tyrannies through laws and social arrangements that stand to threaten and coerce. But the arrangements may also offer occasions to be free for life with one another in a real (even if attenuated and ambiguous) fellowship of mutual help in the securing of justice. Here there is a sense in which the divine sphere of judgment remains itself while also serving the sphere of promise. The God who rules in the political order can be said to be hidden in judgment and accusation; but that hidden God is not an absent

[29] *Ibid.,* p. 304.

God, and therefore the possibility must remain that there may and will emerge in political life patterns of cohumanity that do bear promise of a greater fellowship promised to us.[30] The patterns may not directly arise from, but may he occasioned by, the equalizing and restricting of social and political power; out of that protective maneuver, recognition of one another as *partners* may take place. Christians in their political responsibilities live in hope of just this restoration of creation, in which the work of the promising God, even as Creator and Preserver of fallen creation, may be witnessed. This hope, finally, is the meaning of the proposal that the political community may clear a space, *may make way,* for proclamation *through* humanization, for in the latter task Christians already attest to the God who is proclaimed.[31]

This interpretation is useful, I think, because it appropriately incorporates elements of realism and radicalism into the understanding of Christian political responsibility. On the one hand, acknowledgment that the stamp of sin and death continues to be borne by the politics of this world will allow for a humble recognition of the limits of political action at any particular time and place. The attainment of genuine value in cohumanity will always remain ambiguous and, in a sense, unsystematically related to our efforts to secure it. In addition, the Christian will be warned not to embrace pleas for political community and patriotism prematurely. Pleas of this sort are dangerous, for they expose us to the effort " to build social cohesion and political enthusiasm from above, through the use of state power."[32] On the other hand, the radical possibility that a new politics may emerge in which those pleas may become effective through participatory expansion of the

30 I am indebted to Ronald F. Thiemann for helping me with this formulation.

31 See Gollwitzer, *An Introduction to Protestant Theology,* pp. 194-205, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics* (New York: Macmillan, 1955), pp. 120-43.

32 Michael Walzer, *Radical Principles* (New York: Basic Books, 1980), p. 68.

public sphere finds support in the hope that the work of the Creator may still be found in the political realm, and that that work is not unrelated to the work of redemption.[83] The acknowledgment that political life may bear a real value of covenant, intimating and bearing promise of a greater covenant for which justified sinners are freed, corrects tendencies in Christian political ethics toward "a complete dualism of powers . . . a radical separation between private morality and official morality . . . the political aloofness of Christians . . . the establishment of politics as a law unto itself."[34] The idea of cohumanity offers a positive criterion for political action that will not take the reduction of conflict to be divorced from the overcoming of patterns of privilege and deprivation that themselves reflect coercion, and that isolate citizens from one another and from an appreciation of their *common* task.[35]

V

Assuming for the moment that my reconstruction of Barth is plausible,[36] I would like to conclude by suggesting how a political ethic of cohumanity may pertain to our current situation.

[33] Cf. Gilbert C. Meilaender's concern that the moral costs associated with the "inculcation" of civic virtue be fully acknowledged. *The Theory and Practice of Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), pp. 68-72. Caution about the dangers and costs of "inculcating" virtue in the public sphere is necessary and important; but I remain unclear about its concrete relation to a proposal such as mine, which would establish an indirect link between efforts to resist the tyrannies of our lives and the achievement of cohumanity in the public sphere.

[34] Thielicke, *Theol-OgicalEthics,* Volume 2, p. 581.

[35] Gollwitzer, *An Introduction to· Protestant Theology,* p. 192.

[36] In personal correspondence, dated November 1, 1985, my colleague Michael Root has proposed that my *use* of what Barth says about the meaning and ground of cohumanity is at least logically separable from the *distinctive* way in which Barth relates creation and covenant-Le., that a *covenant of reconciliation* is *prior* to creation as its internal basis. He believes the logical independence is important because he takes this "distinctive" move to be theologically disastrous, since it logically requires that "all of the suffering created by human sin is willed by God." I am sympathetic to the latter concern, as well as to the point about separability. While I cannot pursue the matter further here, I can say that the features of Barth's political thought which I find most useful do tend in his own writing to be distanced some-

In the first place, our political life is characterized by a vast pluralism of positions on the meaning of social justice and the nature of the good life. Insofar as it reflects the absence of a moral consensus relevant to public deliberation, this pluralism supports a politics of private interest.[37] To seek to modify the pluralism by the effort to secure more agreement on the values governing our common life is part and parcel of the attempt to ease the coercive elements of interest politics, in which public decisions are made through exertions of private power. But to work toward such agreement is only to provide a space within which the (cohuman) sharing of politics may operate. Second, to oppose reductions in social spending directed toward the least advantaged members of our society becomes ever more urgent when those reductions are not counterbalanced by other efforts to secure for them improvements in social integration and political participation. Without the enjoyment of basic goods which help to give a person a sense of active membership in a community, any appeal made on behalf of that community for that person to *sacrifice* for it fail, because the community cannot properly be understood as that person's own.[38] A political ethic of cohumanity exposes this hypocrisy, and in so doing exposes new sources of coercion and domination.

what from the "distinctive" move which Root rejects, while also retaining a Christological basis. At least rhetorically, then, Barth invites me to consider moving with Root beyond Barth.

37 "To believe that oral disagreements can never be resolved by reasoned argument, to believe that ethical positions are nothing more than expressions of personal preferences or cultural differences, to believe that our deepest beliefs and convictions are simply non-rational opinions is to despair of the possibility of any significant common life within the republic. People who hold these beliefs have no motivation to participate in the 'common good' of the nation. They have no reason to listen to the arguments of those with whom they disagree. And finally they have no reason to curb their own excesses in defending those positions which most accord with their own personal preferences-no matter how harmful those positions may be to the community as a whole. The new pluralism thus portends a crisis of community." Ronald F. Thiemann, "From Twilight to Darkness: Theology and the New Pluralism," *Trinity Seminary Review* (Fall 1984): 14.

as Ronald Dworkin, "Why Liberals Should Believe in Equality," *New York Review of Books* 30 (February 3, 1983): 32-34.

Third, the pursuit of structures of relationship that reduce conflict and invite cooperation may include efforts to secure more democratic forms of governance in the sphere of the workplace. To call for more democratic control may be especially important at a time when workers are significantly less empowered to accept or reject the terms of their employers.[89] Fourth, to think covenantally about our politics forces us to recognize the double outrage performed upon those who, for lack of power and participation, are isolated not only from fellow-citizens but also from enjoyment of the more private covenants of family and neighborhood.[40]

The precise contemporary relevance of the political ethic sketched here would, of course, have to be elaborated. My suggestions are too cryptic as they stand. I hope, nevertheless, that they succeed in inviting further inquiry from the Christian community, since I suspect that they may indeed help it to discern what are the "real needs of the day " by which its political program should be directed. The needs, certainly, may and must be grasped in light of the " more comprehensive theological clarifications" provided above. If any or all of this is the case, then the words of Barth's Preface, I believe, may find a powerful vindication. And we might then recall his work with gratitude, lapses and unclarity notwithstanding, for helping us to approach the problem of Christian political ethics with the greater understanding which faith always seeks.[41]

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39 See the important analysis of Francis Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *The New Class War: Reagan's Attack on the Welfare State and its Consequences* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982) .

40 See, for example, Richard Sennett and Jonathan Cobb, *The Hidden Injuries of Class* (New York: Random House, 1972) .

41 I read an earlier version of this essay in June of 1984 at a conference on "Barth, Barmen, and the Confessing Church," Luther Northwestern Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota. I am grateful to Wayne Stumme for inviting me to the conference, and to the participants there for their questions and interest. I also want to thank George Hunsinger, Gilbert Meilaender, and Michael Root for their excellent critical suggestions concerning subsequent versons of the essay.

AQUINAS AND BARTH ON THE HUMAN BODY*

WE CELEBRATE both the 50th anniversary of the founding of *The Thomist* and the centennial of Karl Barth's birth there can be no question about the appropriateness of reflecting on some part of a theological conversation which may even now-we may dare to imagine as a kind of pious whimsy-be going on between St. Thomas Aquinas and Karl Barth. About the conversation topic I have assigned them, however, something more may need to be said. "Theology of the body", after all, has hardly figured as a major *locus* in the greater body of Christian Divinity.

Modernity has brought with it profound changes in the attitudes Western culture leads us to adopt toward the human body. In his remarkable study, *Theologies of the Body: Humanist and Christian*, Benedict M. Ashley characterizes it as a change from a " sacramental " to a non-sacramental, " desacralized" view of the human body. This change he argues, involves an objectivized view of matter in general " as a collection of things to be used for their utility rather than to be contemplated as a mirror of the Creator." In this desacralized view the human person is " seen more and more as a self-determining subject isolated from a world of alien objects that had to be controlled and dominated by force of will ... " [1]

Clearly Thomas is a theologian of the " sacramental " view of the body. What about Barth? For all of his "prophetic" denunciations of apostasy in modern culture and in the theology it has dominated, Barth is himself inescapably a modern

*The Walter Farrell Lecture delivered as part of a convocation marking the 50th .Anniversary of *The Thomist* at the Dominican House of Studies, Washington, D.C., on November 8, 1986.

[1] The Pope John Center, Braintree, Massachusetts, 1985, p. 164.

theologian deeply shaped by his culture. Furthermore, he self-consciously adopted theological motifs from his Reformed heritage which Ashley explicitly identifies as developments in theology that reflect and support the "desacralized" view of the human body. Particularily important here are the decisions, *first,* that the relation between God's grace and sinful human being is not to be thought of in ontological terms as a relation between two natures, but in legal terms as an extrinsic relation between Sovereign Will and the creaturely will; *second,* that this extrinsic relation is established by God on conditions God sets which, *third,* are best elucidated using the Biblical images " election " and " covenant ". Does Barth, by adopting these themes from his Calvinist heritage, as well as by the inescapable influences of his cultural setting, end up, however unwittingly, a theologian of the "desacralized" view of the human body?

A useful way to open up the contrasts between Thomas and Barth on this topic will be to focus on their respective answers to the question, " How are our bodies involved in our engagement by God's prevenient and redeeming grace?" Exploration of their answers to that question will surface remarkable similarities in their theologies of the body beneath enormous conceptual and methodological differences. The similarities, however, make the points at which they differ all the more important.

I. *Placement of the Question and Its Subject.*

Perhaps the decisive similarity between Thomas and Barth lies in a common judgment about where in the larger context of Christian doctrine to place questions about who we are and how grace engages us. It is their similarity on this point that makes them overlap enough for their theological views of the body to be worth comparing. The significance of their common move here can be brought out by recalling a familiar picture of a contrasting and more conventional way of placing anthropological questions.

To put the matter schematically: At least from the 16th century until quite recently, Western theology conventionally followed Augustine's lead and located anthropological topics in the context of discussion of the relation between sin and redemption. It was simply assumed that the relevant authoritative Scripture was *Genesis* 1-8. "Sin" and "redemption" were both discussed in terms of " creation ". " Sin " was understood as a corruption of what human being was intended to be by God's creative act. "Redemption", in turn, was understood as God's unmerited and prevenient act to transform corrupted human being. The questions addressed in theological anthropology were posed, in turn, by controversies about how best to understand the way in which God's redeeming grace engages sinful human beings, i.e. controversies about the relation of redemption to creation.

In contrast to all of this, what Thomas and Barth share is a methodological decision to locate anthropological topics in the context of discussion, not of the relation of redemption to creation, but of the relation of creation and consummation to each another. Thomas and Barth do not assume, as the conventional approach had, that theological description of human being must be cast in terms of *one* way in which God continually relates to us, viz. as our Creator. They make the description far more complex and supple by formulating it in terms of *two* ways in which God relates to us: as our Creator and as our Consummator. More exactly, they formulate their respective theological descriptions of human being, including its bodiliness, in terms of the dialectic *between* these two distinct ways in which God relates to us. As we shall see, it is as though they had decided that what theology has to say about human being is generated not by reflection on the " creation and fall " stories in *Genesis* 1-8, but rather by meditation on the sort of divinely initiated movement celebrated in *Ephesians* 1: *5-6* (RSV):

> He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

II. *RatWnally-Empowered Bodily Life.*

Thomas's account of the movement which is the embracing context of our lives may be read as a picture of an " inclusive cosmic order of procession and movement from a single originating source and of return to that source by way of assimilation proper to intellectual creatures." [2] This movement is constituted by the interplay between two distinct ways in which God actively and graciously relates to all that is not God, viz. relating to it as its Creator, the source that moves it "out", and as its Consummator, who draws it back. It is in terms of these relationships with God that one must understand the anthropological implications of our redemption and, in particular, the role of our bodiliness in our engagement by redemptive grace.

That is precisely what Thomas does, for example, in his discussion of "original justice" (Ia. *95,* 1).[4] There the major themes in his anthropology are brought together to give a theological account of the human person precisely in its concreteness. It involves, I suggest, an account of human being as " rationally empowered bodily life " according to which it is precisely in virtue of-and not despite, or in indifference to- our bodies that we are engaged by redemptive grace.

The Biblical picture of Adam is taken as exemplary of human personhood in its full richness, i.e. in the state of " original justice " undistorted by the consequences of sin and evil. This, Thomas says following well-established Augustinian tradition, is " a matter of reason being submissive to God, the lower powers to reason, the body to the soul." It consists, that is, of a set of relationships: body to soul; lower powers to reason; reason to God. Furthermore, the third of the three (reason to God) is, Thomas says, the cause of the other two. Without

[2] Cornelius Ernst, " Introduction ", St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae,* Blackfriars edition, Vol. 30, p. xiv.

[3] *City of God,* XII, 9.

[4] All references to the *Summa Theologiae* are to the Blackfriars Edition (New York and London).

undue risk of modernizing St. Thomas anachronistically, we may in a broadly " existentialist " way characterize this richness of exemplary human being as fully " concrete " human being. It is, after all, a description (albeit an abstract one) of one of many ways of being in the world, many "hows " of human personhood, which are possible to free and rational beings. Furthermore, of them all, it is the one in which alone is human personhood fully realized. By contrast, any person whose " how " is different from this is in some way not truly " concrete", a kind of "abstracted" human being, not fully " there ", closer to being " two " than " three-dimensional " or, to invoke another family of metaphors, a " shadow " of a human person though no less " actual " than any other person. Now the question focuses on us as "persons" in the modern sense of the term (not in the sense of " hypostasis " as it is in Thomas). The question is: What constitutes a human person precisely in its concreteness? Thomas's final answer is: That God relates to the human person as its Creator *and* as its Consummator.

That answer is implicit in the strategy of Thomas's answer to the question, Whether human kind was created "in grace " (Ia. *95,* I). Thomas immediately construes it as a question about what constitutes a human person in the state of original justice. That is, he takes it be a question about what constitutes a person, not simply in regard to its existence or " that " nor in regard to its nature or " what," but rather what constitutes the person precisely in its concreteness or " how ". Thomas's answer is that humankind *is* created "in grace." He defends this by the argument that, had the relation of body to soul and lower powers to reason been constituted by" nature", those relations would have persisted after the relation of reason to God had been disrupted in sin. But in fact the major consequence of sin is that the first two relations are disrupted also. Therefore divine grace's role in the constitution of a human person precisely in its concreteness must be as primordial as is the role of divine creativity.

The particular *force* of this argument is brought out by noting the arguments Thomas is rejecting. He acknowledges that some theologians have taught that Adam was not created" in grace." They hold that grace was conferred either after sin in order to redeem humankind from sin's consequences, or in anticipation of sin to help Adam " stand " in the innocence in which he was created. Both views locate discussion of human personhood in its full concreteness in the context of a creation-sin-redemption scheme. In his dissent and substitute proposal Thomas in effect relocates the discussion into the context of the interplay between creation and consummation.

The role of God's relation to human persons as their Creator is *explicit* in the way the question is posed and its answer argued. Both locate the discussion in the context of Thomas's analysis of God's relation to all that is not God (Ia. 44-49). God's creativity constitutes an exemplary human person in existence, and constitutes existence in a distinctive "nature" essential to which are body and soul, lower and higher powers, particularily intellect.

The role of God's relation to human persons as their Consummator, however, is *implicit* in Thomas's argument. The argument assumes Thomas's view that human beings, along with all of creation, are destined by God to an eschatological reunion with God. The union is realized at the end of the movement and is not given with creation. Grace (when contrasted with creation as it is in this Question) is at root the free love "by which [God] draws the rational creature" (in contradistinction to other kinds of creatures) " above its natural condition to have a part in the divine goodness" (Ia2ae. llO, I). The proper form of that union for rational creatures is intellectual vision of God. That will be a fulfillment of the rightly ordered relation of reason to God which is foundational to "original justice", the concrete "how" of exemplary human personhood. It is for that reason that the properly ordered relation of body and soul and of lower powers to higher cannot be constituted by " nature ". They are not

ordered by God's creativity but by God's gracious superintending our movement to the consummation of our eschatological destiny. The *fact* of destinedness, the context of mission and vocation *to* and *by* that end, is as primordial to concrete human personhood as is the fact of its creatureliness. It is in the context of the interplay *between* creation and consummation that redemption is understood. Hence it is in that context that we are to understand the role of our bodiliness in our engagement by redemptive grace.

Grace is qualified as" redemptive" by the (absurd!) fact of sin, but it is not occasioned by sin. Grace " is ordained to the bringing back of man to God" (Ia2ae, 111, 1). Back from what? Not back from our apostasy in sin, but back from our procession " out " of God in creation. Because sin has the effect of disrupting the set of relationships between a person and God and the relations interior to the person which constitute original justice, bringing the person back to God must now also include transforming the person so as to be pleasing to God. Thus in relation to our sinfulness, grace is *gratia gratum faciens,* " grace which makes pleasing ", redeeming us, or in conventional terms, "sanctifying" us. This theme is underscored in a passage that Cornelius Ernst points out in *De Malo* (V, 1). There Thomas responds to the objection that since none of God's works is in vain, either God did not destine us for reunion with God, or else we have lost the vision of God despite sin. Thomas answers this would indeed be so except that God has from the beginning of the human race provided humankind with a remedy for sin, viz. Jesus Christ. "Thus" Ernst comments, "grace bestowed on man's nature in the first man is an anticipation--even in its loss-of the grace to be bestowed in Jesus Christ: God's purpose in creating man is ordered to his purpose of bestowing grace on his creature." [5] It may be that in God's foreknowledge the Incarnation and Atonement are contingent on humankind's free fall,

[5] Cornelius Ernst, "Appendix I: Grace and Saving History", p. 232-3.

but the grace by which we are destined for the ultimate consummation of union with God is not.

Consummation Prior to Creation: Final Order.

Thus in the order of finality, consummation has priority to creation: we are created to the end of our consummation. Thomas simply identifies the content of grace with the active and abiding presence of the Holy Spirit (la2ae. 106, I). If, according to the conventions of Trinitarian theology, creation is appropriated to God the Father, then we may say that for Thomas the Father's relating to us as our Creator is in the service of the Holy Spirit's relating to us as our Consummator. More exactly, creation is in service of, but *transcended by,* consummation. What the Holy Spirit brings to fulfillment does not simply develop out of what the Father creates. To the contrary, that is precisely why Adam had to be graced *as well as* created. The movement rooted in the Source's continual creativity returns to the Source in a consummation that is congruent with but transcends what creation makes possible.

It is important to stress that God the Holy Spirit's relating to us as our Consummator is a dynamic relation constituted by divine activity which is, from the creature's perspective, coterminal with creaturely reality. At least from the time of the composition of the *Summa Contra Gentiles* (1259-64) onward, Thomas located discussion of grace in the context of discussion of Providence. Indeed, it is in this context (III, 150) that Thomas explicitly quotes Ephesians I, *5* about God's predestinating purpose to bring us as adopted children " unto himself" (the passage I suggested above is a kind of subtext shared by Thomas and Barth). It is by God the Holy Spirit's active providential governance that human persons, each in ways appropriate to its peculiar situation and conditions, are given the assistance they need to continue in their destined movement toward reunion with God. God's providential rule has a plan. It is periodized in a threefold way according to the

basically different kinds of assistance God gives in each period: Old Law or Old Covenant; New Law or New Covenant; the time of our" heavenly home" (Ia2ae. 106, 4 and 1). Evidently the use of covenantal imagery is not confined to or definitive of theologies whose view of the human body is implicitly " desacralizing ". Thus, for Thomas, " Providence " names, not simply God's continuing preservation of creation's order, but more centrally God's active super-intending of the entire historical process so as to lead it to its destined consummation.

It is clearly Thomas's intent to insist that grace engages us precisely *in* our bodiliness. Our bodies are not irrelevant to our engagement by grace. Nor do they present a problem, as though grace could only engage us by getting around our bodies or by somehow short-circuiting them. For example, it is important to Thomas to insist that grace is only engage-able by the likes of us as redemptive grace if it encounters us as intentional bodily action. The Incarnate Word effects our salvation by every one of his bodily actions, and especially by his suffering death by crucifixion (Illa. 46) . On our side, Thomas insists that grace truly engages us so as to transform us only if it brings us toward truly concrete human life, i.e. toward that " how " in which alone is the fullness of human personhood realized. That involves restoration not only of the mind's right relation to God, but body's right relation to the soul. And that is constituted and not just illustrated by bodily action.

This is a major part of the force of Thomas's discussion of merit. What redeeming or sanctifying grace effects, we may say though Thomas does not, is not good human *being* but a meritorious human *person.* St. Thomas, after all, is first of all a Christian theologian concerned to elucidate the meaning, truth and comprehensive explanatory power of Gospel claims about the power of God's free and prevenient love to liberate concrete, living human persons from all their bondage and to heal all their brokenness. In service of that Thomas may elect to use metaphysical conceptual schemes and " ontological "

analysis. Nonetheless, the overarching concern is news about persons rather than about modes of being.

The point of my distinction between " human being " and "human person" is this: It is a person's free actions that *may* have merit, not the distinctively human " what " which he or she participates, nor the existential " that " which she or he "has". Actions *do* have merit when they are both free actions and the work of the Holy Spirit (Ia2ae. 114, 3). That means that they are meritorious as the enactments of a particular concrete " how ". The temporally extended series of these acts constitutes the new life-project of a person who is being made a" new creature". The person has his or her concrete personhood, that is, his or her new " how ", precisely *in* these acts. Thus a person, and not just a set of acts, is meritorious precisely because his or her *concrete* reality, his or her "how" along with his or her "what" and "that", are constituted by *two* ways in which God relates to it at once: as its Creator and as its Consummator. Grace engages us *in* our bodiliness.

But *how* does grace do that? In particular, does it somehow engage us *by meam of* our bodies? Thomas's discussion concentrates almost entirely on the way grace relates to the soul rather than to the body: The seat or subject of grace, he teaches, is in the essence of the soul (la2ae. 110, 4). It seems, ironically, that it is his stress on grace's engagement of us *in* our bodiliness that leads Thomas to stress grace's engagement of us *by way of* our souls. It leads to this *given* Thomas's metaphysics of human life.

This is evident in his discussion of the question whether grace is simply a virtue (la2ae. 110, 3). Given the stress on grace's engagement of us precisely in our bodily actions, it might seem that grace is a virtue. For that view, grace transforms a person in view of good action. Now " virtue " is the name for a disposition to good action. It is a shaping of human power so that it is disposed to act in a characteristic way. In this case to be virtuous is to be disposed to act in love for God

and neighbor, i.e. to have the disposition of charity. That is what grace effects in us by transforming us. So the subject of grace would seem to be a person's" powers". And grace would seem to engage a person the way a virtue engages a power, by in-forming it with some disposition to act in a certain way.

Thomas argues *against* this on the grounds that it fails to do justice to the relation of "doing" to "being" in human beings. It may be that the *concreteness,* the particular" how", of human persons lies in their acts, but their *subsistence* does not. It is a given human being's soul, its root-principle of life, that subsists, even in the absence of a body. As the root-principle of life, it is the root of that human being's array of powers-to-act and subsists even when one or another of the powers is gone. Virtues, then, must be understood, not only by reference to the principles of action, the powers which they dispose to act one way rather than another, but also by reference to the root-principle of life itself, the soul. Grace engages us in our bodily actions only indirectly. It engages the soul directly, transforming it so that "in consequence of certain rebirth or recreation it participates, by way of a kind of likeness, in the divine nature" (Ia2ae. 110, 4) . Thus, where the Father's relation to us as our Creator established a radical *difference* in being between us and God even as it orders us toward consummation, the Holy Spirit's relation to us as our Consummator establishes a kind of union of being between us and God: "[T]his in fact is the divine nature as possessed by participation, as *II Peter* says, *He has given us most great and precious promises, that by these you may be made partakers of the divine nature"* (Ia2ae. 110, 3). Now, since the root-principle of life is the root of the principles of action, a transformed soul will be the root of transformed powers as well. Thus, as a consequence of grace's engagement of the soul, a human being's powers come to have transformed dispositions. Thus the subject of grace is the soul of the human *being,* not the principles of actions in which the human *person* has its concreteness.

How, then, does grace engage the soul? Grace "as divine assistance by which God moves us to will and do good" engages the soul as "mover" engages "moved" (Ia2ae. 111, 2). The one moved, the human soul, is intrinsically free. Accordingly, our engagement by grace must take place by our free decision (Ia2ae. 109, 6 ad 1). However," that good movement of free choice itself . . . is the action of a free choice moved by God ... The principal agent is God moving the free choice ..." (Ia2ae. 112, 2) .

Although that claim preserves the prevenience of grace, it can scarcely be said to be enlightening. Moreover, this "explanation " of how grace so engages us as to transform us seems to suggest that the role our bodies can play in the engagement is at most merely instrumental. Grace's business is directly with the non-material soul. Any role a material body may play in that engagement would seem at best to be incidental and in principle dispensable. To get more light on this explanation and to check the growing impression that the body has no important or integral role to play in its engagement by grace we need to turn briefly to Thomas's account of created human *being.*

Creation Prior to Consummation: Formal Order

To turn from the destinedness of the creature to the creatureliness of the destined is to shift attention from the final to the formal order. It is to ask about the "that" and the "what", the "existence" and the "nature" of the creature. In particular, we are concerned to ask what it is in the nature of the human creature that is the condition of the possibility of the creature's actions being at once free and moved by God the Holy Spirit. However, it is important to stress that the context of this analysis of free action is not the metaphysical concept of " nature " but the theological concepts " Creator " and "creature". "Creation" is much richer than "nature". It embraces both a relation and the effect of the relation. Like God's relation to us as our Consummator, God's relation to

us as our Creator is a dynamic relation that is actively coterminal with the creature. Its dynamism is by no means to be identified simply with a postulated singular moment of origination of the creaturely realm in the past. Its " effect " is both " what " a creature is and " that " it is. Hence the creature is continuously and unqualifiedly dependent, both for the essence that it *is* and the existence that it *has* on God's actively relating to it as its Creator. Analysis of the essence of any one kind of creature and analysis of the relation of essence to existence is an exercise in metaphysics. But it is done in the service of theological claims. In this case, it is done in service of the elucidation of the claim that a condition of free action by fallen human beings is prevenient movement by the Holy Spirit.

Thus in the formal order creation is prior to consummation. *What* God the Holy Spirit brings to consummation by grace is none other than what God the Father creates. If it is to be the consummation of *us,* it must be consonant with *what* we are, embracing it without negating it or leaving it behind. Moreover, if we are going to be fulfilled, we must at least exist. God's relating to us as Consummator presupposes God's relating to us as Creator both in regard to what we are essentially or " formally " and in regard to the fact that we are.

What is it about the structure of human creatures that makes possible their acting at once freely and as moved by God's grace? And what is the role of the body in its engagement by grace? Thomas's account of the " what " of human being can be summarized as " rationally empowered bodily life ". This formulation has the advantage of bringing out the essential role of bodiliness in human being. Thomas is emphatic that bodiliness is integral to human essence. A soul is not a human being, for "it is [only] a part of human nature" (Ia. 75, 4 ad A human being is not a soul contained in a body, nor a soul using a body. Rather, "it is plain that man is no mere soul, but a compound of soul and body" (Ia. 75, 4).

The grounds for this insistence lie in Thomas's account of what it is to be a living body (Ia. 18, 1). Intrinsic to every

actual body, animate or inanimate, is a principle (its " form ") which at once makes it be determinately what it is and is its principle of " movement ", i.e. the principle that determines the range of kinds of change that it can undergo. The principle of movement of a non-living body can only be actuated by some other actual thing. The distinguishing feature of a living body, by contrast, is that it is in some respects *self-moving.* Plants are self-moving in regard to nutrition, growth and propagation, but not in regard to the way in which they feed or what they consume. Animals in varying degrees are additionally self-moving in regard to what they eat and where they move to find it, but not in regard to the end of their acts of search-and-consume. According to Thomas the degrees of mobility that distinguish one type of animal from another are a function of degrees of complexity in the sensory equipment by which alone they engage their environment.

Human beings are living bodies that are self-moving not only in ways guided by the senses, but also by reference to ends which they provide themselves. " This can only be done by reason and intellect, to which it belongs to know the relation of means to end, and direct one to the other" (Ia. 18, 3). It is bodily life which is rationally empowered, though not necessarily always rationally enacted! The power may not be exercised adequately. To say that it is self-moved in regard to self-supplied ends is to say that it moves freely. It is not self-moved, however, in regard to "first principles, about which it has no choice, and the ultimate end, which it is not free not to will " (Ia. 18, 3) (precisely because in grace it is destined for it). In these respects, for all of its rational empowerment, human bodily life is moved by Another.

These are all analogical uses of " life ". Only non-bodied God has life properly speaking because, as pure actuality subject to no determination by something else, only God is entirely self-moved in regard to both the form and the end of action.

According to this account living bodies are open energy systems of varying complexity that interact with their environ-

ments in self-sustaining and self-regulating ways. More adequately put, a complex living body is thought of as a self-regulating system of self-sustaining energy systems, some of which are semi-autonomous. This is the point of Thomas's argument that there are no other souls in a human being essentially different from the intelligent soul. Rather the intelligent soul embraces in one system the sub-systems of energies comprising vegitative and animal modes of life (Ia. 76, 3; for the general pattern of thought cf. Ia. 76, *5* ad 4) . The environment with which all bodily lives interact is constituted by the infinitely complex network of interrelationships among all other bodies, animate and inanimate, and is apprehended through the senses. Human lives in addition interact with a non-bodily environment of values and truths apprehended by the intellect. Human beings *are* rationally empowered bodily lives. That is *what* they are.

Thomas's metaphysical analysis of the relation between human body and soul is in the service of this analysis of human life. Consequently interpretation of the body-soul distinction must be guided by the analysis of rational bodily life. What actually exists is a living body. "[T] he soul is the root-principle of life" in a living body. **It** accounts for the identity of the body through ceaseless physical change (Ia. 78, 2 ad 1). **It** is the " actuating principle " of the body in virtue of which the body is determinately some thing, actually " *such,* as distinct from not-such" (Ia. 75, 1). In the case of human beings the soul is the principle of self-sustaining " motion " that is self regulating by reference to what is acquired by both sense experience and intellect. As we have seen the soul is not itself the immediate principle or " power" of any single " motion " or action. The soul is ontologically prior to its powers, the source from which they flow " by natural resultance without sequence in time" (Ia. 77, 7 ad 1). Thomas's discussion of the soul as the root-principle of human life insofar as it is self-sustaining ("vegetative" life) and self-regulating in reference to sense experience ("animate" life) stresses the integral and

terminal character of a given rationally empowered bodily life. The soul may be the source of these powers, but it is, he says, the" body-soul unity" that does this living (Ia. 77, 5).

To be sure, the soul, unlike the body, subsists and cannot be destroyed by the processes that destroy the body. Thomas's argument for this rests entirely on the validity of his metaphysics of human knowing. The root principle of precisely human bodily life is the root principle of life empowered to be rational, i.e. empowered to know the nature of things that environ it and thereby in the light of first principles to provide itself with its own ends for action. "Now the principle of the act of understanding ... must be some kind of incorporeal and subsistent principle". This is because knowing involves the knower becoming one with the known in respect to form though not in respect to existence. Hence the principle of knowing must be open to take in every possible form. This would be impossible were it in any way itself material or employed a bodily organ. The determinate nature of that material thing would get in the way of knowledge of all bodies. Hence " the principle of understanding ... has its own activity in which body takes no intrinsic part. But nothing can act of itself unless it subsists in its own right." Consequently it is incorporeal and subsists (Ia. 75, Moreover, since it is pure form it cannot be destroyed by the processes that destroy the body (Ia. 75, 6) . Therefore, the powers of rational activities, i.e. understanding and willing, have the soul not only as their source (as do all human powers) but also as their seat (Ia. 77, 5). Not the one body-soul human being, but the soul *<ilone* " does " them. Thus Thomas very often writes, not of the integral human being understanding or willing, but of the soul understanding or willing as though the soul *were* the human being.

Surely, however, that must be interpreted very carefully in the context of Thomas's account of human being as rationally empowered bodily life and his insistence that the soul is not the human being. There is something misleadingly" abstract" about his talk of the "soul" understanding and willing. We

must take as more adequate to his basic view Thomas's argument that the intellective soul "fits " the body of which it is the form precisely because the intellective soul "needs the power of sensation as well as the power of understanding. **But** there can be no sensation except through the body. Therefore the intellective soul has to have a body which is a suitable organ of sense " (Ia. 76, 5) . It may be that the soul is the seat of the intellectual power, but properly speaking it is the integral body-soul human being who does the knowing. So too, Thomas seems to express his view of the separated soul less onesidedly when he argues that even though the soul cannot be destroyed by the processes that destroy the body, in its separation from the body it is not properly speaking a human being but only a "partial human substance" (Ia. 89, **1-4).** What redemptive grace engages and brings to consummation is not a separated soul, but a human being, an integral body-soul unity. Hence the importance of the resurrection of the dead.

What does this analysis of the formal structure which human being has by virtue of God's relating to us as our Creator tell us about the role played by our bodies in our engagement by God's gracious relating to us as our Consummator? Above all **it** tells us that our bodies play an integral role simply because what grace engages in engaging a human being is an entire *integral* body-soul unity, a rationally empowered *bodily* life. There is something profoundly misleading in a description of grace engaging a soul which merely uses a body as an instrument.

It is the body-soul unity that is the term of the Creation relation and therefore of the grace relation. It is terminal in the order of predication: Things are predicated of it, it cannot be predicated of anything else (terminal in regard to truth). It is terminal in the order of analysis of action and responsibility: It, and nothing ontologically more basic, does its acts and is finally accountable for them (terminal in regard to goodness) . **It** is terminal in the order of analysis of intrinsic value: **It** is delightful and loveable intrinsically and not for reasons of

utility (terminal in regard to beauty). This is crucial to human being's standing as moral agent, possible lover of God, and possible object of God's love, i.e. of grace. A necessary condition of love's communion is that lover and beloved genuinely be other-than one another. Otherwise it is not a relation in which another is loved but rather absorbed and annihilated. Each human being really is human, yet really is not any other human being. It *is* human, it subsists in virtue of its soul and not of its bodiliness. Form gives existence. But it is in virtue of its bodiliness that it is particularized in contradistinction to other human lives. Grace engages a human being as a terminal individual to which bodiliness is intrinsically necessary.

Furthermore, the analysis of the formal structure of created human being shows it to be an integral body-soul unity-in-*harmony*, not a unity-in-dialectical-tensions. This has important consequences for understanding how grace engages us. The soul " fits " the body: It has the type of body it needs, not because the act of understanding requires an organ but because it requires sensation. Furthermore, the type of body the soul has involves human life in no tension with the network of inter-related bodies that comprise its environing world. Nor does it import any such tension into human life: " Such a body " as the human soul actuates " has a dignity of its own precisely in that it is not one of the opposites at strife in the world. In this it bears some resemblance to the heavenly bodies" (Ia. 76, *5* .

It is significant that Thomas holds that the senses by which we are engaged in the world all " build on touch " (Ia. 76, 5) . " Hands-on " engagement with the " other " is as necessary for human life as is irreducible " otherness" itself. What underlies all rationally empowered engagement with the world is not the relatively detached, sensing-at-a-distance senses like sight and hearing, but the most intensely sensuous of senses. So too in the intellectual soul's act: existential otherness is a necessary condition, but so is formal identity. For Thomas the "other-

ness " that human life requires does not entail distancing or tension that must then be overcome. And it certainly does not entail" estrangement".

Hence the body is not an impediment to the soul, a container in tension with the soul because it holds back the soul's yearning to exercise the infinite range of its capacities. Rather it is the integral body-soul unity that is situatedly open to the world. The proper object of knowledge for rationally empowered bodily life as created is the world of other creaturely bodies. A human being cognitively engages the world from the perspective of his bodily location employing distinctively human rational capacities. In that placement it is limitlessly "open". *Qua* intellective soul it has "infinite range". *Qua* bodily it has brain and hands " which are the tools of tools, for with them man can make a limitless range of tools with a limitless range of activities" (Ia. 76, *5* ad 4). Situatedness and openness are dialectically related. Body and soul are in integral unity in regard to *both.* The relation between the two is not a relation-in-tension.

Thus in virtue of God's relating to it as its Creator, human being is itself inwardly ordered and is set into an ordered context. Body is ordered to soul, lower powers to higher, individual human life to objects of knowledge and to ends to be pursued. The order is hierarchical, but as created it is harmonious. Rationally empowered bodily life is not constituted by tension or conflict. Hence grace does not engage human life primarily to reconcile such tensions, although when such tension is generated by sin grace does also reconcile it. Nor does grace find in one pole rather than another of some tension within human life or between human life and its world the "point of contact" where it engages human being.

When we asked how grace engages us in terms of God's relation to us as our Consummator, i.e. under the aspect of the order of *finality* in which we are constituted *concrete human persons,* we learned that grace so engages us *in* our bodiliness that our acts are at once free and preveniently moved by God

the Holy Spirit. When we asked how *that* could be, our focus was shifted to examine life in terms of God's relation to us as our Creator, i.e. under the aspect of the *formal-* order in which we are constituted *particular human beings.* So what does this formal analysis of human being tell us about the conditions in us of the possibility of our acts being both free and divinely moved? And, more narrowly, what is the role of the body in these conditions?

Formal analysis of human being in terms of its relation as creature to Creator does not so much answer these questions as call for their reformulation. The analysis of human being as rationally empowered bodily life shows that there is no one element or abstractable feature of the body-soul unity that is the point at which grace gets a purchase on us. Grace is not, of course, itself a body that might impact us in virtue of our bodiliness. It is not literally a " medicine of immortality ". Nor is it a possible object of experience that might engage the physical sense organs. Equally important, grace is not a possible object of intentional consciousness, nor yet a purely formal object of intellectual intuition by the soul. In the modern sense of "spiritual", i.e. having to do with the life of our consciousness and intentional rational reflection, grace has no greater affinity for the spiritual aspect of human life than it has for the bodily aspect. For grace is not entitative at all. So it cannot be an object causally affecting us, nor a possible object of either sensation or understanding. It is God's *act* (" sanctifying grace" as" operative grace"). The act does indeed have effects in us (" habitual grace ") , and leads to our engaging in certain kinds of outward behavior in concert with it (" cooperative grace"). But for Thomas grace is *primarily* God's action on us, not an entity God gives (Ia2ae. 111, 2).

This rules out any effort to explain the way grace engages us by drawing an analogy with the way an offer or a warning can engage us in our freedom. Grace might be likened to a message making a promise (" proclamation of the Word ") which we can hear and understand and then are free to accept or reject.

Or it might be likened to an illness or accident sent providentially to awaken us from our indifference and inattentiveness to God, events we are free to heed or ignore. In such cases the prevenience of grace can be explained as the fact that the proclamation or the providential jolt came before we could ask for them and without our earning them. Clearly grace that is prevenient in that fashion in no way threatens to violate our freedom. However, Thomas recognizes that such analogies for grace's engagement of us in our freedom carry with them the logic of " Pelagianism ". Their root error lies in likening grace to some extrinsic entity. God's grace is better understood as God's act. It engages a human life as an integral body-soul whole in order to destine and bring it to consummation. But in what manner?

What formal analysis of human being constituted by God's relating to it as its Creator provides is an analogy for the way God's relating to us as Consummator engages us. God's creative act grounds not only human being's "what", its essential structure, but also its "that ", its act of existing. From the creature's perspective, God's relating to it as Creator must be thought of as continuously active because the creature is continuously dependent on God for existence. So God's creative act does not engage any element or aspect of human being. It *constitutes* the creature. The human creature has free will. Its dependence relation on God for existence is not a violation of that freedom. Rather, it is a structural condition of its freedom being what it is. In particular, it constitutes it as the freedom of a living body that can provide itself its own ends but is not free to choose its first principles or its ultimate good. Being bodily, being given first principles in whose light to understand, and being given an ultimate end in whose light to assess lower-order ends are constitutive of its freedom, not violations of it. God's relating to the creature as its *Creator* is intrinsic to the creature's being.

So too, in a way, God's destining and consummating grace does not engage a human life in virtue of any feature of created

human being. Rather, the relation is an act whereby rationally empowered bodily life is constituted in a way distinguishable from its constitution by creation. What is constituted is a bodily life empowered by participation in divine nature to have as its object of understanding, not simply the world of created bodies which are its proper objects by creation, but also the essence of God by intellectual vision. What is thus constituted includes a soul, the principle of understanding. But this soul nonetheless is the life principle of a *body.* Thus it is less one-sided to say that what is constituted in a distinct way by God's relating to it as its *Consummator* is a body-soul unity *in* its integral otherness, in its inner harmony, in its harmonious integration with the world. The body is engaged in this no less than the soul. Neither has any privileged role to play in the engagement. For it is simply the whole, integral rationally empowered bodily life that is engaged.

Accordingly, *granted* that a human being is constituted in this way, it is a bodily life which in its internally harmonious sensory-intellectual life and in its harmonious transactions with the world is empowered to apprehend the presence of the graciously consummating God in everything that is sensed and understood. All creaturely objects of sense experience and of knowledge are both themselves, i.e. finite creaturely realities, and analogues of the grace and beauty of God. So too, granted that a human being is constituted in this way, it is a bodily life whose every intentional action is at once freely chosen and freely chosen as the bodily enactment of a life-project whose concrete "how" is God's own love for God, the act of the Holy Spirit. In this mode of life, precisely because it is a distinct mode of *bodily* life, human bodies, both one's own body and bodiliness of one's fellow creatures, are sacrament energy systems, palpable analogues and means of grace all of which they precisely are *not* when considered only under the aspect of God's relation to them as their Creator. In that regard, they are simply themselves, finite acts of existence planted out by the infinite *Esse,* formally ordered to one another in intelligible

patterns but not as such ordered to the end of making and consummating concrete *personal* lives.

The Dialectical Movement

Note how the movement of Thomas's thought is implicitly dialectical. The way in which grace engages us in our bodiliness according to Thomas must be understood in the context of the interplay between God's relation to us as our Creator and God's relation to us as our Consummator. We began the exploration by noting that in the order of finality consummation is prior to creation. In that context our question became: *Whom* does grace engage in their bodiliness? Thomas's answer was: Concrete human *persons,* i.e. bodily agents whose concrete personhood is a life-project of self-making through enactments of a particular" how". They have concrete personhood precisely *in* these acts. Understood that way, our engagement by redemptive grace clearly is an engagement of us *in* our bodiliness. However, when we asked *how* grace engages human persons the answer was obscure, focused on the soul, and seemed to make body irrelevant to the engagement. In order to understand the explanation of how grace engages human persons it was necessary to understand the formal or essential structure of human *being.* Focus shifted from the destinedness of creatures to the creatureliness of the destined. In order of formality, creation is prior to consummation. In this context the question of who is engaged by grace turns into the question *what* does grace engage? What is the formal structure of that which God creates such that it exists and is patient to being begraced? The answer was that human beings are rationally empowered bodily lives. But their structure as body-soul unities is not what constitutes the conditions of the possibility of their being engaged by grace. Rather their structure as essence-having-existence constitutes that condition. Grace, God's act of relating to us as our Consummator, is " act" analogous to the sense in which God's relating to us as our Creator is an "act" "giving" us existence. It is as intrinsic

to human being as is God's creative act. Like God's creative act, it does not violate human being, especially in its freedom. Rather grace itself constitutes the condition of the possibility of a certain type of human freedom. What distinguishes the bodily life of which grace is the condition is that, unlike the type of human life constituted by creation, it is bodily life empowered with rational and volitional powers ordered to the self-making of concrete persons whose reality is a life-project of acts enacting a particular "how", ultimately consummated in intellectual vision of God. Thus the question, What does grace engage? turns back into the question, Whom does grace engage?

In short, the theological account of us in our bodiliness circles back and forth between analysis of us as concrete human *persons* and analysis of us as particular human *beings.* It does so because "human person" and "human being" are each theologically explained by the interplay between two ways in which God relates to us which together constitute us; and *that* interplay itself circles back and forth between (i) the priority of God as Consummator to God as Creator when we are described under the aspect of finality, and (ii) the priority of God as Creator to God as Consummator when we are described under the aspect of formal order. Neither mode of description can be identified with nor reduced to the other. A theologically adequate account of human being in its bodiliness simply has to exhibit them both in their dialectical interplay.

III. *Concrete Monism*

Barth's account of the movement which is the embracing context of our lives has precisely the same plot line as did Thomas's account. It is this similarity in plot line that makes it plausible to see Barth's account too as a gloss on Eph. 1: 5-6. It is a movement of reality other than God out from God and then, through diverse adventures, back to God. For Barth this movement is rooted in God's primal intention in love to enter into covenant communion with reality other than God

analogous to the communion among the " Three Persons " which constitutes the inner life of the Triune Godhead. The proper form of that communion is Incarnation. Dependent on it and analogous to it is communion with the Incarnate Word's human family. God's act *ad extra* to realize covenant fellowship is God's work as Consummator. Dependent on and derivative from that is God's act *ad extra* as Creator, since in order for there to be covenant community, partners must be real and such that they are capable of responding gladly in love. Hence there is a movement of reality other than God " away " from God to a " far country " which is then brought back to God in the consummation of the covenant in Jesus Christ. For human beings the return takes place in a kind of knowing. A human being " *is* as he is responsible before God, and thus has a share in the Word of God and therefore in God Himself-a creaturely share in a creaturely manner, but nonetheless, a real share ... Thus real man is the being who in this process of knowledge both is himself (in the movement from God) and posits himself (in the movement of return to Him) " (CD III/2 177; my emphasis) .[6]

Of course this movement can only be described in images used analogically, for it consists of enactments of God's intentions. More exactly, it can be described only in stories which use images analogically and are themselves useable only as parables. Thomas's account of the relation of God's grace to human bodily life has its home in the larger story of the emanation of created being from creative Being, and its return to that Source by way of a kind of assimilation. It is told using analogically the language of metaphysical cosmology. Barth rejects use of any cosmology's conceptual scheme on the grounds that they assume that Creator and creature can be comprehended in a single system of description and explanation. The doctrine of Creation explicitly says that they cannot be held together in thought that way because creation marks an onto-

6 All references to the *Church Dogmatics* are to Vol. III/I and III/2 (Edinburgh, 1958 and 1960).

logical gulf that cannot be comprehended from an overarching and "neutral" point of view. Barth's account of the relation of God's grace to human bodily life has its home in the larger story of God's intention to establish a two-party covenant, along with its necessary infra-structures, a threatened rupture by estrangement from the side of one party, and covenant fellowship's eventual realization through reconciliation from the side of the other party. It is told by using analogically the language of social relationships and social institutions and the institution-creating power of promise-making and promise-keeping. It is obvious that these differences in the *ways* in which the context of our lives is narrated could lead to radically different material theological claims about human life and its bodiliness. However, I shall argue, the content of Barth's anthropology is in fa.ct remarkably similar to Thomas's.

Where Barth is most deeply divided from Thomas it follows from his rejection of the distinction between " being" and " operations ". He cannot adopt the distinction in human life between " root principle of life " (or " soul ") and "principle of actions " (or " powers ") . In terminology I was using, Barth cannot distinguish between talking about us as " human beings" and as" human persons". We simply *are* human persons who have their "being" *in* their "acts". In this Barth is a modern thinker for whom the most important relevant development in Western intellectual culture since the 18th century has been the "turn to the subject". Any effort by a modern theologian to ignore that change and attempt to repristinate a pre-17th century way of talking about human life would simply be engaging in a slightly precious fantasy of living in an exotic culture. However, as has been well advertised, Barth is profoundly critical of all "subjectivizing" versions of the turn to the subject. The human subject is not constituted by the affections, nor by the dynamics of the " personality' '. Barth rejects" psychological" anthropology. Nor is the human subject constituted by *a 'JYl'iori* conditions of the possibility of human experience as they may be identified by an analysis of

consciousness. Barth rejects a " phenomenological " anthropology generated by transcendental deduction from experience. His objection to both is that they leave out of account our relationship with the real God (e.g. III/fl/123). And *that* is precisely what-and finally *all that-theological* anthropology has to celebrate as ontologically decisive for human subjecthood. They both leave the God-relation out of account precisely because it is not available to us by way of analysis of our experience, neither directly by " introspection " nor by a " phenomenological " method that " finds " the subject indirectly through analysis of the conditions of the possibility of its objects.

Barth's countermove is ingenious. He assumes that for Christians it is Jesus Christ, God Incarnate, who is decisive for all understanding of God's relation with what is not God. He then proposes to discover the decisive conditions of human subjecthood by analysis of *Jesus's* relation to God. At this point Barth takes more seriously than had Thomas the fact that Eph. 1: *5-6* explicitly says that God's sending us out and calling us back in love is all done "in Jesus Christ". Although, as we have noted, he has rejected a cosmological framework for anthropology, Barth explicitly insists that this Christological framework yields " an ontology of man " (III/fl 6). But it does so by a reversal of the usual procedure. The traditional way of which Thomas is an instance was " to try first to establish generally what human nature is, and then on that basis to interpret the human nature of Jesus Christ in particular." Rather than going from the general to the particular, Barth proposes to move from the particular to the general. However, Barth stresses, " there can be no question of a direct . . . deduction of anthropology from Christology " (III/fl, 47). The differences between Jesus Christ and the rest of us are too great to permit that. At most, the move from analysis of Jesus as " human " to us must be by analogy.

More exactly, we can correctly grasp the conditions of the possibility of human subjecthood, not when we grasp analogies

between Jesus's human "being" and our "being", but when we grasp the analogies between relationships that constitute Jesus and relationships that constitute us. These relations, it can be shown, are rooted in the interplay between God's relating to Jesus as Creator and Consummator. It is to the interplay of those relations that we must look for an answer to the question, What are the anthropological implications, especially regarding our bodies, of our engagement by redemptive grace?

This is precisely what Barth sets out to do in CD 111/2. He takes the Biblical picture of Jesus Christ, rather than the Biblical picture of Adam, as exemplary of human personhood in its full richness undistorted by the consequences of sin and evil. After an introduction to the task and agenda of theological anthropology, Barth undertakes a bi-focal analysis of the humanity of Jesus in order to identify the conditions of his human subjecthood which are analogically also the conditions of our subjecthood. First, he considers the question, What are the anthropological implications of Jesus's engagement by grace *from without?* (Pgh. 44, " Man as The Creature of God " and Pgh. 45, "Man in His Determination as the Covenant-Partner of God ") . He then in effect re-examines the same relation under a different aspect, asking: What are the anthropological implications of Jesus' engagement by grace *from within?* (Pgh. 46, "Man as Soul and Body"). They tum out to be explorations of the interplay of Creation and Consummation under two aspects.

Conditions of Subjecthood" From Without"

Both the " reality " and the " being " of the human person Jesus are constituted by God's relating to him in grace understood as an act. " Real " and " being " are concepts used with such remarkable consistency and precision by Barth that they need to be treated as quasi-technical, indeed metaphysical concepts.

It is significant that Barth begins by asking what constitutes our " reality ". Human subjects are as " substantial " for

Barth as they are for Thomas. Barth uses " real " here as the contrast term to " apparent " or " phenomenal ". He is concerned at the outset to rule out ontological relativism and skepticism. " Reality " is not to be reduced to a construct of " phenomena " which is relative to the location and perspective of the creatively constructing consciousness to which the phenomena "appear". No, Christian faith is in the business of making reality claims, in this case about human subjecthood. Barth understands this to entail the ontological judgment that human subjects are terminal in the order of predication such that while things may be predicated of them they cannot be predicated of anything else (order of truth) , terminal in the order of explanation and accountability for behavior (moral order), and terminal in the order of affection, delighted in for their own sake and not for their utility (order of beauty). Thus far Barth agrees entirely with Thomas that human beings" subsist ".[7]

What constitutes the human Jesus's substantial reality? His reality is constituted by the fact that God relates to him as genuine "other " in the mode of covenant communion called "incarnation". The relation constitutes Jesus's "that", his "reality". For Barth this relation can be adequately described

[7] This permits Barth to introduce a distinction between the "concrete reality " of human subjects, on the one hand, and "aspects " of our subjecthood that may be " abstracted" *from* our concrete reality for reasons of convenience in intellectual work. The latter he calls " phenomena " of the human. This provides a framework within which to understand the relation between theological claims, e.g. about human subjecthood, and claims from the several arts and sciences. It also is the cornerstone of a Barthian theology of culture. In a brilliant series of studies Barth explores sympathetically and with wonder claims about human life from the life-sciences, social sciences and existential phenomenology to show how they do relate *positively* to Christian doctrine (III/2, 79-132). All of the latter ("phenomena") may also be "symptoms" of real human subjecthood. Barth's point is that one can only identify what it is in them that truly is "symptomatic" if one already has in hand adequate criteria of human "reality" (III/2, 76; 72). But one cannot reverse the movement of thought and infer the criteria of human "reality" *from* the "phenomena". Without the criteria one would not know what features to select out of the welter of information the phenomena provide.

only in terms of historical acts. In the picture presented by the New Testament witnesses," the real man Jesus is the working Jesus. They never seem to have thought of a human being beyond history or ... transcending history" (III/2 58). He has his reality *in* his acts. For Barth, these acts also ontologically constitute the hypostatic union. The same metaphysical maxim must be used of God as is used of Jesus: God has being *in* God's acts. The Incarnation is constituted by the fact that the same acts are at once the enactments of human and divine intentions in which both a man and God have being. Hence the fact that Jesus" is a person, that He is the soul of a body, that He has time and so on does not make Him a real man. It merely indicates His possibility as man. He becomes and is real, and is there as such as God is there to Him ..." (III/2, 69). The relation that constitutes Jesus's reality as human subject is the relation God takes to a man in the Incarnation.

In Barth's usage "being" is to "reality" as "what" is to " that ". " Being " designates the basic formal structure of human subjecthood. Since Jesus has his reality *in* his acts, his " being " is the basic pattern informing his acts. It designates the basic pattern of "how". "What" and "how" collapse into one when there is no real distinction between " being " and "operations", "essence" and "virtue". Jesus's "being" consists simply of his "fellow-humanity". The acts in which he has his reality are all acts for others (II/2, 208). This other-relatedness, Barth insists, is " something ontological " in the man Jesus. It is the " supreme constant ", the form or " what " of human subjecthood that cannot be lost or changed even in consequence of sin (III/2, 206). The most basic *form* of Jesus's humanity, the form that informs every other constant, is sociality.

For Barth, " reality " is to " being " as " consummation " is to" creation." God's active relating to Jesus which constitutes Jesus's reality is the enactment of God's primal intention, viz. God's eternal intention to enter into covenant communion with reality other than God. It is grace, i.e. an intentional act by

God in utterly free love. It is primal in that all of God's other intentional acts *ad extra* are logically and ontologically dependent on it. Hence for Barth God's Incarnation in history is not first of all the means by which, given the absurd fact of sin, God's destining grace becomes redemptive. Rather, the eternal decision to be Incarnate is the ultimate *telos* of God's destining grace to whose consummation all else is ordered. In the human subject Jesus it *is* consummated. There the covenant communion God intended eternally has been actualized, and the covenant relation posits Jesus, constitutes his "reality", his "that". Now a necessary condition of a covenant communion is that there be a genuinely *other* reality with which to commune. Consummation entails creation. Since the hallmark of covenant communion is joyful love, this must be a reality capable of wholehearted self-regulated response. Hence, God creates Jesus *as* a self-positor-for-others. Note that where Thomas correlates our "how" with consummation and "what" and "that" with creation, Barth correlates "that" with consummation and "what" and "how" with creation.

What are the anthropological implications of *our* engagement by redemptive grace? To begin with, starting with the particular case of Jesus directs our attention away from ourselves in our search for an answer. The conditions of the possibility of engagement by grace do not lie in the structures of our subjecthood. God's relating to us in grace constitutes our subjecthood rather than our supposing it and its antecedent structures. Furthermore, it is in one respect an engagement from "outside", an engagement mediated by the concrete historical conditions of life.

Next, the particular case of Jesus shows us the two ways in which God so relates to us from without as to engage us redemptively. First our "reality", i.e. our substantial individuality, our "that-ness", is to be understood on analogy with Jesus's "reality". Formally it is identical with Jesus's: Our "reality" is constituted by God's relating to us in covenant communion. Further, the metaphysical maxim that applies to

Jesus applies to us too: We have our reality *in* our historical acts. Materially, however, it is a quite different mode of relationship, analogous to Jesus's relation to God, not identical to it. Jesus's relation to God is unique. Only with him in Incarnation does God relate to a human subject in unmediated covenant communion. God relates to us as Consummator of the eternal goal of covenant only indirectly. It is mediated *by* Jesus's humanity. Jesus as God Incarnate *is,* quite concretely and uniquely *is,* the relation between us and God as our Consummator. God's relation to us as Consummator consists in our historical relationship with Jesus. That historical relationship is not accidental to our reality. It is ontologically constitutive of it. " The whole sphere of man," Barth writes, " his whole fellowship and history, is basically determined and distinguished by the existence of the one man Jesus ... " (III/2, **141).**

To speak more exactly, since our reality is in our acts it is the history of our human acts that constitutes our derivative and analogical participation in covenant communion by participating in Jesus's primary and proper participation in covenant communion. These are acts of " responsibility ", of grateful response to God's active and inviting expression of love to us in Jesus the Word. Thus the reality of human subjecthood "is an answer, or more precisely, a being lived in the act of answering" (III/2,175).

Second, the particular case of Jesus shows that our" being", i.e. the basic form or " what " of the " how " of concrete acts in which we have our reality, is to be understood on analogy with Jesus's "being". Formally, it is identical with Jesus's: Our "being" consists of our "self-positing" or self-regulating and self-making precisely as "being with others" (III/2, 248; 245). Furthermore, our" being", like Jesus's, is constituted by God's relating to us as Creator. It is distinct from what is constituted by God's relating to us as Consummator of the goal of covenant communion. "[W] e are covenant partners by nature. This does not mean that we are covenant-partners of

God, but to be His covenant-partners, to be His partners in the history which is the goal of His Creation, and in which His work as Creator finds its consummation and fulfillment " (III/2, 320). Materially, however, our " being" is analogical to and not identical with Jesus's. God relates directly to the man Jesus as his Creator. God's relation to us as our Creator is indirect, ontologically mediated by God's relation to Jesus as his Creator. Our creation is ontologically dependent on God's logically prior decision to create the man Jesus, which is itself ontologically dependent on the logically prior primal decision to enter into covenant communion with a genuine and joyfully responsible " other ". Our " what " and " how " are constituted by a relation with God from " without " mediated by God's objective relation to Jesus.

Consequently the relations which comprise our "fellow-humanity " are only analogical with the relations that comprise Jesus's fellow-humanity. Jesus's fellow-humanity is exhaustive, a set of one-way non-reciprocal relations (III/2, 243). But ours consists of mutual relations which Barth sketches in a moving and penetrating phenomenology of reciprocal I-Thou relations (III/2, 245-271). In a notorious passage,[8] Barth takes the "structural differentiation" (III/2, 286), as he calls it, of humankind into male and female to be the " original form" (III/2, 290) of the irreducible otherness of I and Thou. Thus for Barth the " what " of our " how " consists of reciprocal but ordered I-Thou relationships for which a certain pattern of heterosexual relationship is paradigmatic and normative. They constitute our "being" analogous to Jesus's non-reciprocal relation with his covenant people as their Lord and Savior, which constitutes his human "being" analogous to the relations which comprise the inner life of the Triune God-

[8] It is " notorious" because it appears to confuse anatomical differences with differences between men and women in psychological and social roles, despite Barth's explicit good intentions not to do so (III/2, 287-8). As a result he seems to elevate culturally and historically conditioned patterns of relationship between men and women to the status of divinely established norms.

head. Thus, to move in the opposite direction along the line of analogous relations, Jesus is the Image of God in the proper sense and we, by analogies between the relations that comprise our "being" and the relations that comprise Jesus's being, are also and derivatively in the image of God. Throughout " there can be no question of analogy of being, but of relationship " (III/2, 234) .

Conditions of Subjecthood "From Within"

Thus far Barth's account of the transcendental conditions of human subjecthood has been ontological. It is an account of conditions of our subjecthood that lie "outside us". God's relating to us as our Consummator and as our Creator in their interplay posit us in our" reality" and in our "being". More precisely, these relations simply consist in the fact that in Jesus of Nazareth God is with us in history bringing to consummation God's eternal intention to enter into covenant communion with an "other". Thus these conditions of our "reality" and " being " are like an encompassing environment outside us whose relation to us posits us. But Barth has also said that God posits us as *self-* positors. God's relating "from outside" posits us precisely as having our reality and being *in* acts that are truly *our* acts, acts in which we engage in self-making, acts that are freely and rationally self-regulated. To discuss this is to discuss the conditions of the *concreteness* of our individual "hows". To elucidate that Barth shifts focus and re-describes precisely the same two ways in which God relates to us as conditions of subjecthood "from within". He does this by redescribing God's ways of relating to us in terms, not of God's relation in history through the Incarnate Word, but-as does Thomas-in terms of God's relating through the indwelling Holy Spirit: not solely God among us in history, but God within us, and neither one without the other.

The striking thing about his discussion of the presence of the Spirit is that Barth insists on discussing the presence of the Spirit not in that about us which might be thought in-

corporeal, the "soul", say, or "consciousness" or "human spirit", but rather in the human subject as a living body. Barth classifies his view of the living human body as "concrete monism" (111/2, 393).

It is a "monism" in contradistinction to all types of dualisms. Barth's attack on dualistic analyses of the human subject is reminiscent of Gilbert Ryle's critique of the doctrine of "the ghost in the machine" (111/2, 393). Barth's rejection of dualistic descriptions involves a denial of any real distinction between "body" and "soul". Of neither can it be said that it subsists. It is the whole human subject that is "real". "Body" and "soul", he says, are "analytic" concepts (111/2, 350). What they analyze is the "what" of the particular "how" in which each of us is "real". Barth's explication of each concept is reminiscent of P. F. Strawson's analysis of the concept" person". "Body" and "soul" seem each to name a different family of predicates that may be ascribed to the same terminal individual: the living human subject. "Body" names the family of predicates that characterize a human subject as both material body, "a spatio-material system of relations" (111/2, 377), and as organic life, self-regulating to some degree (111/2, 378). These predicates, Barth says, describe in detail how our "being" comes in a certain "nature" (111/2, 325). "Soul" names the family of predicates that characterize a human subject as capable of "independent life", i.e. "action, self-movement, self-activity, self-determination" (111/2, 374). These predicates, Barth says, describe in detail how our "being" actually "exists" (111/2, 325), i.e. is self-posited or self-made in a particular "how". Above all Barth is concerned to insist that the terminal human subject is an irreducible integral whole, "the soul of his body" (111/2, 351; 366-370).

In this Barth is perhaps even closer to a "naturalistic" view of the human subject than is Thomas's Aristotelian view. Barth's rejection of Thomas's doctrine of subsistent soul and his denial of any real distinction within the human subject leave him with a living organism capable of rationally self-

regulating intentional actions. That, in all its bodiliness, is what is engaged by redemptive grace as it is posited in covenant communion with God. Barth's stress that this" monism" is *concrete,* however, distinguishes it from any truly naturalistic position. The concreteness of a human subject consists of its particular self-made existence or "how". The hallmark of distinctively human life is that it is at once a bodily life and in charge of that bodily life (III/2, 852-3). There are, of course, an indefinitely large number of degrees and of ways in which to be in charge of one's life. Each constitutes a definite " how ", a concrete existence. They may all be characterized as different ways in which to be related to oneself. That relation is not a given. It is constituted by the subject's free embodied intentional acts. It is constantly open to change. Accordingly it is always possible that a subject will *mis-relate* to itself, thereby distorting its " being ". It is a dialectical relation, marked by tension even in its ideal and non-distorted modes.

This is the point at which the interior *a priori* condition of subjecthood can be identified. The central theological claim, in Barth's view, is that the transcendental condition of our "concreteness", of our entering into some particular self-relation, is not freedom but the presence of the Holy Spirit. The condition of self-relatedness is God-relatedness. "Spirit in His Being *ab extra* " does not name some entity either creaturely or divine, but is " God's operation in relation to His creature." "We cannot say that Spirit is, but that He takes place . . . . " (III/2, 856). So the Holy Spirit is not a structural feature of human subjectivity. It is the act of God's grace. But when and as it occurs, the " presence " of the Spirit *is* God relating to the human creature. One is not a subject unless one is self-related. But, even if one is self-related, one is not yet a human subject unless one is self-related in the context of or as a function of being God-related *by virtue of God's* gracious, prevenient relating *to* one. This is Barth's functional equivalent of a" supernatural existential".

For Barth it is the same pair of relations, as was described

above in terms of God's presence among us in history as the Incarnate Word. It is merely described now under a different aspect or, perhaps better, it is appropriated to a different Person of the Triune Godhead. It is God relating to us in an utterly interior way, present to us more intimately than we are to ourselves. It is a relation that ontologically constitutes us, and in two ways. As God the Holy Spirit relating to us as our *Creator,* it constitutes us in " being", i.e. in regard to the "what" of our "how", not merely formally ("fellow-humanity-in-general ") but *concretely* (" Covenant-partner-with-just-these-neighbors-in-just-these-ways "). As God the Holy Spirit relating to us as the *Consummator* of the eternal goal of covenant-communion, it constitutes us in " being " in relation to God not merely formally (" covenant-partner-with-God"), but *concretely* ("having-being-in-acts-of-responsive-gladness-and-gratitude "). Thus the condition of our being engaged by redemptive grace is not that we have a subsisting and immortal soul, as it was for Thomas, but that human subjecthood is constituted by a dialectic but of rationally empowered bodily life relating to itself (n.b.: *not* a dialectic of soul relating to body).

In arguing this Pneumatico-centric line Barth has by no means abandoned his Christocentric method. The pattern of the movement of his thought shows that. He begins with an analysis of the Biblical picture of Jesus in *his* concreteness as paradigmatic of all human subjects. In Barth's view that picture stresses Jesus's monistic concreteness: That he is "soul of his body ", that he has his " being " in his intentional bodily acts, that in so doing he is in charge of his own life, that the condition of that is the presence to him of the Holy Spirit (III/2, 325-341). Jesus's relation to the Holy Spirit was unique (III/2, 333-335). Nonetheless, in the second moment in the movement of his thought, Barth argues that it provides the criteria by which to discern analogous relationship between the Spirit and the rest of us as we are caught up in reconciliation, i.e. as God relates to us as Consummator of the goal of covenant fellowship in new concrete "hows" in our lives (III/2,

344-359). In a third moment Barth relies on criteria provided by that analysis to identify ways in which we are constituted by the Spirit's relating to us as our Creator that are the "external conditions" of the ways in which the Spirit relates to us as our Consummator 359-366). It is on that basis Barth then finally develops his extensive analysis of us as souls of our bodies.

The Undialectical Movement

Note the curious way in which the movement of Barth's thought about the anthropological implications of our engagement by redemptive grace is markedly less dialectical than Thomas's. He agrees with Thomas that grace's engagement of us in our bodiliness must be understood in the context of the interplay between creation and consummation. Barth describes that interplay in two different ways, first under the aspect of God's relating to us from without by being one among many of our companions in history as the Word Incarnate and so a part, albeit the ontologically decisive part, of the context of our lives; second under the aspect of God's relating to us from within by the presence of the Holy Spirit. According to both descriptions God's relating to us as Consummator is prior logically and ontologically to God's relating to us as Creator in the order of finality. In this Barth agrees with Thomas, but adds that this is said to be true in the proper sense of the man Jesus and then derivatively and by analogy is said of the rest of us.

In this Barth is consistent with a thesis he developed in CD III/I, "The Work of Creation". "The covenant," Barth says, " is the goal of creation and creation is the way to the covenant" (III/I, 97). As its goal, "the covenant is the internal basis of creation ... The fact that the covenant is the goal of creation is not something which is added later to the reality of the creature, as though the history of creation might equally well have been succeeded by any other history" than the one that has resulted in the consummation of that goal in

the Incarnation (III/I, 281). No, creation is *destined* for consummation in covenant. On the other hand, "Creation is not itself the covenant" (III/I, 97) As the *way* to the Covenant, "creation is the external ... basis of the covenant" (III/I, 97). That consists in the fact that creation makes the consummation of love in covenant communion "technically possible" (III/I, 97). "Creation sets the stage for the story of the covenant of grace" (III/I, 48) providing, we might say, the infra-structure that is required by the movement toward consummation of covenant. God's relating to us as Creator is active grace entailed by God's relating as Consummator, but does not itself entail Consummation. Consummation is the root and final act of grace.

Accordingly for Barth, as for Thomas, the question to be put in this context is, who is engaged by grace? And the answer is, Human persons precisely in their bodiliness. "Persons", because grace engages us in covenant communion precisely as self-makers, as ones who have their "reality"' in their embodied enactment of intentions. "In their bodiliness", because grace engages us precisely in the "form of being" in which we are constituted by God's relating to us as Creator *in the service* of relating to us as Consummator of covenant commumon.

However, when we turn to the formal order, Barth differs from Thomas. For Thomas, creation is prior to consummation in the formal order. In virtue of God's relating to us as our Creator, our being is set in certain relations and ordered to certain ends that are integral to their creaturely being and are not ordered to the end of intellectual vision of God. For that reason, Thomas suggests that God's relation to us as our Consummator is an act strictly analogous to God's relation to us as our Creator. It does not presuppose conditions in us but rather itself constitutes the conditions of our being and being in a certain "how". Thus the question, "What is it about our bodiliness that is the condition of the possibility of our engagement by redemptive grace"? cannot be answered precisely

because it is formulated on a mistaken assumption (viz. that there can be " conditions " for that engagement. In contrast, for Barth even in the formal order consummation is prior to creation. Creatures have defining form, to be sure. They have "being", the "what" of their "hows". They also have genuine " reality " other than and over against God. But they do not have any intrinsic structure simply in virtue of God's relating to them as their Creator. Their" being" is what it is entirely in virtue of its being ordered to the end of the consummation of covenant fellowship. Here is a place where Barth is non-dialectical and Thomas dialectical. For Thomas the order between creation and consummation is dialectically related to whether one is considering humankind under the aspect of the formal order or the final order. For Barth the order is always the same. Consummation is prior to creation as much in the formal as in the final order. "There is no independent teleology of the creature", Barth writes (that is, independent of the end of covenant-communion) " introduced with the creature and made its own" (III/I, 94). That is the significance of the fact that the " that ", the subsistence, of the creature, for Barth, is constituted by God's relating to it as its Consummator and not, as it is for Thomas, by God's relating to it as its Creator. This underlies important differences between their respective theologies of the human body.

IV. *Theological Assessments of the Human Body.*

Despite enormous differences in theological method and conceptuality, Thomas and Barth appear to give very similar theological accounts of human subjecthood. They share at lease the following important claims: Christianly understood, a human subject is 1) a rationally empowered bodily life (Thomas: " essence includes soul and body "; Barth: " being" is constituted as " soul of its body") ; 2) is constituted a subsistent terminal individual (Thomas: " substance "; Barth: " real ") by 3) God's active prevenient gracious relating to it in its bodiliness as its Creator (as God the Father) and its

Consummator (as God the Holy Spirit) (Thomas: cosmologically; Barth: in and through the Incarnate Word); 4) such that it is capable of intentional bodily action; 5) which comprise its life-project, the concrete " how " of its being in the world; 6) of whose freedom God's relating to it is no violation but rather the transcendental condition.

Nonetheless there are four important points of difference between these two theological anthropologies that surface when one asks particularily about the role of the body in human subjecthood. The differences seem to he rooted in the way in which each understands the interplay between God's relation to us as our Creator and God's relation to us as our Consummator when our subjecthood is analyzed in the formal order.

One: On Thomas's grounds it is possible to claim that our bodies are intrinsically "sacramental" and "sacral". On Barth's grounds that is impossible. We will consider the two terms "sacramental" and "sacred" separately. Thomas and Barth agree that our bodies are not to be viewed as mere instruments to be valued only on utilitarian grounds. Rather, they are ontologically and functionally integral to us and to our engagement by grace.

If "sacramental" means a "means of redemptive grace", then our bodies are " sacramental " for St. Thomas only as they are related to by God as Consummator. For Thomas this could be said on the grounds that, although sanctifying grace acts on the soul and only on that basis transforms our bodily acts, nonetheless it engages souls through the medium of their bodies. For Barth, only the body of Jesus could conceivably be called "sacramental " in this sense. More properly, however, it is not entities that are the means of grace for Barth but relations. We are analogical to God not in analogy of being but in analogy of relations constituted by grace leading to consummation, not by creation.

If " sacral " means " holy " or the occasion of encounter with "the holy", then Thomas would give us grounds to affirm that

our bodies are " sacral " and Barth grounds to deny it. For Thomas, in virtue of God's creative act our bodies must be said in some way to participate in the richness of God's being formally, though not existentially. Living bodies are analogical to God in an analogy of being. In encountering them we encounter a reflection of the mystery of God's being. So, to apprehend them precisely as creatures is in a way to encounter the holy. However, because for Barth consummation is prior to creation even in the formal order, creatures have no intrinsic nature independent of their being ordered to consummation. They cannot be said to participate the richness of God's being. Rather, they participate the richness of God's relating. Consequently, for Barth encounter with creatures cannot be an encounter with the holy. Our bodies as creatures cannot be said to be" sacral". Indeed, Barth would insist that what the doctrine of creation teaches us is that creatures are simply themselves. They are not transparencies to God. The mystery of their creaturely existence is to be honored in awe and the richness of their being honored in respect. But they are not to be reverenced as holy. That is the honor due only to God. It is not clear what difference, if any, this contrast would entail in actual practice. Barth surely would deny that his position involves a" desacralizing" of the body into a mere instrument, disposable and having only utilitarian value. This difference does not seem of itself to generate important contrasts between Thomas and Barth on ethical questions concerning the body.

Perhaps, however, it generates a contrast between them on questions in " theology of culture ". Both give us theological grounds for delighting in the human body and attending to it seriously as an object of aesthetic value. Thomas would lead us to locate that value partly in the body's " sacral " significance. On that basis aesthetic encounter of the body can be understood as an occasion for encounter with God's holy beauty. By contrast, Barth would tend to give us theological grounds for a more " naturalistic " aesthetic. On this view the human body and depictions of the body are liberated from the burden of " religious " roles as media for encounter with the

holy-including encounter with the holiness of beauty. They are neither transparencies to nor traces of God. They are simply themselves, creaturely and finite, to be honored and enjoyed for their intrinsic creaturely and finite values.

Two: Our theologians agree that redemptive grace engages us precisely in our bodiliness because it engages us in regard to the character of our intentional acts which are always *bodily* actions. In the life-project of those acts, they agree, we constitute ourselves as "persons", constituted as "concrete hows ". At this point our bodies are integral and not merely instrumental to our engagement by grace. They are certainly not obstacles to that engagement. However, Thomas and Barth differ as to whether grace engages our bodiliness-in-action directly or indirectly. Thomas takes it to be indirect. Because he asserts the ontological independence and priority of creation to consummation in analysis of the " what " of human being, he holds that the subsisting form which actuates our "what", i.e. the soul, the root-principle of life, is ontologically prior to and independent of our powers, the root principles of our acts. Accordingly, what grace acts upon directly is the soul and only thereby indirectly engages bodily actions. Barth, on the other hand takes grace to engage our bodily action directly. Because he holds consummation to be prior to creation even in the formal order, he has no grounds for holding that our " what " is a form ordered to ends independent of covenant-fellowship with God. That is, he has no reason to claim a real distinction in us between " being" and " operations ". Grace directly engages us as living bodies precisely engaging us in our living-bodily-acts. Perhaps that enables Barth to give an account of how grace engages us that is more satisfying existentially than Thomas's metaphysically couched account and at the same time more adequate than those officially " extentialist" theological accounts that locate the engagement entirely in the "inner" and " subjective " sphere of " acts of decision" in explicit contrast to an "outer" and "objective" sphere of bodies and their behavior.

Third: Precisely the same difference between Thomas and Barth, however, raises a troubling question about Barth's account of human freedom. Both Thomas and Barth assert our freedom. Both insist that God's active relating to us is the transcendental ontological condition of our freedom, not a potential violation of it. Because he holds that God's creative act constitutes us with a formal order that is independent of what we are ordered to by God's consummating act, Thomas is able to locate the freedom God constitutes in our actuating form, in the soul as God sanctifies it; the powers are ontologically distinct and exercise that freedom without interference. But because Barth holds creation to be secondary to and ordered exhaustively to consummation, he has no basis for a distinction between divinely constituted being and freely exercised powers. Rather, God the Holy Spirit is understood to engage our bodily acts directly and individually. When Barth presses this point it is very difficult not to get the picture that our living bodies are puppets under the Spirit's control or sluices channeling the Spirit's power. In that case grace's direct engagement of us in our bodiliness entails conversion of our bodies into mere instruments of the Spirit, not genuine covenant partners.

Fourth: Our theologians agree that as part of what God creates our bodies are "good". Negatively, that means that being or having bodies does not inherently pose resistance or obstacle to engagement by grace. Nor does it constitute or cause any condition for which we need grace as an antidote. But the way " goodness " is understood positively is importantly different. The difference is rooted in the kind of " form " that we are said to have. Thomas understands that goodness in process terms. It is best described in terms of the harmony that obtains between body and soul in a human subject, analogous to the harmony that marks the processes constituting a healthy organism. A living body after all, is what God creates and it is the subsistent form, the soul, that is prior to and continues independently of whatever end it may also be ordered to by consummation. Barth understands the'" goodness " of the

living body in dialectical terms. He agrees with Thomas that the integral human subject as soul of its body is a living organism. But a human subject is further constituted by its relation to itself. It's "goodness" precisely as bodily is best described in terms of a " tension " (as opposed to a " harmony ") that constantly marks the dialectic of its self-relating. The tension is generated by the always *open* question how and in what degree it will in fact relate to itself. Bodiliness does not of itself account for the question always being open. But it is integral to that openness, since the question is always and only answered in bodily acts. Barth points out that this is different from holding that our bodiliness is inherently hostile to our self-relating. On the other view we are an absurd paradox, constituted by the hopeless project of dialectically relating what cannot be related. By contrast, to say that the " goodness " of having a body is seen in the tension it generates is to say that " it is possible to be a man. To be a man is not an extravagant task necessarily leading to despair" 37z).

This is an important difference in relation to questions about how evil engages human subjects. **If** the body's goodness is the harmony of its integralness to the subject, then evil can only be thought to engage the subject from the outside in a kind of assault or an encircling of the subject in bonds that remain external. However, if the body's goodness is shown in the tension of the dialectic of the integral body-soul unity's self-relating, then the subject can be considered somehow complicit in its engagement by evil, mis-relating to itself in such a way that evil enters into it as a deformation of its interior and self-constituting dialectics and not simply as an exterior bond. At the same time, to understand the body's goodness as tension is to rule out that it is somehow intrinsically alien to subjecthood. That would be a view according to which evil is somehow already ingredient in the subject by its very constitution as something bodily. Perhaps then Barth's is the account of the gqodness of our bodies which is more adequate to the paradox of our experience of engagement by evil as something at once

alien and hostile to our well being, assaulting from without, while nonetheless finding openness and complicity from within us.

The fact that our theologians agree that consummation ultimately overrides creation may suggest, however, that this difference between them in respect to our engagement by evil may be relatively unimportant. It seems that because of that shared judgement the structure of each of these theologies leads, albeit in very different ways, to a thoroughgoingly triumphalist position in regard to evil. Thomas explicates the overriding priority of consummation in cosmological terms. The identity of God as Creator and as Consummator means that the movement of reality from God as Source *inevitably* arrives at its End. Theology may need to assert this, but, as Cornelius Ernst points out, " it may do so as Christian theology only if it continually reminds itself that the God about whom it makes its assertions is a hidden God, only to be felt for by a continually renewed discovery in Christ and his Spirit, a continual rebirth. St. Thomas's metaphysical theology seems to make identification of Origin and Goal in God too easy, to be in this sense a *theologia gloriae rather than a theologia crucis."* [9] Barth explicates the overriding priority of consummation in social imagery. The Incarnation of the Word in the history of acts comprising the life, ministry, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth *is* the realization of God's eternal and primordial intent to enter into covenant communion with reality other than God. That is the embracing context by which our " reality " and " being " are constituted. The fundamental ontological structure of human subjecthood consists of the fact that we all are in fact covenant partners of God. There is no ontological "not yet" to Barth's eschatology. If anything, the consummation is more fully realized according to Barth than it is according to Thomas, for whom the cosmic movement, while certain to reach its destiny, has still some moving on to do. For all his polemics against a *theologia*

9" Introduction", pp. xxvi-xxvii.

gloriae, Barth's theology seems in this regard at least as triumphalist as Thomas's.

Perhaps in both cases the systematic root of the problem has two forks. One may be the decision to reduce God's relating to us as our Redeemer to a side effect of God's relating to us as our Consummator. It might be a fruitful strategy against triumphalism to keep *three,* not two, modes of God-relatedness in dialectical interplay when explicating human subjecthood: Creation, Consummation, and Redemption. For it is explicit in God's relation to us as Redeemer that it is the *present* reality and power of evil, not its ontological possibility nor the grounds of our confidence in its final defeat, that is the central topic which must be taken into account. The other fork may be the tendency to give a single, comprehensive systematic account of the dialectic of the interplay among these ways in which God relates to us. Inappropriate systematization implies that we can be clearer about how God's relations to us all fit together than the limits of finitude and the darkness of sin really allow.

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FERMENT IN PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE:

A Review Discussion *

IT MIGHT SEEM appropriate to begin this survey with the claim that several of the books under discussion document the change that has taken place in philosophy of science since the early 1960s. That would reflect a widespread conception among practitioners in the field. Yet philosophy of science, if one construes the discipline broadly enough, is and always has been a remarkably diverse field-even in the pre-Kuhnian heyday of logical empiricism.

If, as seems reasonable, we take Rudolf Carnap's *Logical Foundations of Probability* (1950) as at once the culmination of the logical positivist program and a point of departure, the first thing to note is that the work appeared only shortly before R. B. Braithwaite's less rigid *Scientific Explanation* (1953) and Stephen Toulmin's even more adventuresome *Philosophy of Science* (1953). And Thomas Kuhn's first contribution, *The Copernican Revolution* (1957), did not follow far behind. N. R. Hanson's *Patterns of Discovery* (1958) and Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1st ed., 1962) virtually coincide with the appearance of Karl Popper's *Logic of Scientifio Discovery* (1959), Ernest Nagel's classic, *The Structure of Science* (1961), and The Library of Living Philosophers volume, *The Philosophy of Rudolf Carnap* (1963). Of course Carl Hempel, in his *Aspects of Scientific Explanation* (1965) and in his useful textbook *Philosophy of Natural Science* (1966), would totally ignore it, but one should not forget Herbert Marcuse's attack on logical empiricism in *One-Dimensional Man* (1964). Other evidence of diversity in the period that ranges right up to the appearance of the books to be discussed here includes two useful historical anthologies, Joseph

Kockelmans's *Philosophy of Science: The Historic<il Background* (1968) and John Losee's *A Historical Introduction to Philosophy of Science* (1st ed., 1972); Mary Hesse's *Models and Analogies in Science* (1966); Jurgen Habermas's *Knowledge and Human Interests* (1971); three works on the discovery process, Nicholas Rescher's *Plausible Reasoning* (1976) and Thomas Nickles's two proceedings volumes, *Scientific Discovery, Logic, and Rationality,* and *Scientific Discovery: Case Studies* (both 1980); not to mention sociologists' " externalist" studies, for instance, Bruno Latour and Stephen Woolgar's *Laboratory Life* (1979), Karin Knorr-Cetina's *The Manufacture of Knowledge* (1981), or John Ziman's tour-de-force, *An Introduction to Science Studies* (1984). These last few items are admittedly late, as is interest in the ethics of science-see, for instance, William Broad and Nicholas Wade, *Betrayers of the Truth* (1st ed., 1982) or William Lowrance, *Modern Science and Human Values* (1985).

Here I will discuss five books-three monographs: Wesley Salmon's *Scientific Explanation and the Causal Structure of the World* (1984), Dudley Shapere's *Reason and the Search for Knowledge* (1983), and John Watkins's *Science and Scepticism* (1984); and two collections: James T. Cushing, C. F. Delaney, and Gary M. Gutting, eds., *Science and Reality: Recent Work in the Philosophy of Science* (1984; a *Festschrift* in honor of Ernan McMullin), and Leroy S. Rouner, ed., *On Nature* (1984; volume 6 of Boston University Studies in Philosophy and Religion) . I will also make reference to Guttorm Fl115istad, ed., *Contemporary Philosophy: A New Survey,* volume Q: *Philosophy of Science* (1982) . The issue I address throughout is continuities and discontinuities in philosophy of science in the 1980s.

AN APPLIED TURN?

The appearance of so many sociological-externalist and ethical studies of the scientific community in recent years has led some reviewers to suggest that there has been an " applied turn " in philosophy of science just as there has been in philos-

ophy generally. There is some evidence of this in the books under review.

For some years now Adolf Griinbaum has turned his formidable analytic skills on psychoanalysis. In " The Hermeneutic Construal of Psychoanalytic Theory and Therapy: An Ill-Conceived Paradigm for bhe Human Sciences " (in *Science and Reality)* , Griinbaum continues this attack. His target in this case is Paul Ricoeur and especially the latter's hermeneutic reading of the Freudian text. According to Griinbaum-and there seems to be ample support for his claim-" Whatever the verdict on its [hermeneutics'] appropriateness to Dilthey's ideographic anti-nomothetic conception of psychology, ... its extrapolation to Freud's nomothetic clinical theory begets conceptual mischief" (p. 80) . 'lihat is, hermeneutics and a subjective approach may be appropriate to psychology in some sense, but to interpret Freud in this fashion is to do him injustice.

Stephen Toulmin, in " Cosmology as Science and as Religion" (in *On Nature)* , continues an effort he has been engaged in for a number of years: " to suggest that we should look again at the case for reinstating *cosmology,* in its older and broader sense as a field of discussion that overlaps the boundaries of science, philosophy, and religion" (p. 28) . Toulmin talks about the era of " postmodern science," and he says it has relevance " not just to mechanics and physiology but to ecology, psychiatry, and cosmology also" and he urges his readers " once again to embrace the basic cosmological vision that the natural universe is, indeed, a fit home for humanity" (p. 41) .

As a somewhat contrary indication, Philip Quinn, in " The Philosopher of Science as Expert Witness" (in *Science and Reality),* concludes a detailed analysis of what happened when philosophers of science applied their talents in the *McLean v. Arkansas* creation-science case in this fashion:

I see no objection in principle to philosophers of science taking the applied turn by serving as expert witnesses. There are sub-

stantial risks . . . [and they] should proceed with care and caution to minimize them. One bad precedent, particularly one so extensively publicized and so apt to arouse passionate feelings, is already one too many (p. 51).

SPECIALIST AREAS

If there is only limited evidence of an applied turn in philosophy of science, and particularly if some of the applications are viewed by other philosophers of science as highly suspect, this still may not settle the questions. Applications take (at least) two forms and traditional empiricist philosophy of science has for years been applied to the philosophy of various branches of science, from physics to the social sciences. I will look briefly at two areas here, philosophy of physics and philosophy of biology.

In *Science and ReaJ,ity,* the editors devote a large portion of the volume to philosophy of physics. They claim that the essays in question-by Larry Landan, Arthur Fine, Nancy Cartwright and Henry Mendell, Bas van Fraassen, and Edward MacKinnon-break new ground by addressing " issues that are often ignored in discussions of scientific realism" (p. 2; the editors view scientific realism itself as a rather " hot " current topic). In fact, Larry Landan says little about physics but suggests going " beyond epistemic realism and relativism " in what amounts to a continuing attack on what he views as Kuhnian (and other versions of) relativism. The topic he addresses is whether either realism or relativism can account for the presumed successes of science. (This issue will come up again in the next section in a discussion of recent work of Ronald Giere). Arthur Fine does a close textual analysis of sayings of Albert Einstein and concludes that whatever realism there is in Einstein is merely " motivational "-an inspiration to dedicate himself to a life of science-and not epistemological. The Cartwright and Mendell contribution is philosophy of physics in a more proper sense, but their McMullin-based conclusion, applying Aristotelian explanatory factors to the analysis of abstract entities in physics, is not likely to be widely

accepted by their fellow philosophers of physics. Nor is Edward MacKinnon's continued effort to find some acceptable meaning of the term " real " to apply to the phenomena of quantum mechanics-swimming as he does against the tide of conventionalism so often found in this area. Bas van Fraassen's contribution is an unvarnished continuation of traditional philosophy of physics, though he ends up acknowledging that each new generation tends to rediscover for itself the same anomalies that have infected quantum mechanics since the days of Niels Bohr.

When we turn to philosophy of biology, there is something new. Philosopher of biology David Hull has done more than anyone else to highlight this novelty. He begins with a lament:

> Some philosophers view philosophy of science as nothing more than epistemology of the most abstract sort. Philosophy of science has no more to do with science than aesthetics has to do with artistic productions or ethics with matters of common decency.

Hull contrasts this with his own view that philosophy of science should be concerned with science, even with the latest developments in particular sciences. " One contribution which philosophy of biology can make," he says, " is to introduce a little breadth to philosophy of science. Biology is currently undergoing rapid change. Philosophers of science might profitably pay attention to these advances." Hull cites two examples. In discussions of the relationship between philosophy and history of science, many philosophers of science invoke an evolutionary model. To which Hull retorts: " If one takes current versions of theories about organic evolution seriously, however, the implications for conceptual evolution are radical." The units of selection and evolution would have to be radically different from what philosophers of science have thought. Hull continues:

> Another lesson which biology has to teach any philosopher attempting to construct an evolutionary analysis of science is that theories cannot be individuated in isolation from their environments .... If theories can be traced through time entirely in terms

of cognitive factors, then external forces merely produce perturbations. If, however, internal and external factors are related in conceptual evolution in anything like the way that the units in biological evolution are related to their environments, then the contrast is neither so clear nor so obvious.

This argument of Hull's is taken from a volume not under review here: Peter Asquith and Henry Kyburg, eds., *Current Research in Philosophy of Science* (1979); the citations are from pages 421 and 429-480). Hull's contribution represents one of the few significant novelties in that rather academic survey of the state of the art in philosophy of science. This may be profitably contrasted with another survey, Guttorm Flfl$istad, ed., *Contemporary Philosophy: A New Survey,* volume 2: *Philosophy of Science* (1982). There, rather traditional surveys of traditional subfields in philosophy of science are set alongside exciting rundowns of genuinely novel approaches-including Hull's survey of recent philosophy of biology. Other interesting work surveyed includes a much more open look at philosophy of psychology than Griinbaum's (mentioned earlier) by Amedeo Giorgi; a wide-ranging survey of philosophy of technology by Friedrich Rapp; a look at French structuralism by Peter Kemp; and a survey of hermeneutics and philosophy of science by Richard E. Palmer (again much more generous than Griinbaum's treatment of Ricoeur's hermeneutic interpretation of Freud). This should not be taken to mean that these novelties are the only things worthwhile in the Flfl$istad volume; there are also excellent summaries of more traditional issues such as causality (Mario Bunge's "The Revival of Causality"), quantum mechanics (an excellent technical survey by M. L. Dalla Chiara and P. A. Metelli) and paradigms (survey and interpretation by Theodore Kisiel).

RECENT MAINSTREAM CONTRIBUTIONS

It is often said that positivism is dead. But, if that is the case, it is nonetheless true-as John Watkins demonstrates in *Science and Scepticism-that* something very like it, in the form of Popperianism or neo-Popperianism, is still alive and

quite vigorous. This survey allows no space to do a proper review of Watkin's substantial book, but perhaps enough can be said to suggest its flavor. Watkins himself summarizes the volume in a preface, where he says the second, and longer, part is the constructive part-after Part One has leveled skeptical attacks on irrationalism, probabilism, and inductivism. Chapter *5* is technical and proposes comparative measures of testable content, explanatory depth, and theoretical unity-related to what Watkins calls the " optimum aim for science." Watkins claims that he has gone beyond Popper (even while acknowledging that he has been immersed in the latter's ideas), but neither of them has advanced far beyond positivism. Watkins sums up his discussion in chapter 7 by saying, "Rationally accepted statements need not be restricted to ones about pointer readings, ink bottles, etc., but may include ones about the position of a planet or the electrical current in a wire." Such generosity is likely to be wasted on anti-positivists. Watkins claims that he has tried to make his text readable to the non-expert (except in more technical discussions such as Chapter 5) , but very few people, even experts, will be able to follow the argument, which extends from opening to closing page, without repeated reading, close analysis, and possibly even translation into a more accessible idiom. Watkins claims that his " immodest " goal is to succeed where Descartes failed and to find an answer to Hume. Whether he has succeeded or not can only be determined by people capable of fathoming technical depths far beyond the lucidity of Hume's prose. In my view, he has not succeeded; he has simply added one more technical detail-at monumental length-to a neo-Popperian tapestry woven by many hands. Only those are likely to say he has succeeded who continue to swallow whole the ancient and pure goals of logical positivism.

Wesley Salmon's *Scientific Explanation and the Causal Structure of the World* is another technical exercise, though its technicality is less forbidding than that of Watkins. In his book Salmon attempts what many had thought could never be

done again, after the rise of quantum mechanics: he attempts to resuscitate a causal-mechanical model of the universe, to revive a realism of a mechanistic sort in spite of the formidable obstacles. He does this by rejecting Hempel's deductive-nomological model of scientific explanation, devising his own " ontic " conception of causal explanation. The crucial chapters are 5 to 7, and the crucial notion is a" probabilistic causality " applicable to the world of elementary particles in quantum theory. Salmon's views-while critical of logical empiricists who have accepted Hempel's as *the* model of explanation-is another example of old wine in a new bottle. In this case, the old wine is the scientific realism that Hans Reichenbach wished to defend against his fellow logical positivists. In this case, however, the new is distinctly better than the old. Anyone who would wish to defend any of the views of explanation Salmon rejects (Hempel is his major but by no means his only target) has here a formidable target for attack. The prose is not always clear and the level of technical jargon is often high, but the rewards for wading through it are also high: a convincing demonstration that a causal explanation can be given of quantum-mechanical subatomic-particle phenomena. The cost is probably too high for most empiricists to accept, but then the converts to scientific realism today are rather numerous.

The third book I want to review here is Dudley Shapere's *Reason and the Search for Knowledge.* Probably more even than Watkins's and Salmon's books, Shapere's illustrates the continuity-in-change theme. The book is a collection of Shapere's papers that have appeared over the years, one of the earliest being his well known review of Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (Philosophical Review,* 1964). There and elsewhere in the early years, Shapere acquired a reputation as a defender of logical-empiricist orthodoxy against what he saw as a strain of subjectivism and relativism in Kuhn's thought. But over the years Shapere turned to his own philosophical analyses of the history of science-those papers are

included in this collection-and in the process his own thought underwent a profound change. In his latest papers, reprinted in this volume, Shapere has almost stood the old tradition on its head. He now says that the notion of a " reason" (and, more particularly, chain-of-reasoning connections that link historical stages in the development of a scientific concept) is more fundamental than the old notions of meaning and reference. Moreover, the notion of "observation" has taken on new meaning for Shapere: unlike the old positivistic notion, or the similar notion of the Popperians, Shapere's depends significantly upon accepted usages in (series of) communities of scientists. Shapere claims to be clarifying as well as applying the Wittgensteinian notion of " family resemblances " among concepts and usages. This does represent something new in contemporary philosophy of science, and one can follow Shapere's intellectual development within the confines of this volume. Yet this novelty is not really so new: already in *1953* Toulmin's *Philosophy of Science* had made many of the same intellectual moves that Shapere has only recently come to make.

As my final example in this " mainstream " section, I want to discuss one contribution that I consider to be genuinely novel. That is Ronald Giere's "Toward a Unified Theory of Science " in *Science and Reality.* In that remarkable and insightful paper, Giere makes a proposal that would have struck pre-Kuhnian logical empiricists as bizarre if not absurd: namely, that philosophy of science should be treated as an empirical theoretical model to be verified or falsified by the evidence-in this case, the history-of-science record-just as any empirical theory should be tested against its evidence. Giere is critical of Kuhn, who had first proposed something along these lines, because he thinks Kuhn missed important historical differences. And he is by no means sanguine about an easy fit between philosophy-of-science theory and history-of-science fact; he says, "We may end up with fairly strong models of science in particular places and times but weak

models of longer-range historical development." Even so, and whether one chooses to conceive of the long-range history of science in terms of the model of biological evolution or economic development (or of both in different ways), "The *nature* of the relationship is clear. It is the standard relationship between theoretical models and empirical data " (p. 28). To make this approach go, Giere must have some secure data base to explain, and for this he suggests the same notion that Laudan would (see above): *success.* That is, if it is to be worth our while, philosophy of science, like science itself, must be successful in explaining something. Giere is usually thought of as a rather hardnosed philosopher of science; it is to be hoped that many of his colleagues will recognize the novel character of his proposal, and that numerous disciples will follow him along the new path.

NATURE AND SCIENCE

In this final section I want to take special note of the collection *On Nature.* Normally, one would not want to include it in a survey of recent books in philosophy of science, in spite of contributions by such philosophers as Stephen Toulmin (discussed above) or W. V. Quine (who here repeats his basic view about the systemic relation between theory and observations in science). What makes the volume worth at least a brief mention in the current context is that, using the concept of nature as a focus and invoking Oriental philosophy and religion, it challenges contemporary philosophy of science in a fundamental way.

Two examples. Huston Smith, in " Two Evolutions," challenges Darwinian evolutionism as inadequate in terms of explaining human origins. This might be taken as simply a reactionary religious attack on evolutionary theory, but in Smith's hands it is an indictment of scientism-of science as capable of explaining everything-that nonetheless remains timid and diffident about the scientific enterprise itself. In that it differs significantly from attacks by the anarchist philos-

opher of science Paul Feyerabend. On the other hand, John Findlay, in "They Think Not, Neither Do They Care-The Place of Matter in Reality," defends a dialectic of matter and spirit with roots in Hegel but that also encompasses East and West emptiness (spiritually full) and fullness (spiritually empty-but related). That is, he extols traditional metaphysics of the very sort that the earliest logical positivists set out to unmask.

The appearance of this volume (which also includes essays on the Gaia hypothesis and on God and the meaning of life-alongside the essays by Toulmin and Quine already mentioned) is eloquent witness that, even today, philosophy of science does not, for many intellectuals, exhaust the meaning of philosophy of nature.

That much granted, I cannot resist saying that the quality of even the best papers in this volume is significantly lower, inteilectually speaking, than even average contributions in the other volumes under discussion. The papers were originally presented as lectures at the Institute for Philosophy and Religion at Boston University, and they never aspire to the technical rigor that has become customary in philosophy of science circles.

Conclusion: I have not here touched upon such other indications of continuity-amid-change as William Wallace's continuing defenses of Aristotelian-Thomistic realism in philosophy of science-or European hermeneutic-phenomenological philosophy of science, Whiteheadian or Bergsonian philosophy of science, Marxists, followers of C. S. Peirce, neo-Kantians, etc. Neither have I done more than mention the new ethics of science. But I think I have done enough to suggest that philosophy of science remains a marvelously diversified field-much more so than some academic philosophers of science would have their students believe.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Sa-int Bonaventure As a Biblical Commentator: A Translation and Analysis of His Commentary on L1,ke, XVIII, 34-XIX, 42. By THOMAS REIST, 0.F.M., Conv. Lanham, Md.; University Press of America, 1985. Pp. xx + 264. $21.50 (cloth); $12.50 (paper).

Although scholars have recognized for many years that the Bible, not the *summae* of the masters, remained the basic theological text for almost all of the thirteenth century, the Biblical commentaries of the great Scholastics have remained largely unexplored territory, with only a few trials blazed through the wilderness by the pioneering studies of Spicq, Smalley, and de Lubac. Fortunately, in recent years several studies have appeared which have begun to open up a bit more of this neglected area. The present study by Thomas Reist is one such contribution, presenting to us a less examined side of the great Franciscan theologian of the thirteenth eentury, St. Bonaventure.

Chenu remarked long ago that Bonaventure's *Breviloquium* represents *"le plus beau programme d'hermeneutique sacree qu'ait propose le XIII" sieele,"* and there since have been several fine studies of the theological significance Bonaventure accords to Scripture. However, the rest of Chenu's statement seems to have been forgotten: *"mais ce sont programme et methode d'un expositor, d'un exegete."* It is to Reist's credit that he offers " not only the principles of Bonaventure's exegesis, but also an example of it.... to see, how, in fact, these principles were applied by the man who proposed and formulated them" (p. xii).

The plan of the work is straightforward and logical. After two introductory chapters on Bonaventure's life and works and his general theory of Biblical hermeneutics, the central third chapter introduces us to the *Commentary on Luke,* his most impressive work of Biblical exposition. Reist correctly identifies one of the central concerns of this postille as showing how the Franciscan way of life is founded directly on the Gospel text and that the friars were indeed following the way of "evangelical perfection." Appropriately, then, he has selected for analysis a passage (Lk. 18:34-19:42) in which Bonaventure discusses the renuneiation of material goods, a subject :flowing from his exposition of the stories of the rich young man and the publican Zacchaeus. The bulk of the third chapter (pp. 79-128) is a translation of this pericope. Reist goes on in his fourth chapter to offer an exegetical, doctrinal, and pastoral analysis of the text. After a brief conclusion, a lengthy appendix (pp. 203-244) presents the selected pericope.

All in all, Fr. Reist has presented a very able exposition; his analysis, however, is less successful. This is evident even in the two introductory chapters. The first chapter is a good and clear summary of Bonaventure's cueer, especially the conflict between the secular and mendicant masters at the University of Paris, which was the context of the *Commentary on Luke.* Even here, however, the author shows himeslf overly bound to his sources to the point of inconsistency. On the top of p. 8, for example, he argues, basing himself on more recent research, that Bonaventure received the *licencia docendi* either towards the end of the 1254-55 school year or in the fall of 1255, yet on the bottom of the same page unhesitatingly repeats Bougerol's older chronology, dating Bonaventure's term as master from 1253. (Another strange inconsistency: the chapter headings refer to Bonaventura; everywhere else we see the normal Anglicized spelling). These are certainly minor matters, but they do reveal a certain reluctance to make independent conclusions, which will be more evident later in the work. This tendency is more pronounced in the second chapter, which summarizes Bonaventure's hermeneutical principles as he has stated them in his *BreviZoquium.* Again, Reist's presentation is accurate; however, there is little attempt to go "beyond" or "beneath" Bonaventure's own words to show where he received his ideas, how he compares with his contemporaries, etc.

The third chapter, the presentation of the context of the *Commentary on Luke* and the translation of the pericope Reist has chosen, is the most successful. It shows clearly how Bonaventure has creatively responded to a difficult situation in the life of his own community, offering an artistic and convincing exposition of the Biblical text, extracting from it a theology of renunciation of material wealth. Reist's translation is accurate and generally reads very well.

The final chapter, devoted to an "exegetical, doctrinal, and pastoral analysis" of the selected pericope, is less satisfying. Most of the time, we do not receive an analysis at all, but simply a re-statement of what we have just read. Bonaventure has given us a compelling (and lengthy) exposition of the Biblical text; it does not need to be paraphrased. Does Reist really accomplish his stated goal: " to demonstrate, how, in fact, Bonaventure follows his own hermeneutical system" (p. xv) ' / Here is where conclusions need to be drawn more clearly. Many studies have suggested, basing themselves on the *Breviloquium,* that the spiritual exposition is more important for Bonaventure than the literal. Does the passage we have seen show that this is the case, or not ' / Reist has shown, in the third chapter, Bonaventure's gemiral dependence on the postille of Hugh of St. Cher. How does he depart from his most important source on the poverty question T There are many questions like these which remain unanswered. Reist gives us a good ,deal of material which might pro-

vide such answers, but the lines of connection between theory and practice, between Bonaventure and his sources and contemporaries, need to be more clearly shown. Perhaps I am looking for too much here, but it seems that many loose ends remain unconnected, and that with a bit more probing the author could have drawn them together for us. Despite this reservation, however, I am grateful for the appearance of this study. It opens up a door to a vast new world which up to now has remained *terra incognita.*

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Metaphysical Themes in Thomas Aquinas. By JOHN WIPPEL. (Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy, Vol. 10.) Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of .America Press, 1984. Pp. xi + 293. No price given.

In this volume the author brings together previously written articles on teachings of St. Thomas .Aquinas. In addition to these articles, however, the book contains new materials: a response to Fr. Owens regarding .Aquinas's teaching on the real distinction between essence and existence (the second part of chapter 5) and further elaboration on how St. Thomas dealt with this problem (the whole of chapter 6).

Such collections risk a lack of overall unity. The author shows that he is aware of this danger in the opening lines of his Introduction. The title he chooses for the volume, *Metaphysical Themes in Thomas Aquinas,* however, serves as an announcement of his intention and an answer to anyone who might complain that he did not write another and more unified kind of exposition.

The present volume for the most part addresses issues neglected by the (relatively few) philosophers who today concern themselves with the medieval period. Such scholars give the lion's share of their interest to issues of logic and semantics. Hence the author's work is a welcome complement in that it delves into questions of a different sort-the kinds of questions scholars, mainly European, liked to take up some generations ago.

The opening essay nicely sets the tone and prepares the reader for what is to come, viz. a succession of topics treated by .Aquinas *qua* Christian philosopher. The author's purpose here is to review the opinions of certain workers, especially Gilson, and to clarify from his own standpoint what it means to speak, of .Aquinas (or anyone) as a Christian philosopher.

This first chapter is particularly apposite, for it lays out the necessary context for issues that otherwise might strike many contemporary philosophers as strictly theological. Much rides, of course, on how one chooses to think about the meaning, or indeed the very possibility, of Christian philosophy. The author presents his case soberly and clearly, arguing that one can indeed choose as a philosopher to enter into questions which others might regard as more properly not philosophical but theological. If one accepts his view here, then the way is open for the Christian philosopher to move in what can be taken as rather obvious directions: " Granted that the Christian philosopher has the right to investigate each and every philosophical problem, in fact he is selective. Questions concerning the existence and nature of God and the origin and nature and destiny of man will be of paramount importance" (p. 13).

The rest of Part One, i.e., chapters 2, 3, and 4, deal with St. Thomas's account of how metaphysical knowledge works in comparison with natural philosophy and mathematics. This entails an explanation of *separatio,* sometimes refeITed to as the third degree of abstraction. The author appropriately focuses on Aquinas's relatively early but most thorough treatment of the question in his commentary on the *De Trin.itate of Boethius.* In these chapters, the author explains in considerable detail St. Thomas's carefully thought out theory of how the human mind goes about the task of formulating a body of systematic and scientific knowledge, with special emphasis on precisely how he justifies the possibility of human thought regarding immaterial substance. As Aristotle had done, Aquinas calls this enterprise by three different names, viz. ' first philosophy', ' divine science', and 'metaphysics' (or trans-physics), and Wippel discusses the reasons behind the threefold naming, especially 'first philosophy'.

In chapters 5 and 6 the author takes up the celebrated Thomistic doctrine of the real distinction between essence and existence. From the thirteenth century to our own day, commentators on Aquinas have had much to say on this subject, and there has been a quite remarkable disagreement in their views. Though Wippel does not say much about it, Giles of Rome, for example, who was a student of St. Thomas in Paris, thought that what the author styles Aquinas's *intellectus essentiae* argument is quite inadequate to establish the real distinction. Giles then went on to defend the distinction in what he thought a more cogent manner with his ' separability argument '. The reasoning here was that since an essence can 'lose ' its existence, it is clear that the two must be truly distinct from one another. Giles's view on the matter found favor with some early Thomists. Robert Orford, for instance, who was a first generation Oxford Thomist, although very critical of Giles on many points, agreed entirely with his account of the real distinction between essence and existence. Wippel also deals with the *intellectus es.9entiae* argument and ques-

tions whether Aquinas's proof requires that one presuppose the existence of God for it to work, as some claim. The author's view is that Aquinas did not take God's existence as an essential step in his proof, and appended to his explanation why this is the case is his reply to Fr. Owens, a prominent contemporary scholar who was not persuaded by Wippel's reasoning when it first appeared. He then reviews what some consider to be further ways in which Aquinas defended the real distinction, and again Wippel denies that God's existence is always presupposed.

Next the author compares the views of Henry of Ghent and Godfrey of Fontaines with that of St. Thomas concerning the reality of non-existing possibles. Medieval positions depended largely on the various meanings assigned to the term 'possible', as well as on what was deemed the more appropriate way to think about the relation obtaining between God and the creature in terms of exemplarity. It seems to me that in this question the case for Christian philosophy becomes more difllcult to uphold. By this I mean that both the very posing of the question and the solutions presented seem to rely very much on matters of faith. This is not to deny that a high degree of adroitness in medieval metaphysics is brought to bear throughout the discussions, but it does seem that the basis of exposition and argument is more theological than philosophical.

The possibility of eternal creation became in medieval discussion one of the more hotly debated issues. Aquinas drew upon himself the wrath of the more conservative-minded men of his day by the way he dealt with this question. The author explains St. Thomas's position and adds some interesting observations on the slightly differing but very important ways in which this question can be understood.

The final two chapters are devoted to our knowledge of God and God's knowledge of us. Both are fraught with problems which medieval thinkers, including St. Thomas, did not fail to notice. Relating the God of utter and timeless simplicity to the creature bound up in complexity and time is a very great philosophical challenge. In these final chapters Wippel reviews, from an authentic Thomistic standpoint, the status of the question and the proposed attempts at solution, without neglecting some elements of controversy.

Throughout these essays the author exhibits balance, fairness in exposition, and attention to strengths and weaknesses in argumentation. His eontrol of the pertinent modern literature is more than adequate. Anyone interested in coming to terms with these topics as treated by Thomas Aquinas should turn to this book.

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God, Action, and Embodiment. By THOMAS F. TRACY. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1984. Pp. xx + 184, $11.95 (paper).

Originally a doctoral dissertation at Yale in 1980, this book by Thomas Tracy is a masterful, compelling, and forthright analysis of the concept of God as agent, one which moves the discussion of the issue significantly forward.

There have always been some of us who consider the issue of God's agency as one of the enduring problems of theology, not only because the Biblical witness speaks of God as one who does decisive things in history, but also because of the fruitfulness which we have seen in recent philosophical work on the concepts of person, action, and agency. Despite Langdon Gilkey's attempt to write the epitaph for speaking of God as an agent, the work of Gordon Kaufman and, more recently, the spate of work within process theology, have kept alive the possibility of speaking about God, at least analogically, in language drawn from our human experience of action and agency.

But, as both Kaufman's and process theology's approaches reveal, there is a tentativeness in speaking about God in absolutely straightforward and literal ways as an agent. As Tracy persuasively points out, there is a "residual Cartesianism" in the use both make of person/agent concepts as applied to God. For example, Kaufman still holds God to be inaccessible to us except through his external manifestations which are never completely revelatory of who He is. At the same time, God is not regarded as the agent responsible for *specific* acts in history but only for the overarching sweep of history, for its general pattern. In this way, an almost unbridgeable chasm is unintentionally opened between the concept of agency as applied to human persons and as applied to God.

One of the great virtues of Tracy's book is that he confronts this problem head-on. Using the vocabulary of character traits ("person-characterizing predicates"), Tracy argues that we can only ascribe attributes to God if they are based on the intentional actions of an agent. It makes no sense to describe God as loving or just unless there is some intentional action (attributable to him) from which these descriptive traits are drawn. Nothing is gained and everything is lost by pretending that such character traits are not literally applicable to God. If God is to be described at all as personal it can only be on the basis of divine behavior manifested in intentional action, and intentional action can only originate from an agent.

Tracy's application of the concepts of agency and intentionality are particularly impressive because he manages to summarize as well as to integrate some of the most important analytical work of this quarter-

century. His success is particularly noteworthy in that he extends the discussion precisely to those topics (God and His acts in history) so often considered irrelevant or unnecessary by the very analytical philosophers whose work is so nicely mined by Tracy.

Tracy devotes two-thirds of the book to a full discussion of the problem of mind-body dualism and to the claim that God can be a non-bodily agent. He wants to argue against such dualism, for the notion of God as a personal agent, and against the claim that such an agent must be (a la Strawson) embodied. Tracy agrees with Strawson that the bodily personal agent is a psychophysical unit, irreducibly one. But Tracy is very careful not to draw out implications from Strawson that would require that *every* individual who acts intentionally must be in every case a *bodily* agent. Agents must necessarily act intentionally but intentional action need not necessarily require embodiment as a condition for enactment. A mental agent is not a category mistake as long as he can intentionally act. All embodied agents must, as Tracy concedes to Strawson, be psychophysical units, but not all agents must be embodied.

The key question, here, of course, is whether a non-embodied agent can act upon bodies? And to that Tracy gives what I think is a less than fully satisfying answer. He claims that it is not up to the theist (i.e., one who holds to a non-embodied God) to explain the *means* by which God's intentional activity engages his creatures. And this claim is based upon Tracy's appeal to God's "uniqueness", which makes the means of divine activity always a mystery to us.

What moves Tracy to want to avoid an embodied God is the fact that psychophysical agents are always bound to limitations set by their biology. These limitations, he believes, are entailed by recent claims, some of which are associated with process theology, that the world is God's body. These claims, which clearly trade on the power of Strawson's notion of agents as psychophysical units, assume that God does not exist except in and through the processes of the world. While God may well be able to affect decisively the life of the world, the psychophysical concept entails that He could not have created the world (since psychophysical agents do not create their own bodies).

If God is to be God then any limitation on his intentional activity must be *self-imposed.* There must be nothing in God's activity which is not capable of intentional regulation. This understanding of God's relation to some kind of bodily structure through which action can be carried out avoids the obvious problems involved in the alternative claim that God must work with a bodily structure 'given' to him and in some sense, therefore, beyond his complete intentional control. But if the only kind of body appropriate to a self-regulating deity is one which is completely subject to divine control, that is, "once we have denied that the world at

any level constitutes a pattern of activity beyond the reach of God's intentions, we may well wonder why we should speak of God as embodied at all" (119).

Tracy rightly points out that, if God's body is identified with the world (as process thought tends to do), then there can be virtually no independence of action on the part of the constituents of God's body. But process thought certainly *intends* to permit a great deal of independence for worldly entities which interact with God, and it is this intention which leads process thinkers to question the metaphysical viability of classical theism. But, if the entities of the world *are* God's body, it is hard to see how they could have any independent capacity for action vis-a-vis the agent whose body they are.

At this point, Tracy seems to think he has disposed of the strongest argument on behalf of God's embodiment. What he does not seem to have considered, however, is the logical possibility of a body for God which is *neither* the world iself *nor* an organism identical to those within the world. It is certainly logically possible that God could have a body of some sort, consisting of some kind of matter continuous with but not necessarily identical in every respect to the matter which presently constitutes this particular universe of space-time. It could not be completely discontinuous with matter as we know it if we want to avoid having the term 'body' become so stretched as to be meaningless. Nevertheless, such a body could be completely inaccessible to us through the normal vehicles of perception. To be *God's* body it would have to be completely subject to his will but it could also be an ontologically necessary infrastructure through which he enacts his will on others (and thus meet Strawson's condition that all agents be irreducible psychophysical units). I think Tracy is right in arguing that one cannot necessarily rule out the logical possibility of a bodiless divine agent, but he is wrong in claiming that being an embodied agent necessarily diminishes the power of God. I think he needs to explore more fully why the notion of a divine body which is not identical to the world, is inaccessible to human detection, and is subject to divine will, would detract in any metaphysically significant way from God's majesty and worthiness of worship.

There are two final observations a.bout Tracy's argument. First, I sense a certain failure on his part to appreciate the full force of process theology's claim that part of the reason for insisting on God's embodiment is to make human relationship with God as meaningful to him as it is to us. Tracy is still ·enough of a classical theist to be uncomfortable with any notion of God which threatens his 'completeness.' As the "perfection of agency," God "will exist from himself *(a se)* in sovereign independence from the world of creatures" and will not· "have his being in essential relatedness to creatures ..•" (151). These claims, of course,

as Tracy recognizes, break sharply with process theology, which holds that, unless God is in some sense moved or changed by our action upon him, then he cannot in any metaphysically coherent way be said to be in relation to us and we must be completely determined by him. Tracy tries to get around this problem by insisting that God's perfection does not *preclude* him from relationships with creatures, even "mutually affecting" ones. But it is difficult to see how he can claim both that God is perfect and complete without creatures-his life lacks "'no richness without the creature" (143)-and at the same time that God can be genuinely "affected" by them. The relationship, given Tracy's classical theistic assumptions, still seems one-way since God's love toward creatures determines them, but is not determined in any way by their love toward him. It is not at all clear what God has to "gain " from creating and interacting with creatures who can add literally nothing to the richness of his already complete and perfect life. To talk about love in this context is no answer since a genuine, full love is one which is reciprocal or mutual: one in which both partners are enriched at least to some degree. Unless creatures can either help to fulfill or to frustrate God's intentions, and unless the realization or frustration of those intentions enhances or diminishes the satisfaction of God, then mutually affecting relationships between God and creatures are simply not possible. And, ironically, Tracy's insistence on the perfection and completeness of God does not square well with his otherwise very sensitive comments about the genuine mutuality of love and friendship elsewhere in the book.

Finally, I think Tracy needs to develop more fully the extremely important implications of his claim that as agent God can (and does) perform specific acts in history. Given Tracy's vigorous and persuasive case for employing the vocabulary of character traits for God based on divine action, he is committed to claiming that "we must be prepared to point to actions in which his love and justice are displayed .... The meaning of these attributes will be tied logically to the account that we give of what God has done and is doing" (19). Tracy rightly refuses to fall back solely upon the notion of God's "overarching" control of history. God must be the agent responsible for some acts *in* history which are his and not someone else's. It will not do simply to say that God cooperates with human action or that in every human act there are two agents, God and the human person. But Tracy gives no real indication of how we might go about determining which acts are God's and not those of other agents or simply natural occurrences. Many events are claimed to be divine acts, but what criteria would Tracy use for adjudicating those claims? He is justifiably suspicious of restricting divine activity to psychological forms of inspiration because these actions "cannot be easily identified as a basis for the identification of God as their agent" (78). But, while

he insists that divine acts are always story-relative, he does not provide a full explanation of how someone, either within the framework of the st-0ry, or outside it, can determine (using historical evidence and philosophical analysis) when they are dealing with a divine act.

As evidenced by his review *(The Thomist,* 49 (1985), 299-305) of William Abraham's *Divine Revelation and the Limits of Historical Criticism* (Oxford, 1982), I'm certain Tracy is aware of this need for further development despite its absence in this book. It is, in fact, one of the most important contributions of his study of divine action that he has recognized the obligation on the part of those who accept his analysis to identify specific divine acts in history. In this respect, I believe, Tracy is well beyond the limited view of divine agency in Kaufman (who is reluctant to identify God with anything other than a vague kind of overarching intention). Tracy's argument gives us the basis for beginning to support the Biblical view of divine action on the solid ground of a metaphysics which is faithful to classical theism (perhaps to a fault) as well as to the most sophisticated forms of contemporary philosophical analysis and process thought. His book is a masterpiece of cogent reasoning, but, more important, it breaks new ground in our understanding of one of the most basic of all Christian claims-that God is one who acts in history.

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Alvin Plantinga, James E. Tomberlin and Peter van Inwagen, eds. in *Profiles: An International Series on Contemporary Philosophers and Logicians, Vol. 5;* Radu J. Bogdan and Ilkka Niiniluoto, general editors; Dordrecht, D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1985; pp. ix + 396 with indices of names and subjects. No price quoted.

The series to which this anthology belongs, *Profiles,* takes up the baton of P. A. Schilpp's *Library of Living Philosophers.* As with the Schilpp series, invited contributors (nine here) discuss the work of a distinguished living oolleague, Alvin Plantinga. Plantinga himself replies on topics in ontology, philosophical theology, and epistemology.

The tradition of the *Festschrift* is our age's amiable compromise between scholastic dispute and literary polemic. And, indeed, the format is nearly certain to succeed within its clearly stated limits if the invited contributions are of high quality. Astute criticisms-and even astute apprecia-

tion-from a worthy colleague often help a philosopher clarify his own views, exposing to the public eye insights taken for granted or shrouded in the author's independent writings. If nothing more, the critique and reply format corroborates the thesis that the best answer to an objection is usually the philosopher's own.

Yet it is difficult not to be disappointed that the program here is so cramped. Only philosophers practicing in the analytic tradition and sympathetic to Plantinga's fundamental assumptions about method in philosophy have offered their views. This is not necessarily bad, for the positions stated both for and against Plantinga are well stated. The tone throughout is entirely professional. It is simply that there are no fresh insights, no bracing challenges to fundamental assumptions. What is lacking is healthy variety.

How welcome would be a piece by someone trained in the scholastic method such as Mclnerny or Wallace; how intriguing it would prove for the analytically trained to read a critique by an adherent of phenomenology or the hermeneutic critical approaches of Gadamer, Eugen, Fink, or Werner Marx, to balance an otherwise narrow and polarised presentation.

In the end, it is ironic that Plantinga-who throughout his career has delved into the most time-honored and universal problems (what there is, the nature of evidence, the rational demonstration of the existence of God, and problem of evil)-should find himself involved in a dialogue more narrowly based than his true competence as a philosopher merits.

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The Matter of Minds. By ZENO VENDLER. (Clarendon Library of Logie and Philosophy). Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985. Pp. vi + 139. Clothbound.

In his book current logico-linguistie methods are used for the treatment of the traditional philosophical problems of other minds. Professor Vendler believes that the postulation of minds in complex living organisms similar to our own body is a precondition for securing the existence of our own mind-he sides with Kant as against Descartes. Hence, the problem of other minds becomes for him rather the task of imagining being someone else as a subjee.t of experience with its corresponding life his-

tory. This task is then translated into Vendler's techniques of transference and vicarious experience (Chapters 2 and 3). Imagining *being someone else* (subjective imagination) is not the same as imagining *someone else,* for instance, Napoleon on the field of Waterloo (objective imagination). It is the subjective imagination on which our possibilities and abilities of transference and vicarious experience rest. According to Vendler, without this sort of imaginative transference we all would be " functional solipsists " (p. 25). When I am able to imagine being Napoleon, for instance, thus vicariously experiencing his actions, feelings, and attitudes, I am establishing causal links which connect my imaginative transference with the mind of that historical (though non-non existent) person, Napoleon. This causal strategy would not work, say, for Hercules, who of course is a fictitious mythological character unanchored in the actual world. This application of causal linkage resembles the causal theory of reference which has been proposed by some contemporary philosophers of language and logicians, such as S. Kripke, D. Kaplan, and K. Donellan. This is a good example of Vendler's erudite ability to utilize various current logico-linguistic conceptual devices, including his own "inventions" which had been demonstrated in his previous published works, such as *Linguistics and Philosophy* (1967), *.Adjectives and Nominalization* (1968), and *Res Cogitans* A1972). In Chapter IV, entitled' Traces of Individuals,' Vendler uses for his purposes not only the causal theory of reference but also logical theories of proper names and descriptions, Kripke's doctrine of rigid designators, and a very interesting logico-epistemological discussion on "firsthand" and "secondhand" acquaintance. "Firsthand" acquaintance with persons and things can be obtained immediately, by means of sense perception, whereas " secondhand " acquaintance is acquired via the above-mentioned causal links and chains.

Chapter V, entitled "Being There," contains intricate preparatory material for the conclusive and most significant Chapter VI which is called "The Transcendental Self." In "Being There" Vendler discusses the double use of the tedm **'I'** (the subjective use and the indexical-objective use), the privileged access to one's own mind, the importance of preconceived schemata for the interrelation and integration of our concepts, images, and perceptions, just as he function of memory. The final chapter is divided into three sections: A. Subject of Transference, B. Cogito, C. Agency, and it is filled with interesting and provocative statements and proposals. The reader finds here such breathtaking claims as that " the ultimate subject of all representations defies representation" (p. 109), or that Descartes's Cogito proves " the ' existence ' of an empty and contentless **'I'** ... the 'existence' of a transcendental self" (p. 117). This ' transcendental self,' Vendler admits, is a highly controversial term, for it does not denote anything in the world that could be named or de-

scribed (isn't he already contradicting himself?). The transcendental self is not in the world, nor in time, yet it is supposed to appear as various " empirical " selves in a highly mysterious fashion, defying any principle of individuation. In order to answer various self-proclaimed counter-arguments, Vendler attempts to support his Kantian-Wittgensteinian position also by his brief reference to St. Thomas and the Scholastic doctrine of the individuality of separated souls (pp. 109-110). He invokes the method of *via negativa*, the analogy of the " prime matter," even Averroe's active intellect, common to all men, as the possible historical means for the elucidation of the strained and belabored concept of the transcendental self. Ultimately, Vendler resorts to metaphorical phrases, by claiming, for instance, that the transcendental ' I ' " touches " the world at the various "anchors of subjectivity" (p. 113).

It is unfortunate that this serious attempt to defend sub,jectivity against fashionable reductionistic tendencies (wearing the mask of the so--called scientific objectivity) is marred by the author's declared allegiance to epiphenomenalism ("to this much maligned position," p. 29. Even the most subtle version of epiphenomenalism, toward which Vendler inclines in the final sections of his book, carries in itself the danger of a hidden physiological reductionism and subjective "impotence" (causal or any other). One may wonder whether the champion of subjectivity and free human agency hit the right final note in his demanding and sophisticated opus.

Vendler's style is quite refreshing and it sparkles with witty formulations and examples. Yet the book is not easy reading, due to the extremely condensed argumentation and an overload of the presented material. The accumulation of otherwise intelligent verbal illustrations might actually be an obstacle for a clearer grasp of the author's main points. It is unfortunate that in this nicely produced book one finds several misprints and errors (pp. 44, 96, 119, 123; and especially the bibliography, pp. 137-139, for example, " Hantikka" instead of the correct" Hintikka ").

In summary, *The Matter of Minds* is a book worth reading for its rich content and the provocative issues which it raises. The demarcation lines between the realms of objectivity and subjectivity, so difficult to outline, are considered here in a new light, with the help of current epistemological, logical and linguistic devices. Although the emphasis is put on the developments started by Descartes, the reader interested in various aspects of Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy will find numerous references and discussions which, directly or indirectly, fall into that province (especially in Chapters V and VI, where important metaphysical issues are being touched upon). On the other hand, a reader interested in phenomenology may be disappointed, for there is no reference to Husserl's investigation of the transcendental ego and related problems. Yet the territory which

Vendler does .cover offers interesting vistas, even if one may not be quite willing to follow a Kantian guide who is eclectically equipped with fancy gadgets.

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Should War Be Eliminated'! Philosophical and Theological Investigations. By STANLEY HAUERWAS. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1984. Pp. 72.

Stanley Hauerwas's *Should War Be Eliminated'! Philosophical and Theological Investigations,* an essay delivered as the 1984 Pere Marquette Lecture at Marquette University, proposes a "thought experiment" whose purpose is to reconsider common assumptions about war and its place *in* our lives, to illumine the ambivalence Christians often exhibit about war, and to show that war is a morally positive institution rather than always "the result of sin" (p. 8). Claiming that pacifism too often "ignores the powerful moral presupposition that sustains war's viability in spite of its brutality " (p. 9). Hauerwas, himself a pacifist, seeks to develop as strong a case for war as is possible. Such a development, he contends, will support the essay's main premise that pacifist and just-war thinkers draw on quite different assumptions about eschatology.

John XXIII's 1963 encyclical, *Pacem in Terris,* and the 1983 American Catholic bishops' peace pastoral, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response,* provide Hauerwas with examples of the ambivalence which he wants to illumine. *Pacem in Terris,* articulating a view of peace " that is the working assumption of many schooled by the Enlightenment" (p. 15), erroneously presents cooperation as the key to peace. *A* human being, endorsed with intelligence and free will, has rights and duties which intelligence can grasp and which flow directly from human nature. By preserving within oneself this order commanded by God, the individual knows peace. *A* well-oriented society results when all cooperate in mutual reverence £or all others' rights and duties. The greater the cooperation, the less violence will exist in that society. Similarly, in international affairs, reciprocal rights and duties and relations between states should be harmonized in truth, justice, active cooperation, and liberty.

Ambiguity haunts *Challenge of Peace* when, on the basis of natural law reasoning, the letter acknowledges that a state has the right and moral duty to defend the people entrusted to its care, with force if necessary, and yet maintains that, in principle, peace should be possible in our world.

To acknowledge the moral possibility of war, for Hauerwas, is to be unable to avoid its actuality. Similarly, while the bishops present some war as being justified, they also claim that the "consequences of sin" are found in any violent situation. It remains unclear to Hauerwas, given the Gospel ethic, how Christinas can then participate in war, since Christians must avoid intentionally cooperating with sin.

Hauerwas then develops his thought-experiment by indicating how cooperation results, not in the peace proposed by John XXIII, but rather in war. Drawing on the thinking of Hannah Arendt and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Hauerwas argues that war provides for as well as sustains the particular goods of particular peoples in a divided world. War is not anarchy existing between states, but rather it is anarchy's enemy insofar as it allows corporate entities, such as nation-states, to perpetuate their own particular shared goods and histories through a cooperative pledge to protect them. The elimination of war, therefore, would mean the extinction of cooperation as well.

War also enables a nation-state to cooperate with its own past by enabling its people to realize a continuity with its ancestors, who also fought in wars. In fact, to refute the licitness of war would dishonor those ancestors. In present-day reality, war provides a nation-state with its own "story," and therefore a niche in ongoing history. In addition to these advantages, warfare also teaches the individual to preserve common life, which transcends the individual, since each citizen ought to be willing to sacrifice life itself in order to preserve the common life.

Such is the best case which Hauerwas can muster for the moral acceptability of war. The remainder of the essay presents Hauerwas's argument for pacifism and his call for the elimination of war as a theological imperative. Hauerwas's pacifism, however, is not pacifism as embraced by the American Catholic bishops in *Challenge of Peace* or by David Hollenbach in his *Nuclear Ethics: .A Christian Moral .Argument.* Both the bishops and Hollenbach, in presenting just-war theory and pacifism as two legitimate strategies which complement one another, ignore the fact that these two approaches draw on very different assumptions about history and its relation to the kingdom. Hauerwas's understanding of the eschatological nature of the peace brought by Jesus's life, death, and resurrection (which Hauerwas holds to be closer to the New Testament reality, p. 50) is not some ideal to be realized beyond history but rather an actual way of life among a concrete group of people, a real alternative to war. True history is not that of the nation-state, "a history of godlessness" (p. 53), which uses war to rid itself of God, attempts to determine its own meaning and destiny, and eliminates enemies in the name of protecting the common good; true history, rather, is the different history offered through participation in the church, a community which loves

the enemy and witnesses to God's refusal to give up on creation. The bishops, Hollenbach, and all other Christians who embrace just-war theory, which then assures war's actuality, ignore true eschatological peace and this witness provided by the church.

In the end, concludes Hauerwas, the question "Should war be eliminated T" is a false one, since war has already been eliminated for those who participate in God's history. The church is God's sign that war is not part of God's providential care for the world. It remains the happy task of Christians to bear witness to that fact.

Hauerwas's argument, however, remains unconvincing. If one is going to engage Catholic thought and argue with its just-war tradition and the manner in which it embraces pacifism, as Hauerwas does, then a fuller treatment of that tradition, its key documents, and its moral concepts is essential. Hauerwas's essay lacks an extended discussion of the human rights tradition within Roman Catholic thought-a tradition based on the dignity of the human being who is the image of God. *Pacem in Terris,* for instance, is not so much the product of the Enlightenment as it is part of a continuum of Catholic social teaching building on Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum.* Similarly, a notable absence surrounds the teaching of Vatican II, teaching on which *Challenge of Peace* heavily relies for its ecclesial foundation and its starting point for its arguments regarding modern warfare. The American Catholic bishops clearly and frequently acknowledge this reliance in their letter. An additional
is the topic of conscience. Only once in the entire text does Hauerwas use this term, although Catholic thought bases its recognition of the pacifist option on a decision which emerges from "this sacred core and sanctuary" of the human person (Vatican II).

Throughout *Should War Be Eliminated?,* one senses a basic misunderstanding of traditional just-war theory. To admit the possibility of a just war is not necessarily to ensure its actuality (p. 48), nor does it eliminate "peace" from the earth (pp. 19, 39). While it is true that the perfect peace of God will be fully realized only beyond history, as the bishops and Hollenbach contend, nonetheless peace as it can be maximally realized on earth remains the goal. Just-war theory, in fact, presumes that peace is the norm and should only be disrupted when peace and justice cannot be simultaneously realized, since a "peace" built on injustice is no peace at all.

When discussing participation in a just war, Hauerwas also fails to distinguish social sin from personal sin. While it is true that any type of violence reflects the disharmony within the world, to defend oneself and one's country from unjust aggression is nevertheless not *per se* to cooperate in personal sin. In such defense, one attempts to stop the evildoer-aggressor from perpetrating wrongdoing. Such an action does not nee-

essarily mean the *elimination* of the enemy, either, since just-war theory holds that actions must be proportionate.

One must also take issue with Hauerwas's eschatology and ecclesiology. His eschatology is a realized one, not in the godless history of the nation-state but in the history found through the Church. Yet Hauerwas insists that there are not " two histories " but " only one true history-the history of God's peaceable kingdom. Christians admit no ultimate dualism tween God's history and the world's history" (p. 54). Despite this statement, dualism between the church and world permeates Hauerwas's work. His church remains a sectarian. one which bears witness to God's true peace. The world undoubtedly needs such a communal witness, but Hauerwas must realize that, given his eschatology and ecclesiology, it will be exceedingly difficult for the Christian of his model of church to be " in the world " and enter into "the complex world of deterrence and disarmament strategy" (p. 57) when such a world is so wrought with ambiguity. The strength of Hauerwas's " Christ against culture" model of church would appear to be in "bearing witness" and not in attempting to transform, through dialogue, superpower deterrent strategies.

Hauerwas's essay does point to a real need to articulate more fully how just-war theory and pacifism "complement" one another, how the two remain genuine options for individuals within the Christian community. *Should War Be* however, fails to prove that just-war theory and pacifism are based on different eschatological assumption1:1 and are, therefore, mutually exclusive in terms of the Christian faith.

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Cosmogony and Ethical Order: New Studies in Comparative Ethics. Edited by ROBIN W. Lovrn and :FRANK E. REYNOLDS. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985. Pp. 437. $19.95 paper; $55.00 cloth.

What the reader of *Cosmogony and Ethical Order* gets and what he expects might not be altogether in agreement. For me and other philosophers, the terms " cosmogony " and " cosmology" have standardized meanings. Cosmology is the study of the origin and structure of the universe, or, as Milton K. Munitz had defined it in his *Theories of the Universe,* " the study of the astronomical or physical universe as a whole" (this would include origins). Cosmogony, a narrower term, refers to cosmological accounts which are conveyed mythologically. The terms

serve to distinguish mythological efforts from later philosophical and scientific endeavors, the latter of which were attempts to release cosmological speculation from the imagery of myth regarded as too anthropomorphic. This liberation is first seen in the writings of the pre-Socratics where physical notions were substituted for myths. Inasmuch as the work seems intended for a scholarly audience, perhaps sharing a similar notion of cosmogony, the full extent of what is treated in the volume is not conveyed by the title.

The contributors, whose particular traditions do not contain myths recounting the actual creation of the universe, wrestle with the problem of vindicating their usage of the term cosmogony for what they are relating to the ethical order. Burkhalter in her study of the Islamic tradition redefines cosmogony, extending it to eternal creative process almost as a convenience to include Islam here where " cosmogony " is being used as a category of comparison. Reynolds also broadens his definition of cosmogony to allow for the inclusion of Theravada Buddhism. Defining cosmogony as "theories about the origin of the world," Sturm, using the term " origin " synonymously with " beginning," distinguishes three types of beginnings (hence cosmogonies) in terms of their function(s) primitive (" in the beginning" . . .)-legitimization of myths; modern (" we the people of the United States in order to form a more perfect union" ...)– a calculus of rational control; and the third (unnamed)-multi-functional: explanatory, productive, critical, and directive. Marxism as representative of this last consequently becomes a cosmogony.

What is indicated is not that the contributors to the volume do not have a category of comparison for doing comparative descriptive ethics, but simply that the comparative category is not cosmogony. Rather the category is " perspectives on reality " or " metaphysical views," given the notable absence of current scientific or physical theory. Even the terms "beginning" or " origins" might better describe their bases for comparison. In any event, whatever the appropriate term for this category of comparison might be, this ca;tegory includes accounts of creation (mythological, narrative, or otherwise) and cosmic, psychological, and historical processes.

The difficulty of the introduction precludes its being understood by readers untrained in ethics or moral philosophy. This is unfortunate since it is not indicative of characters of the collection of essays, which would be intelligible and interesting for both a general and a technical audience (e.g., philosophers, theologians, historians of religion, sociologists, and anthropologists).

Five types of cosmogonies are identified in this introduction, and the fourteen essays which follow are arranged according to this identification with occasional unavoidable overlapping: (1) single cosmogonies in which

only one myth is explored, (2) cosmogonies which have had a long history, (3) multiple cosmogonies or cosmogonies with more than one myth, (4) cosmogonies which conflict with a culture's thinking, and (5) scientific cosmogonies which replaced cosmogonic myths (reference to Freud and Marx). Before relating the cosmogony to the moral order, most authors spend considerable time developing and familiarizing the reader with the particular cosmogony under consideration. The scholarship of each conjoined with articulate expression makes this work invaluable to those interested is the history of religion or cultural studies.

Prior to introducing the Indian tradition, O'Flaherty points out that, similarly to Staal who maintains that ritual has no meaning but rather is a blank check upon which people write meaning, it could be argued that the same applies to cosmogony. Cosmogony is simply a stage upon which people enact ethical dramas; in itself it is ethically vacuous. Clearly, O'Flaherty and the other contributors to the volume reject this thesis. each firmly believing that the way the world is, is in some sense a directive for moral action, that the moral and cosmic orders are knit tightly together. That this has been and continues to be the belief of various religions and philosophical traditions is unquestionable. Lovin's sion in his " Cosmogony, Contrivance and Ethical Order" of the connection between nature and ethics in Paley's theological utilitarianism is a succulent treatment of claims of this sort. Paley's conviction that nature is ordered and that this order is teleological permits him to develop a theological ethics based on maximization of human happiness.

Ethical naturalism has had a long history and despite its apparent loss of adherents with the rise of modern science and positivitism or empirical philosophy from the 17th century on, once more it is capturing thoughtful minds (e.g. Macintyre, Rorty, and Putnam). Anticipating a wide-scale renewal of interest in ethical naturalism, this work serves as an inspiration to those who likewise maintain a connection between *fact* and *value,* that there is not (except perhaps semantically) an infinite abyss between *is* and *ought,* that evaluation can indeed follow upon description, that the world of moral value is not as estranged from the empirical world as some have come to believe. To those who do not at this time see fit to hold an ethical naturalism, this work would still be at least of historical interest to bear witness to the connections which have been made.

In their introduction, Lovin and Reynolds state that these essays " mark the beginning of an inquiry not its conclusion." This is decisive in evaluating how effective the contributors are in relating the cosmogonic and ethical orders. While each quite clearly maintains a connection, often more attention is paid to an in-depth study of the cosmogony than to the actual relating of the cosmogony to the moral order. Sometimes too, when related, the connection is either vague or of mere structural or terminological (e.g. Atkins, " Cosmogony & Order in Ancient

Greece") significance. Consequently, one might believe the connections to be ultimately trivial or of little practical consequence since the question "What are the particular dictates of moral action?" is left unanswered. This criticism is not altogether pejorative for the following reason: perhaps in certain cases little can be said, and vagueness in what is said is because no probable inferences can be legitimately drawn. This cautiousness of the contributors with respect to the conclusions they draw is a strength. This work *does* mark a beginning and indeed an invaluable one since the category chosen for a comparative study of ethics seems legitimate and offers a wealth of potential for further research and study.

Although *Cosmogony and Ethical Order* is a work in descriptive ethics, it might be viewed, because of the normative concerns expressed in the introduction, as a prolegomenon to a future normative ethics where ethical disagreement or diversity is overcome by appealing to a common thread found to run through the various cosmogonies rather than through an alleged common principle of moral reasoning. Metaethically, however, one would have to be concerned with whether the common thread does in fact accurately represent reality for this agreement to mean anything. And if it does "as the Rhine flows north, the Rhone south; yet both spring from the *same* mountain . . ." (Lovin and Reynolds). there may be a *common* objectively viable view of reality hidden by apparent diversity. The discovery process here marks a beginning.

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