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EDITORIAL

EGOCRACY

by Colin Wright

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. (Eph. 5:18-21)

As a young Christian in the Sixties the first part of this exhortation was constantly drummed into me by the Pentecostals among whom I found myself. But they did not quote it exactly, which caused me considerable grief and frustration. They reduced it to: *Be not drunk with wine, but be drunk with the Spirit*. A parallel was drawn that does not exist in the text. Indeed the text says just the opposite.

The problem with being full of wine, according to Paul, is precisely this: that it involves excess or intoxication, that is, loss of self-control. The Greek word used here is *asotos* (ἄσωτος), literally *beyond redemption*. It is used in the New Testament a number of times, not least of the prodigal son who wasted his inheritance in a life of *riotous living*. In 1 Peter 4:4 it is translated *excess of riot*, that is, profligacy or dissoluteness. It must not be a characteristic of an elder (Titus 1:6) or of the companions of a godly man (Proverbs 28:7).

Clearly, however, what Paul has in view here is the abandonment of all normal restraints, the loss of self-control that results from being drunk. This is contrasted, implicitly yet really, with the result of being filled with the Spirit. The latter, by implication, involves the very opposite—total self-control. This is not a popular idea in evangelical circles today, hardly acceptable in most Reformed circles. The cult of “Let go and let God” is rampant, often denied in word but not in deed. Today’s Christians have forgotten—all too conveniently—that one of the leading marks or evidences of being filled with the Spirit is self-government; see Gal. 5:22-23, where it is badly translated (for modern English) as *temperance*. The original is egocracy (*egkrateia*)—compare with *demo*-cracy (rule by the people) and *aristo*-cracy (rule by the best, i.e. the nobility).

But egocracy is precisely what we mean by *theonomy*. Theonomy is not a new political agenda (at least primarily). It is not a new set of rules to impose on other people (most of the time). Rather it is the conviction that man should govern himself and that he should do so in a specific way: by obedience to the law of God. He must do this in whatever circumstances he finds himself. Thus the farmer will govern his life on the land by applying biblical principles to the way he tills and nurtures it. His focus is on what God says, not the latest prescript from Brussels or the latest fad of his fellows. The Christian school teacher will mould his pedagogical system with a philosophy that is informed by directives and principles drawn from the same Scriptures, not by his own fancies or wisdom. And each man will govern his own every

act, thought and word by the same law of God placed over him in Scripture.

It is the duty of each man to bear this responsibility of governing himself. It is the mark of a free man. Modern man in his unbelief and war against God prefers to relegate this responsibility to others, particularly the State. His mentality is a slave mentality.

In his impassioned defence of true Christian liberty against the oppressive regulation-mad Presbyterian parliaments of the seventeenth century, the great John Milton wrote: “If every action, which is good or evil in man at ripe years, were to be under pittance and prescription and compulsion, what were virtue but a name, what praise could then be due to well-doing, what grammar to be sober, just or continent?” (*Areopagitica*) God, said Milton, never meant man to be kept under a perpetual childhood of prescription. The sure sign of maturity in man is not that he has reached a certain height, weight or age. It is that he can now regulate his own life without a constant stream of commands from his parents. The Christian theonomist simply points out that the regulative principle by which such a man must live is *every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord* (Dt. 8:3). C&S

EDITORIAL NOTICE

What’s in a Name?

On the 1st January, 1997 the Foundation for Christian Reconstruction, the trust that publishes *Christianity & Society*, was renamed **The Kuyper Foundation**. All cheques for subscriptions to *Christianity & Society* should now be made payable to The Kuyper Foundation.

The reason for this change of name is that the Reconstructionist world has become very diverse and its character has for some time been developing in directions away from the broad Kuyperian paradigm that informed and guided it originally. In the light of this the continued use of the term “Christian Reconstruction” in the name of the trust is likely to lead to misidentification, or at least to some confusion. It was felt that a name that more accurately identified the Foundation was therefore needed. It was also felt that a different name would be more likely to lead to people making judgements about what the Foundation stands for based on its own words and actions, not the words and actions of other groups and organisations. In the world of proliferating Reconstructionist options this seemed a sensible and necessary move. The change of name does not mean that we have changed our theology, philosophy or agenda, or that we mean to do so in future. It is the many developments in the broader world of Reconstructionism that has necessitated this move on our part.

Christianity & Society on the Web

Christianity & Society now has a World Wide Web page, which is part of The Kuyper Foundation’s web site. The address is: www.kuyper.org. E-mail can be sent to *Christianity & Society* at the following address: C&S@kuyper.org.

Letter to the Editor

Sir,

Re the editorial “Fealty and Familiarity,” your explanation of the feudal, mediaeval roots of the custom of “hands together” for prayer, I can only say that it is another useful instance of the need to always ask, “Why do we do this, when that is not specifically laid down in the Bible?”

As for the *You/Thou* controversy, I am more than a little surprised that it wasn’t dead and buried long ago. Anyone with even GCSE knowledge of European foreign languages would be aware of three basic facts. One, they still retain the distinction between singular and plural forms of the second person pronoun. Two, the singular form is used for close friends, relatives, inferiors, and pets. Three, this same form is the one used for addressing God! Thus the Germans use *Du*, rather than the formal *Sie*; the Spanish use *tu* and not *Usted*, while the French (though this is only true of Protestants) employ *tu* and not *vous*. But even apart from this an examination of the use of *thou* in the English Bible would soon show that it wasn’t used exclusively when God was being addressed. As you sum up, “We should use words and phrases that are understood by those who are alive today.” A crusade against the use of jargon and theological shorthand is likewise in order, else what is the “stranger within the gate” going to make of what is said?

Going on to other matters, when Andrew Sandlin referred to “the antithesis between the knowledge of covenant-keepers and covenant-breakers,” a difference should surely be recognised between raw data and any conclusions drawn from such data. Seen in this way, there is no difference concerning facts of mere *physical* reality in a purely descriptive aspect. The difference arises when the data is *interpreted*. The believer will interpret them according to his presuppositions, i.e. in the light of the biblical revelation, whereas the unbeliever will interpret them using the presuppositions of such unbelief.

Lastly, he should have been more careful before he put pen to paper on the subject of “Christian Libertarianism.” To say he wrested Dt. 4:2 puts it mildly. The state not authorised to punish employers whose buildings do not meet “recognised” safety codes? Maybe he has ignored Dt. 22:8, which insists on a roof parapet to prevent anyone falling to his death from the flat roofs of the time and place. And can he deny that for an employer to make his workers operate under conditions that endanger life and limb renders that employer liable for any deaths or injuries that result that could have been prevented? Unlicensed doctors? Given what we expect from a doctor, we need to know if he has been trained properly and has had the appropriate experience before being let loose on patients, and that must entail some form of licensing. As for drivers who drive too fast, a car is a ton-and-a-half of metal and glass that can kill at quite low speeds. Again, this means some form of licensing both to make sure that the would-be driver can be trusted to go on the road with the vehicle in question without endangering either himself or others, and as an attestation that the vehicle itself is fit to be allowed on the public highway. If freedom is not to become such only for those who are strong, ruthless, and grasping, then the state has a wider remit than Andrew Sandlin would seem to allow.

The state punishing idolatry? Forget it. Has he forgotten the historic recognition of the division of the decalogue into the so-called first and second tables? The first table embraces the first four commandments summarising duty to God, while the second, covering the last six, summarise duty to fellow-man. It

is within the state’s remit to legislate on matters that fall under the second table. But on matters that fall under the first table it has no right to interfere. Clearly, Mr Sandlin has overlooked the *differences* between the Old Testament church and the New Testament church and overstressed the continuity. The former was located in a literal land of Israel, and was theoretically coterminous with a people. The latter cannot be viewed in those terms; its people are expected to view themselves as strangers and pilgrims, as a *diaspora*, so to speak (1 Pet. 2:11). Nor is the state’s ministry of justice limited to the purely negative aspect, i.e. punishing disobedience. In the parallel reference to this very subject (1 Pt. 2:13-17) we are told that one of the functions of government is the praise of doing what is right as well as punishing wrongdoing (v. 14). As well as the stick there is also the carrot!

When he examines the subject of legitimate disobedience he tends to be overly simplistic. It is all very well to say that “Christians may resist civil tyranny under the authority of a lower civil magistrate.” The crucial question is: what happens if the civil magistracy from top to bottom is handpicked to dance to the tyrant’s tune? Or where the tyrant is actually resorting to what amounts to mass murder in such a context? Or where the state quite blatantly aims to keep the common man in a state of ignorance and terror? Daniel Ortega and the *Sandinista* regime in Nicaragua could not be called perfect. However, only the most obtuse would deny that it was an improvement on the cruel and tyrannical rule of the Somoza family, something that the *Reader’s Digest*, itself no friend of Marxism, saw fit to castigate. If the *Sandinistas* deserve condemnation the *Contras* are far more blameworthy. John Knox and Christopher Goodman would have recognised such a situation; after all, they advocated rebellion against ungodly and idolatrous sovereigns as a duty not merely of the nobles and higher magistrates but of the common people themselves!

As for government-imposed redistribution of wealth, there is one factor that has always to be considered. Has that wealth been gained by honest means? And in this connection I don’t just mean: has it been acquired by merely legal means? It is possible to accumulate wealth by means that are quite legal, and yet do it in ways that could well be morally questionable. In this connection it is important to notice that the Mosaic laws on land inheritance, if strictly followed, would have made it almost impossible for a small group to corner the market, even by the most judicious of means. For one thing, land could not be transferred from tribe to tribe (Num. 36:7-9); there was also a well-defined order of precedence in the inheritance pecking order that would tend to keep it in the family (27:8-11). As if that wasn’t enough, there was the jubilee law, under which all landed property reverted to its original owners; the freehold could not be sold outright, so the “sale” was more like a long-term lease in today’s terms (Lev. 25:8-16, 23-28, 31).

From this we may deduce that it is quite legitimate for the state to prevent the emergence of “over-mighty subjects,” the bane of late 15th century England. This is particularly true if a monopoly power threatens to emerge. “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power tends to corrupt absolutely”; again, only the most obtuse would disagree with this observation of Lord Acton. Certainly God seems to have acted on this principle at Babel (Gen. 11:1-9), to prevent the emergence of such an “absolute power,” and that at an early period in human history! Are we not warned against the emergence of such a power, exerting economic monopoly power worldwide to suppress dissent and compel compliance (Rev. 13:16, 17)?

Yours faithfully,
Barry Gowland

ST AUGUSTINE: HIS LIFE AND THOUGHT

by Colin Wright

PART V: AUGUSTINE'S PHILOSOPHY

Dost thou wish to understand?

Believe.

For God has said by the prophet: "Except ye believe, ye shall not understand" . . . If thou hast not understood, said I, believe. For understanding is the reward of faith. Therefore do not seek to understand in order to believe, but believe that thou mayest understand.

On the Gospel of John, Tractate 29, §6.

Philosophy has had a bad press in Christian circles for a long time. Nevertheless, it is a subject of profound importance to the Christian faith. The neglect of it, moreover, does not imply that its influence has been any the less on our lives. Granted the subject has often been perceived and pursued by academics as the arcane private property of their own inner circle, philosophical views are the stuff of life. We all take a stance in philosophical views of the world in which we are placed. That these views are often not articulated, or even regarded as philosophy, is besides the point. Indeed, unarticulated views are often the most dangerous, because they drive our lives without our being aware of the bases of our thought.

Philosophy is largely concerned with global questions about the structure of our universe rather than its content. It deals with the way we view things to be, what we mean by words and ideas like justice, law, history, life, morality, knowledge. It is concerned with what Abraham Kuyper referred to as our *Weltanschauung*, our world-view or world-outlook.

In this brief look at Augustine's philosophy I want to present his thought in, as much as possible, ordinary everyday language for the benefit of all our readers. Philosophy quite naturally discusses issues at times that are very complex, and a (perfectly legitimate) scientific language has evolved for this purpose. We shall avoid this language as much as possible. Readers interested in pursuing a more technical understanding of Augustine's philosophy may consult with profit Cornelius van Til's *A Christian Theory of Knowledge*.¹

1. Cornelius Van Til, *A Christian Theory of Knowledge* (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co.), pp. 118-147. There is also relevant material in his *A Survey of Christian Epistemology*, by the same publisher.

Augustine was not a professional philosopher. He did not write systematic treatises on the subject. Yet it is widely, indeed almost universally, admitted that the philosophical views expressed in his writings are of profound significance for our culture and the fruit of one of the most extraordinary characters in world history. It has often been said in non-Christian circles that Western civilisation is a comment on Plato. This is partly true. His influence has been overwhelming. Nevertheless I do not believe Western civilisation would have arisen from this cause alone. To my mind, without Augustine there would have been no Western civilisation. We do not trace our origins back to Athens or even the Christian schools of Alexandria but to the bishop of Hippo whose life and work were firmly rooted and grounded in the work of Golgotha. Indeed, I would add that, without Augustine, there could have been no Reformation, either. The Reformation was largely a rediscovery of Augustinian theology and philosophy, after centuries in which the minor aberrations in his theology had been raised to issues of supreme importance and built into the gross deformity of Roman Catholic thought. If anything, then, Western civilisation is a comment on Augustine.

Epistemology

So we begin with one of those technical words! *Epistemology* is derived from the Greek word *episteme*, meaning knowledge. It is the study of, sometimes the content of, our *theory of knowledge*. It deals not with *what* we know but *how* we know and, as Francis Schaeffer² put it, with *how we know we know*.

2. Francis Schaeffer, *He Is There And He Is Not Silent* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1972), page 9. Schaeffer's best three books, *Escape From Reason*, *The God Who Is There*, and *He Is There And He Is Not Silent*, ought to be consulted by every thinking Christian.

Put another way, it examines the *nature* of knowledge, the *limits* of knowledge, and the *validity* of knowledge.³

It has been fashionable to interpret Augustine as a sceptic in his theory of knowledge. The world of sense is uncertain and little able to afford us certainty. Things temporal are not only fleeting, they are largely illusory. But Augustine's "scepticism" was not that of non-Christian philosophy. Scepticism maintains that nothing is certain, that our knowledge by its very nature is always partial, if not inaccurate. Indeed, even if we found the truth we would be unable to recognise it as such. It is admirably epitomised in the statement of the Greek presocratic philosopher, Xenophanes: "There never was nor will be a man who has clear certainty as to what I say about the gods and about all things; for, even if he does chance to say what is right, yet he himself does not know that it is so."⁴

Such ideas are common in modern humanistic thought also. Sir Karl Popper's recent theories are an attempt to circumvent David Hume's scepticism without actually abandoning it.

Augustine was far from embracing any such doctrine. He was firmly convinced that Truth was attainable, that man could have real and certain knowledge. But he could not accept that this knowledge could be founded upon anything that was transient. He did not denigrate creation when he asserted that nothing in it could form the basis for knowledge. He simply pointed out its limitations due to its finiteness and createdness. He also drew attention to the fact that all epistemologies that based themselves on features within creation had proved to be inadequate. His theory of knowledge was firmly based upon the fact of God's omniscience and transcendence. We can know truly because God knows truly.

Many, too, wish to propose Augustine as a precursor of Descartes, the 16th century French humanist. Descartes propounded a theory of knowledge based upon the now-famous *cogito ergo sum*—I think therefore I am. He sought certainty by stripping away everything, by doubting everything, until the only thing left was the certainty of doubt. He then proceeded to build certain knowledge from this base using purely scientific, neutral reason. Now, it is true that Augustine says some things that bear a striking resemblance to Descartes' *cogito*, but his meaning and intention are a million miles from those of Descartes. To claim that Augustine makes scepticism the starting point of his epistemology⁵ is to miss the whole point of his critique. Augustine put forward a stinging critique of scepticism in which he pointed out its self-refuting nature. How could one possibly be certain, i.e., have certain knowledge of the fact, that nothing can be certainly known? To this extent Windelband's comment is correct:

3. One of the easiest ways to stump evolutionists, and bring them down a peg or two, is to raise this question of validity with them. If we are nothing but the product of chemicals, time, and chance, how could we know that? If evolution has taken the course of survival by beating the odds and adaptation to surroundings how do we know that our thought forms are not adapted to that way of things also? Knowledge for evolutionists is not so much problematic as impossible. They cannot even know that they cannot know!

4. John Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy* (London: A & C Black, 1892), p. 115-116.

5. W. Windelband, *A History of Philosophy* (London: Macmillan, 1898) Part III, chap. 1, §22.

He points out that together with the sensation there is given not only its content, which is liable to doubt in one direction or another, but also the reality of the perceiving subject, and this certainty which consciousness has in itself follows first of all from the very act of doubt. In that I doubt, or since I doubt, he says, I know that I, the doubter, am: and thus, just this doubt contains within itself the valuable truth of the reality of the conscious being. Even if I should err in all else, I cannot err in this; for in order to err I must exist.⁶

This criticism of Augustine's is a criticism of the contradictory nature of scepticism, and not a positive argument for one's existence, let alone a starting point for one's philosophy. Dooyeweerd draws attention to this misreading of Augustine's meaning as "having an affinity with Descartes' founding of all knowledge in self-consciousness" by the Jansenists of Port Royal:

For this inner affinity does not exist, in spite of the appearance to the contrary. In an unsurpassed manner CALVIN expounded in his *Institutio* the authentic Christian conception of AUGUSTINE which made all knowledge of the cosmos dependent upon self-knowledge, and made self-knowledge dependent upon a knowledge of God . . . This view is radically opposed to the conception of DESCARTES. In his "cogito," the latter implicitly proclaimed the sovereignty of mathematical thought and deified it in his Idea of God, in a typically Humanist attitude towards knowledge.

Consequently, there is no inner connection between Augustine's refutation of scepticism by referring to the certainty of thought which doubts, and DESCARTES' "cogito, ergo sum." AUGUSTINE never intended to declare the *naturalis ratio* [natural reason] to be autonomous and unaffected by the fall.⁷

I have quoted Professor Dooyeweerd at some length because there is a serious issue involved here. Too often, both within Christian circles and without, cursory readings of texts suggest meanings that are totally at odds with the real intention of the author under review. Augustine in particular has been the unfortunate subject of much of this shallow, first-glance argumentation. Concomitant with this shallow reading is the development of a party spirit. Reading is undertaken with a view not to learning what the author can teach us but to determining whether he is one of us or one of them. We read in order to canonise or anathematise rather than to learn.

This is important also for what I am about to say regarding Augustine's epistemology. His ideas are often seen as Platonic or neo-Platonic. The truth is, we cannot be forever developing new terms to suit our ideas, current ones have to do.⁸ They have to be matched with reality as we see it. So Augustine used the language of his day, but poured his own content into it. This is particularly true of his ideas of goodness, truth, justice, and so on. At first glance they appear Platonic but in reality are far from it. This ought to be clear from the clues to be found in many of the passages from Augustine that I have quoted. Plato's *ideas* or *forms* were pure abstractions at best. They were inherent aspects of the one system of being that includes all that is, even the gods. They are impersonal. Knowledge of them is problematic for

6. *Ibid.*

7. Herman Dooyeweerd, *New Critique of Theoretical Thought* (Nutley, NJ: Craig Press, 1953) vol. 1, p. 196.

8. One of the few to have succeeded at this art is the Dutch philosopher and jurist, Herman Dooyeweerd. But at times even his new terminology has been the cause of misunderstanding rather than enlightenment.

a number of reasons: first, how can finite creatures truly know these cosmic attributes? Second, to know abstractions requires abstract thought, which necessarily limits who can know them. Third and consequently, neither Plato nor his followers believed that any but their own small band of intellectuals at best could know these vitally important aspects of life. Thus real life for most will be governed by tradition and regulation, not truly ethical standards. So that real life for the majority will always be without true meaning or significance: “a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.”

For Augustine, these ideas were not abstract at all, they were very personal. Because they find their origin in God himself. Everything we see and know is as it is simply and purely because God has made it so. As Professor Leff explains, referring to Augustine’s thought on the subject:

In God’s own infinite immaterial nature reside the archetypes, or Ideas, of all that exists in the real world: they are indivisible from His own essence and are the signs of it. That which is distinct in this world is one in God.⁹

He quotes Augustine from his *De Diversis Quaestionibus*: “There are certain ideas, forms, or reasons, of things which are immutable and constant, which are immaterial and contained in the divine intellect.”¹⁰ The consequences of this for a Christian theory of knowledge are highly significant. If every idea, every principle, has its origin in God’s mind and being, and not in some impersonal abstraction unrelated to him, then to know these things is—in a sense—to know God. Knowledge is no longer neutral with respect to God. Nothing we experience is outside or divorced from his mind. Creation might be, indeed is, totally separate from God but it is never unrelated to him in any way. This is what Paul means when he writes that “. . . the holy anger of God is disclosed from heaven against the godlessness and evil of those men who render Truth dumb and inoperative by their wickedness. It is not that they do not know the truth about God: indeed He has made it quite plain to them. For since the beginning of the world the invisible attributes of God, e.g., His eternal power and Divinity, have been plainly discernible through things which He has made and which are commonly seen and known, thus leaving these men without a rag of excuse.”¹¹ It is also what Cornelius van Til meant when he insisted:

The main point is that if man could look anywhere and not be confronted with the revelation of God then he could not sin in the Biblical sense of the term. Sin is the breaking of the law of God. God confronts man everywhere. He cannot in the nature of the case confront man anywhere if he does not confront him everywhere. God is one; the law is one. If man could press one button on the radio of his experience and not hear the voice of God then he would always press that button and not the others. But man cannot even press the button of his own self-consciousness without hearing the requirement of God.¹²

9. Gordon Leff, *Medieval Thought: From Augustine to Occam* (Harmondsworth: Pelican Books, 1970 [1958]), p. 40.

10. Augustine, *De Diversis Quaestionibus* LXXXIII, q. 46. Recently (1982) translated by David L. Mosher as *Eighty-three Different Questions* and published by the Catholic University Press of America as volume 70 in their *Fathers of the Church* series.

11. Romans 1:18-20. From the translation of J. B. Phillips, *Letters to Young Churches*.

12. Cornelius van Til, *A Letter on Common Grace* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1955), p. 40f.

Unfortunately, this is seen as a novelty—albeit a correct and biblical one—of the twentieth century. But Augustine was saying the same things in effect 1600 years ago! Indeed, other things being equal, it is unlikely that Calvin, Van Til or Dooyeweerd would have been able to express themselves thus if Augustine had not preceded them and laid the foundations of the Christian culture upon which they built. The difference lies in language and application, not content.

Furthermore, we can have confidence in our knowledge on this basis. Principles of goodness, beauty, circularity, logical validity, and so on, with which we operate are not mysterious qualities beyond our ability to fathom, but structural principles built into our very nature as creatures who are made in the image of the God, whom they reflect. Augustine was fond of pointing out the nature of man as an analogue of his maker. See especially his *de Trinitate* (where? Read it all!).

How we know is also related to God’s grace towards us. One of the most quoted passages of Scripture in Augustine’s writings is Psalm 18:28—“For thou wilt light my candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.” A candle can only give light as it is lighted from elsewhere; it does not carry illumination within itself. Similarly, says Augustine, whatever our structural ability to know, we cannot know without the gracious illuminating power of God opening and directing our minds. So knowledge, to be true knowledge is based not upon neutral “hard facts” within creation but upon faith in God. Until we come to him all our knowledge is deceptive and illusory. As God and God alone is the truth, so true knowledge can only come from knowledge of him and by his gracious illumination.

History

If Augustine had never written any of his purely theological works he would, nevertheless, have secured for himself, by his philosophy of history alone, a place among the great moulders of human thought.

However, Augustine’s philosophy was not the result of purely human intellectual speculation. It was firmly grounded upon biblical revelation and rooted in Christian thought. No doubt the Christian faith would have produced such a view of history as Augustine gave us in any case. But the laurels must go to Augustine for the *originality of its articulation*. He clarified and made a matter of conscious thought what was previously only a matter of implicit acceptance in Christian circles. His great achievement was, by his writings, to be the most important figure in changing the way a whole society viewed its existence. That influence spread to encompass not only Europe but the Americas also. Humanistic thought is, in all its twists and turns, reliant upon it, whilst thoroughly reprobating it at every turn. Humanism is parasitic; it has no life of its own. It is a secularisation of Christian themes, and often no more than a sick parody of them.

Augustine’s achievement needs to be viewed against the backdrop of the pagan culture of his day. This culture was steeped in Greek thought, thought that was diametrically opposed to the biblical view of things.

His philosophy of history is brilliantly encapsulated in one of his greatest works—perhaps his greatest work—*The City of God (de Civitate Dei)*. This 22 volume work started life as a response to a friend’s request for advice in dealing with the accusations of the heathen that Christianity was respon-

sible for the downfall of Rome. He began it in 413 A.D. and laboured at it in stages for the next thirteen years.

To understand the significance of what Augustine taught we need to explain somewhat the reigning pagan—largely Greek—thought of the day. Greek thought had evolved out of two basic religious foundational systems. The first was the idea of all-that-is as an endless flowing stream of formless being. The second was the later idea of the gods who gave structure or form to this matter, housed on Mount Olympus. One school of thought emphasised the former as ultimate, in which form, order, structure are seen as a corruption of that which is genuine. Our readers may recognise this in various modern movements of thought, for it has never been extinguished. The oldest outworking is in the bacchanalian orgy, later revived in western Europe as the carnival. In these festivals it is not simply a love of excess or riot that is sought, but a return to nature, a casting off of the restrictions of normal life that are seen as constricting and destructive of true life.¹³ Evangelicalism, particularly its more fundamentalist wing, is prone to this opposing of life to law. The hippie culture of the Sixties was a classic instance of this too.

The other religious force emphasised order as ultimate. Without it matter was “evil.” This, too, can be seen reflected in modern intellectualist movements, particularly the political urge to organise and regulate. For these people, the idea that everyone can decide for himself is anarchic and evil. Civilised life means organised life. It is much, much more than a will to power that is at issue here.

Important for us to notice, however, is that there was an underlining unity of belief in the all-encompassing nature of this reality. Whether one believed in personal gods or abstract forms as ultimate, all were contained in this single reality and all were an integral part of it. *There was no-one and no thing beyond this reality.* Thus there was no-one, nor anything, to give it direction or purpose. Indeed, the flow of time seemed to suggest clearly, within this framework of belief, that things simply went round and round. History was cyclical. And, with no purpose to this universe of being, what possible purpose—of any meaningful nature—could there be for each individual being within it?¹⁴

As Augustine began to develop his defence of the Christian faith against the Roman pagans his vision also began to widen. He saw that more than a single historical incident—the sack of Rome—was involved: he had to explain and defend the relationship of God to the world. Above all, Augustine’s eagle-like vision peered through the mists of the prevailing controversy and perceived that the fundamental issue was resolved into the awesome statement that his God was not some bit player on the stage of history, competing on equal terms with all the other forces. *This God was the very creator and governor of this history in its entirety.* He is above it, both

creating and controlling it; he is not a part of it. Neither did he create the universe only to set it on its way, running independently of himself like some vast clockwork gismo. He brings to pass all that happens. Nothing occurs by chance; chance does not exist. So much so, that it is even illegitimate to raise the question, What if God had not existed? All possibility is defined in terms of God’s being; he is the *source* of all possibility. In particular, men are not the final arbiters of their own fate, nor kingdoms the determiners of their future. All depends upon the express will of God alone. As Augustine so clearly expressed it, the times of all kings and kingdoms are ordained by the judgement and power of the true God:

God, the author and giver of felicity, because He alone is the true God, gives earthly kingdoms both to good and bad. Neither does He do it rashly, and, as it were, fortuitously,—because He is God not fortune,—but according to the order of things and times, which is hidden from us, but thoroughly known to himself; which same order of times, however, *He does not serve as subject to it, but Himself rules as lord and appoints as governor.*¹⁵

Augustine flatly refutes the pagan ideas of God’s immanence in creation and in history. God does not order history from within, as angels and humans; he sits above it, transcendent, and appoints its every moment as he chooses. There is no fate hanging over God. He is true master of all that is. A little later Augustine adds: “The cause of the greatness of the Roman Empire is neither fortuitous nor fatal . . . Human kingdoms are established by Divine Providence.”¹⁶

Similarly, claimed Augustine, the *fall* of the Roman Empire is neither fortuitous nor fatal; it is brought to pass by Divine Providence, largely the concomitant of the empire’s sin against its Maker.

Thus, Augustine broke the futility and despair of pagan thought. History, he maintained, does have real purpose. The old cliché that history is “his story” is not wide of the mark. History had a beginning, in the eternal counsels of the ineffable Three-in-One. History has a definite course to run as the outworking of those counsels. And history has a goal too, the day of Jesus Christ. History really is going somewhere; it is not just a series of unconnected and unrelated events, like the endless episodes of some TV soap opera. Even Satan cannot thwart this movement of history. In fact, he is an integral part of it, if only as the dirt rag of history.

This thesis had then, and has had since, profound significance.

First, this philosophy of history, as we have already said, brings relevance and meaning to all of life for all people. Pagan thought allows the truth only to the small esoteric circle. Because God appoints even the minutiae of history even “small” people have significance. God was as concerned and as involved with the fears and worries of those poor farmers whose crops were destroyed at the battle of Waterloo as he was with the earth-shattering ramifications of the battle itself. The “secular” calling becomes highly significant, whether it is keeping the streets clean or piloting the ship of state. People become important, too. Until Christianity hit the scene there was little real understanding

13. One finds this clearly expressed in the modern enigma of the eminent who have everything resorting to common street prostitutes, as witness a number of instances in the British press in recent years. There is a seeking for “real” life in abandon of all the normal restraints in order to find a fulfilment that is felt to be lacking in normal structured life.

14. A similar objection can be raised, and needs to be raised, against the lack of purpose at the foundation of modern humanistic thought. The present debate on morality in Britain (largely engendered by an approaching General Election) is futile if there is no underlying universal and absolute standard of morality—which there cannot be if all that exists is a product of time and chance.

15. *City of God*, Bk IV, chap. 33, my emphasis.

16. *Ibid.*, Bk V, chap. 1.

of the concept of an individual, little recognition of the dignity of those without the trappings of great power. Now God was making it plain that these people were an integral part of his history: things of nought bringing to nought things that are. The concept of Liberty, too, could be nothing more than a sick joke in a system in which neither man nor his life have any significance in absolute terms.

Second, because common man now saw himself as a creature of significance in a history of significance, he would have both cause and confidence to engage in history. The struggle was no longer futile. History was there to be shaped under God and his law. The history books have rarely pointed out the importance of Christianity to the development of civilisation. The appeal of ancient Greek and Roman times is founded upon a lie. Democracy in Athens even in its heyday meant power for only a very small elite of the city. And in Rome in Cicero's day (106-43 B.C.) we are reliably informed that the average citizen had nothing but "human and animal urine derived from the streets and lavatories" to launder his garments.¹⁷ The Christian view of history alone, as a significant history for all men, could lead to the creation of hospitals, schools, universities and courts of law as we know them (and take them for granted). The fact is, life was so meaningless in pagan cultures that such facilities were restricted to the well-to-do. Most Christian monasteries were, originally, designed as centres of learning and places of refuge for the sick. They were also conveniently placed for travellers to act as inns; travel could be dangerous and the new view of life's significance meant that provision had to be made to protect people even on their journeys!

Third, once the foundations of a Christian society had been laid, a concept of real, significant progress could lead to a serious interest in social, scientific and technological advance. Neither Greek nor Roman thought—let alone Chinese thought—had advanced beyond a few speculative ideas, humanistic historians to the contrary. It was not that they were less intelligent than modern Europeans; they simply did not have the foundation of a view of progress in history that was necessary. The structure that God provides to time and its contents has proved to be the only basis upon which such amazing progress could be made.

Truth

Augustine's philosophy bears the stamp of all his other productions—that burning desire to know and to understand. There was nothing that was "academic," as we say, about anything he undertook. In his concept of truth this shines clear, too.

One of his earliest writings as a Christian, his *Soliloquies*,¹⁸ contain some fascinating insights into the way he thought about such things. In Book II, section 2, for instance, he raises the question of the relation between Truth and the universe. Suppose that in some future age the

17. F. R. Cowell, *Cicero and the Roman Republic* (Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1962) p. 91. After such treatment the garments were rinsed in water and hung out to dry.

18. In Book I, section 17 he informs us they were written when he was thirty-three; soon after he had been baptised by Ambrose at Milan. They take the form of a conversation between himself and reason, so are not strictly speaking soliloquy. I quote the *Soliloquies* with reservation; Augustine developed his thought remarkably in the next forty years.

universe were to cease to be. If that were true now it would be true also after the event. But does this not clearly indicate that truth must be independent of everything that could possibly be conceived as not existing?

Reason: Furthermore, does it seem to you that anything can be true, and not be Truth?

Augustine: In no wise.

Reason: There will therefore be Truth, even though the frame of things should pass away.

Augustine: I cannot deny it.

Reason: What if Truth herself should perish? will it not be true that Truth has perished?

Augustine: And even that who can deny?

Reason: But that which is true cannot be, if Truth is not.

Augustine: I have just conceded this.

Reason: In no wise therefore can Truth fail.

Augustine: Proceed as thou has begun, for than this deduction nothing is truer.¹⁹

Furthermore, if truth itself should cease to exist then it would still be true that truth had ceased to exist! This, as the pundits say, is a *reductio ad absurdum*—it flatly contradicts itself. The idea of there being no truth, even when there is nothing that has not been annihilated, is impossible. Truth has a *necessary* existence; it cannot even be conceived not to exist. Augustine's thoughts are groping toward a clearer understanding of God's transcendence, his separation from all that is merely created or temporal. Later he was to emphasise this aspect of God's being when he wrote his magisterial *De Trinitate* (*On the Trinity*). Back of God there is nothing conceivable. God's standards of truth, right, justice, love, goodness are not things he *has*; they are what he *is*. They are not abstractions in God, they are not attributes without which he could still exist. He is these things ultimately and personally. Thus, to know God is the only way to really understand anything, for ultimately the truth of what creation is lies in God. Augustine is in this sense a *presuppositionalist*, though he is attacking the problem from a different angle to modern Reformed apologists. Recall what we quoted from *De Trinitate* in our second article:

For it is not, as with the creature, so with the Son of God before the incarnation and before He took upon Him our flesh, the Only-begotten by whom all things were made; *but He is in such a way as to be what He has.*²⁰

His view of truth is clearly what we see echoed in Van Til's understanding one and a half millenia later, when he taunts unbelievers with the claim that they need to use a Christian concept of truth to argue against Christianity.

Conclusion

Augustine's thinking spanned a wide range of fascinating topics. He has interesting comments on law, mathematics, political economy, man, and time that would double the length of this essay. In Part VI we shall look at one aspect of his anthropology—his passionate concern with the problem of the origin of evil. C&S

19. *Soliloquies*, Book II, section 2 (*NPNF*, vol. 7, p. 548).

20. *De Trinitate*, Bk I, chap. 12, §26.

EVOLUTION AND THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION

by Thomas Schirrmacher

The evolutionist view of the family is a good example of the influence exercised by secular *Weltanschauungen* on ethics.¹ The question of the division of a species into male and female, and particularly of the significant role of marriage and the family in human life, has always been one of the insoluble problems in the theory of evolution. Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, in a widely noticed article in a German newspaper, explains the phenomenon of the human family by deriving it from the breeding habits of animals.² He rejects all other explanations, including those of Konrad Lorenz³: “Neither sexuality nor aggression nor fear suffice.”⁴ His reliance on speculation, and the substitution of “invention” for explanation becomes repeatedly obvious: “The invention of care for the young is certainly the essential origin of differentiated higher social systems.” Or “The essential invention for us as humans was the supplementary development of the individualised ties between mother and child.”⁵

Naturally, Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt is probably the “most consistent of behavioral scientists,”⁶ as his book, *Lehrbuch der Humanethologie*,⁷ clearly demonstrates. Behavioral psychology considers man a being most strongly programmed by innate, non-conditioned behavior and by instinct. Yet, biology and sociology hold quite similar ideas when they handle this precarious subject. The impression arises that, while the scholars are unable to agree on even insignificant details, they are united in insisting that the human family must have originated in the behavior of its animal ancestors. The most distinguished, easy to read *dtv Atlas zur Biologie* describes the origin of the human family as following:

Sexuality and integration into the family: The non-humanoid ancestors of Man probably had a social organisation similar to that of the apes. In polygamous relationships, natural selection preferred the sexually active male and the passive female, but the energies of the most active, highest ranking male would be

exhausted by competition with rivals and the defence of his group against enemies, so that the raising of the young would be left to the females. This social organisation was only profitable in tropical biotopes, which provided sufficient food for the female and for her offspring. With the transition to the omnivorous or carnivorous lifestyle of the steppe or the savannah, which required hunting and food-collecting, natural selection preferred a different division of labor. The female’s perpetual sexual readiness, unique to human beings, made monogamy possible and liberated the male from the incessant necessity of defending his rights from rivals. He could then concentrate on activities outside his territory and transform suppression and rivalry into cooperation, which required exchange of information, and so encouraged the development of speech.⁸

According to this explanation, assumed without a shred of evidence, monogamy developed before man was even able to speak. Thus, conversation in marriage is at best a later product of evolution. Parents’ love for their children is purely a product of evolutionary pressure:

Parental care and domestication: The chance distribution of a high mortality rate among animal young, which reduces the directive effect of selection, is limited by parental care. The ability to provide for offspring is increased with expanding brain capacity. Both factors seem to be closely related to each other through feedback. As the brain became larger, the child’s development decelerated, the period of his dependency lengthened . . . this increased the value of parental care and encouraged the selection of animals with larger brains. Lorenz discovered that disruption of a child’s development resulted primarily in a continuation of childish characteristics (neotony): the human being retains an open-minded curiosity for the rest of his life. The value to natural selection is obvious.⁹

I do not wish to take the time to refute the theory of the evolution of man and of the inclusion of his supposed ancestors—this has been repeatedly and successfully done elsewhere.¹⁰ The discrepancies in the article cited above are obvious. It repeats six contradictory theories about man’s departure from his animal ancestry, and, as always, cites no evidence of the transition from animal to human.¹¹ Even if

1. As best seen in a lecture by a professor of anthropology, Ch. Letourneau, *The Evolution of Marriage*, Walter Scott, (London, 1891).

2. Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt. “Wie Liebe in die Welt gekommen ist,” *Die Welt*, Nr. 205, Sept. 1, 1984, p. 1 of “Die Geistigen Welt.”

3. On criticism of Lorenz from a Christian point of view, see Klaus Berger, *Abbau des Göttlichen*, Schwengeler Verlag, (Berneck, 1990); Klaus Berger, *Evolution und Aggression*, Schwengeler Verlag, (Berneck, 1981). From a secular point of view, see Hugo Moesch, *Der Mensch und die Graugans: Eine Kritik an Konrad Lorenz*, Umschau, (Frankfurt, 1975).

4. Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, *op. cit.* 5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.* Subtext to photograph, Column 1.

7. Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, *Lehrbuch der Humanethologie* (Munich, 1984).

8. Günter Vogel, Hartmut Angermann, *dtv-Atlas zur Biologie*, Vol. 2, dtv, (Munich, 1975), p. 501.

9. *Ibid.*

10. See for example, Duane Gish, *Fossilien und Evolution*, Hänssler, (Neuhausen, 1983) (English original: *Evolution? The Fossils Say No!*); M. Bowden, *Ape-Men: Fact or Fallacy*, Sovereign Publ., (Bormley, GB, 1981); Reinhard Junker and Siegfried Scherer, *Entstehung und Geschichte der Lebewesen*, Weyel Lehrmittelverlag, (Gießen, 1988); Reinhard Junker, *Stamm der Mensch von Affen ab?: Die Aussagen der Bibel und die Daten der Naturwissenschaft*, Hänssler, (Neuhausen, 1993).

11. Günter Vogel, et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 492-493.

we assume that evolution did occur, this explanation of the origin of the human family is weak. It silently assumes what it wishes to explain; why the woman, unlike the animal female, is always able to have sexual relations, or why the period of time between birth and adulthood is so much longer for humans than for animals, for example. The statement, “The female’s perpetual sexual readiness, unique to human beings, made monogamy possible . . .” is circular reasoning, comparable to Eibl-Eibesfeldt’s “invention.” (The perpetual availability for sexual activity, by the way, also makes possible other forms of human social life which are forbidden by God, and which restrict the increase of the human race.)

As unfounded as the theory of the evolution of the human family is in its details,¹² it is still the basis for many modern currents of thought, for such theories clearly have great consequences for man in his everyday life, particularly when he holds his philosophy for unassailable science. Ever since Friedrich Engels rejected research into the family prior to 1860 as being “still under the influence of the five books of Moses”¹³—an influence now considered taboo—there have been no classical alternatives to the evolutionist view of the family.

As a result, we forget that the idea of an evolution of marriage and the family is the basis of many world-transforming, philosophical systems. Whether National Socialism,¹⁴ Marxism, the sexual revolution or the Frankfurt school, all assume that the family and marriage have developed in mankind unconsciously by natural selection, and that the responsible human being can and must shake off the tyranny of the roles it prescribes. Whenever one reads a book on the sociology of the family,¹⁵ or the wide-ranging literature of the Frankfurt School, whose influence can be observed in politics, education and child raising, one recognises the doctrine of the family’s evolution, which is equally the doctrine of the sexual revolution.

We are often unaware how closely opinions about the family are related to religion.¹⁶ An “enlightening” article in the popular youth magazine, *Bravo*, was written by a Dr. Goldstein under the pseudonym, Korff and Sommer.¹⁷ That the writer is employed by the Lutheran Church in the Rhineland as counselor for child-raising and is a professor of psychology and sociology, demonstrates the extent to which this problem has penetrated the protective walls of ecclesiastic circles. The German State Churches no longer endorse lifelong monogamy, but have adopted evolutionist ideas of sexuality.

A significant early work on the subject, *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staates* (“The Roots of

12. See E. L. Hebdgen Tylor, “Theoretical Approaches to the Study of Family, Marriage, and Sex” in *The Journal of Christian Reconstruction*, 4 (1977/1978), 2: *Symposium on the Family*, pp. 149-169.

13. Friedrich Engels, *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staates*, Soziale Klassiker 12, Marxistische Blätter (Frankfurt, 1973), p. 11.

14. Wilhelm Schmidt, *Rassen und Völker*, Vol. 1 (Luzern, 1946), pp. 69-96.

15. On the Frankfurt School, see Wolfgang Brezinka, *Die Pädagogik der Neuen Linken*, Reinhardt (Munich/Basel, 1981); Immanuel Lück, *Alarm um die Schule*, Hänssler (Neuhausen, 1979); Joachim Cochlovius, *Ideologie und Praxis der Frankfurter Schule*, (Krelingen, 1983); Georg Huntemann, *Die Zerstörung der Person*, VLM (Bad Liebenzell, 1981).

16. See Günther Kehr, *Religionssoziologie* (Berlin, 1968), pp. 107ff.

17. Reiner Roedhauser, “In Bravo nichts Neues”, *Concepte* 8, 1977, pp. 1-X.

Family, Private Ownership, and the State”), was written by Friederich Engels.¹⁸ Engels, in an historical outline, mentions Bachofens 1861 “Mutterrecht,” as the first evolutionary history of the family.¹⁹ He then enlarges on Karl Marx’s personal notes on Lewis H. Morgan’s “Ancient Society” of 1877²⁰ and relates it to his economic ideas. He believes that man practised “uncontrolled sexual relations” in the beginning. He contradicts himself, however, by suggesting that the “original communistic community knew a maximal size for the family.”²¹ The development of the family itself and of monogamy resulted, according to Engels, from the condemnation of incest in sibling marriage. At the same time, Engels believes, the developing awareness of “yours and mine” led to the concept of private property.

Engels derives his arguments from ethnological studies into the societies of “primitive” peoples. Assuming that the cultures of “primitive” peoples are identical with those of early man,²² he makes the same mistake made in other studies on the development of culture. One can assume certain wide-ranging changes in these societies, even if one does not accept the possibility of the alternative concept of degeneration. The influence of Engels’ work should not be underrated. It contains the one aspect of Communism which has perhaps been most widely adopted in modern thinking.

The Myth of Matriarchy

Since Engels bases his interpretation of history on the supposed matriarchy of earlier epochs, we should investigate the idea. A matriarchy is a society in which the women rule, in contrast to patriarchy, in which the men rule.

It is not only feminists who propagate the idea of prehistoric matriarchal societies. It is common to (1) feminists; (2) feminists writers who wish to create a feminist religion with a maternal deity; (3) Marxist philosophers, particularly in the official ethnology of socialist states; (4) psychoanalysts who build on Sigmund Freud and Sandor Ferenczi; and (5) some journalists, such as Klaus Rainer Röhl,²³ who take up the subject of the Amazons, which is apparently fascinating to fans of popular science.

H. J. Heinrichs has demonstrated in a well-documented work, that Bachofen’s theories are experiencing a renaissance in conservative, as well as in liberal camps, according to which consequences are drawn from his interpretation of history.

A standard book on ethnology describes the matriarchy as following:

J. J. Bachofen’s book, *Das Mutterrecht*, was published in the year 1861. Since then, the treatment of the question of matrilinear societies²⁴ continues to be an issue in anthropological research. Early scholars, such as McLennen, Tylor, Morgan and Engels, believed that the period of the so-called patriarchy had been preceded by a period of matriarchy . . . They assumed promiscuity to have been common to primaeval society, so that a child’s biological father could not be traced. Since the case was different

18. *op. cit.* 19. *Ibid.*, p. 12. 20. *Ibid.*

21. *Ibid.*, p. 43. 22. See Will Durant, *Kulturgeschichte der Menschheit*, Vol. 1, Ullstein (Frankfurt, 1981), pp. 43ff, 48ff.

23. Klaus Rainer Röhl, *Aufstand der Amazonen: Geschichte einer Legende*, Econ Verlag, (Düsseldorf, 1982)

24. “Matrilinear” means that ancestry is determined by the line of the mother.

with the biological mother, who could be undeniably determined, society developed, according to the earlier theorists, the complex of the matriarchal system, which was later, with the development of private property, given up in favour of the patriarchy. This reconstruction of social evolution can not hold its ground against the results of ethnological studies, but is still widely upheld, particularly in feminist literature.²⁵

There has never been a matriarchal society, as the quote from Barganski's work shows. The *Taschenwörterbuch der Ethnologie* defines matriarchy as follows: "A political-legal system conceived by early theorists, who postulated that those societies who recognise only matrilinear descent were ruled by women. No society, as 'primitive' as it may be, knows a matriarchal order in the sense of this definition."²⁶ The *Wörterbuch der Ethnologie* says:

There are so many myths about woman's original superiority, that they have given rise to the thesis that there must have been a period of history in which matriarchal power existed (Bachofen, 1861; Morgan, 1877; Reed, 1975; Davis, 1977). Actually, contemporary ethnology has been unable to find any evidence of any purely matriarchal system. Women do have significant influence in matrilinear and matrilocal societies, in which the husband leaves his ancestral home to move to that of the wife. In these societies, however, the men still retain most of the political power . . .²⁷

For this reason, the conservative ethnologist, Uwe Wesel, chose the title, *Der Mythos der Matriarchat* ("The Myth of Matriarchy") for his excellent, comprehensive study of the subject.²⁸ J. Bamberger²⁹ and Hartmut Zinser³⁰ use similar titles for their works. The Marburg ethnologist, Horst Nachtigall, originally gave his article, "Das Matriarchat aus der Sicht der Völkerkunde und der Verhaltensforschung" the title, "Das Reich der Amazonen hat es nie gegeben" ("There Never Was a Kingdom of Amazons").³¹

Nachtigall's judgement is devastating: "A government by women, in the sense that in certain societies women played the same role played by men in Bachofen's time—that only women took part in the communal bodies which passed laws, made decisions or determined public affairs—exists nowhere on the earth."³²

Clearly all theories about matriarchal societies meet opposition from exactly those who ought to know best: the ethnologists. Ethnology has grown out of its evolutionist stage. This does not mean that ethnologists generally view evolutionist ideas critically, but they do consider all concrete

25. Thomas Bargatzky, *Einführung in die Ethnologie*, H. Buske (Hamburg, 1985), p. 79.

26. Michel Panoff and Michel Perrin, *Taschenwörterbuch der Ethnologie*, Dietrich Reimer Verlag, (Berlin, 1982), p. 201.

27. Gisela Maler, "Geschlecht," in *Wörterbuch der Ethnologie*, ed. by Bernhard Streck, DuMont Buchverlag, (Cologne, 1987), p. 65.

28. Uwe Wesel, *Der Mythos der Matriarchat: Über Bachofens Mutterrecht und die Stellung von Frauen in frühen Gesellschaften*, Suhrkamp (Frankfurt, 1980).

29. J. Bamberg, "The Myth of Matriarchy: Why Men Rule in Primitive Society," in *Women, Culture and Society*, ed. by M. Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere (Stanford, 1974).

30. Hartmut Zinser, *Der Mythos des Mutterrechts*, Ullstein Materialien, Ullstein Verlag (Frankfurt, 1981). Compare with Zinser's comments at the end of the essay.

31. Horst Nachtigall, "Das Reich der Amazonen hat es nie gegeben: Zum Streit um das Matriarchat," *Die Welt*, Nr. 177/1986, August 2, 1986, "Geistige Welt," p. 15.

32. *Ibid.*

theories of a succession of evolutionary stages outdated, since any single theory can only consider a fraction of known nations or cultures, but can not do justice to all.

Ethnological materials are devastating for the advocates of the matriarchy. The question is not whether women acted as warriors (Amazons), whether they played a dominating role in the family tree or in inheritance of property, whether a couple's home was located according to the mother's residence (matrilocal) or according to the wife's (uxorlocality). Nor is it whether individual women played a dominating role in positions of authority³³ or were worshipped as maternal deities. Ethnology has discovered all of these in past and present cultures. The question is whether there has ever been a society comparable to a patriarchy, in which women continually ruled as a matter of principle (matriarchy).

The rejection of the historicity of the matriarchy reaches beyond ethnology. Neither archaeology nor classical philology accept Bachofen, which is a serious consideration, since he based his theory almost exclusively on Greek and Roman sources (mythology).³⁴ On the subject of the derivation of matriarchy from the existence of maternal deities, Kippenberg simply says: ". . . the classical construction of Bachofen's 'maternal deities as a reflection of the matriarchy' has been annihilated."³⁵

The theologian, Helen Schüngel-Straumann, who writes about the image of God from a feminist point of view, and who believes that she can derive matriarchal structures from ancient mythology even without historical sources, says about Bachofen: "His study is, however, not historical, but ideological, his background is philosophical Platonism, which holds the masculine (mental or spiritual) principle to be superior. The feminine matriarchal stage serves only as contrasting emphasis to the higher masculine age."³⁶

She speaks of a "masculine self-justification"³⁷ and admits: "Feminist research into matriarchy does not work with historical sources in the strictest sense of the word, but only with myths, since these often retain or reflect the conditions of the social level of society . . ."³⁸

That needs to be proved. Whether, for example, a myth represents reality or a mythical contrast world—which also reflects on reality—can only be determined when historical sources are available as a basis.³⁹

One of the best refutations of the various theories of matriarchy is the book, already cited, by Hartmut Zinser, *Der Mythos des Mutterrechts*,⁴⁰ which, however, does not address their evolutionist roots. Zinser accuses Bachofen's, Engels' and Freud's theories of historical war between the sexes of representing ideals without any basis in reality, of

33. See for example, Walter Hischberg, (ed.), *Neues Wörterbuch der Völkerkunde*, Dietrich Reimer Verlag, (Berlin, 1988), p. 195.

34. See B. A. Bäuml, *Das Mythische Weltalter: Bachofens romantische Deutung des Altertums* (Munich, 1965).

35. Hans G. Kippenberg, "Einleitung: Bachofen-Lektüre heute," *Johann Jakob Bachofen, Mutterrecht und Urreligion*, ed. by Hans G. Kippenberg, Alfred Kröner Verlag (Stuttgart, 1984), p. xxxvi.

36. Helen Schüngel-Straumann, "Matriarchat-Patriarchat," *Lexikon der Religionen*, ed. by Hans Waldenfels and Franz König, Herder, (Freiburg, 1987), p. 393.

37. *Ibid.*

38. *Ibid.*

39. Thomas Schirrmacher, "Sozialhistorische Aspekte der Märchen und Sagenforschung," *Zur Kritik der marxistischen Märchen- und Sagenforschung und andere volkskundliche Beiträge*, Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft, (Bonn, 1991).

40. Hartmut Zinser, *op. cit.*

merely supporting the idea of male superiority in a new fashion. Although all three ideas are now being used to defend equal rights, Zinser sees them as a derogation and disparagement of women.

Under the title, “The mind is masculine,” Zinser refutes Johann Jakob Bachofen in masterly manner. Bachofen considered the transformation of matriarchy into patriarchy to be progress, for now the mind reigns! Under the title, “Labor is masculine,” Zinser opposes Engel’s work, “The origin of the family . . .” Under the title, “The Drives are masculine,” Zinser refutes Freud.

Clearly, Bachofen, who himself drew no conclusions from his theories, has been used by others to prove their long-held *Weltanschauungen*, which widely contradict each other, as can be seen in the renaissance of his ideas in conservative, as well as in liberal circles.

I would extend Zinser’s conclusions even farther: the matriarchal theories do not give the woman new dignity, but

only assume the essential superiority of the man, which is unjustified biblically. The “war between the sexes” cannot be ended by assuming unprovable stages of evolution, but, in my opinion, only by accepting the absolute standards given in the Bible, which reveals the position of man and woman in creation. Indeed, the “war between the sexes” can become true love, which ends all uncontrolled domination of mankind over mankind and clarifies the role of true authority. This prevents the distribution of duties between the sexes from becoming a question of relative value, as in the case with Bachofen, Engels and Freud, for, created in the image of God, man and woman are equal in value, but not in nature. Because of these very differences, they can and should become one. On the basis of forgiveness, true love enables both to give up false claims to authority. The denial of self makes proper authority possible, which never goes beyond the limits set by God, “submitting to one another in the fear of God” (Eph. 5:21). C&S

MUSIC AS AN INDICATOR OF SOCIAL VALUES[†]

by John Peck

Introduction

My thesis is that music is not a neutral, isolated phenomenon, to be judged merely by the way it is used. Generally speaking, Christians who take Scripture seriously have had little to say about the arts in general, and almost nothing to say about music as such. This is largely because we have made hardly any attempt to develop an aesthetic theory which corresponds with the thought-forms of Scripture. I want to insist that music, quite apart from words or social associations, is itself, in its very forms, expressive of the values operating in the culture within which it appears and flourishes.

This paper is necessarily tentative: I am not a musicologist or a sociologist. I owe a lot to Seerveld, to Hauser’s *Social History of Music*, and *Whose Music?* by John Shepherd et al. So what I am putting forward here is the germ of an idea: something you might want to work on. Let me start with a fairly elementary theory of music as an art.

1. How music works

Music-making is one aspect of the creation mandate of Genesis 1:28 and 2:15-17, viz to cultivate and conserve the

materials of our creation in such a way as to unfold its “goodness,” its manifold value. In this case, air vibrations are used.

Music works by creating sound patterns which produce vibratory effects in the hearer’s body. These in turn generate what I tend to call “mood-complexes.” (Not necessarily simple moods, or organised emotions. They often reflect the complexity, even incoherence, of our emotional life). In preliterate societies these are accepted as of equal significance with emotional experience arising from any other circumstance. Remnants persist in more developed cultures (e.g. at weddings and funerals).

But gradually music has also developed as an art; that is, a way of inducing *provisional* mood-complexes which we might well not experience in any other way, and which we may subsequently embrace or reject.

Examples might be found in background music to a TV drama, or listening to a Souza march in a concert. One might see a biblical example in David’s playing for Saul. Saul’s rejection of the LORD resulted in his mind being demonically affected (cf. Judas). Under such circumstances proper decision making, especially towards God, was impossible. David’s music brought about a temporary, provisional normalcy. Saul made no good use of it, however, and eventually rejected even that door of opportunity for repentance.

[†] This is the text of a lecture given to the Association of Christian Reconstructionists at its annual retreat in August 1996 in the UK.

2. Our moods depend on our value-system

But the creation of mood-complexes themselves is dependent on our value-systems. For example, if you hate war, martial music may simply create a mood of annoyance. We can see this on a larger scale: the kind of music current in any society will be symptomatic of its values.

However, I am not simply referring to whether people like rock, pop, or ops. For my purpose, these might actually turn out to be different versions of the same kind of music. I mean something deeper than that. But first let's ask a different question:

3. Is there a typically Christian value-system?

I am sure you would agree that there is a typically Christian value-system. However it is a little more difficult to see this in relation to our mood-complexes. Moods can be associated with many different things and values. For instance, we would not put aggressiveness high on the Christian list; yet there are surely times when we would share with Amos, or that first scathing chapter of Isaiah, the corresponding mood of anger.

4. Value-systems are directed by a world-view

A world-view is what John Shepherd calls a "world-sense." It is what Scripture would call a "wisdom"—a particular way of seeing how the world works, and in particular, how human beings "work." It is this which gives direction and values to a community. And this is what art, subconsciously, reveals, and cannot help revealing. The rest of this article presents examples of what I mean.

(i) *The music of a uniform Christendom: the Gregorian chant*

There are three particular factors to note about Gregorian chant. First, the style of it strongly suggests a pentatonic scale (F# G# A# C# D# F#, do ray me soh la doh). The point about this is that this is a "natural" scale; it is almost, though not entirely, universal among preliterate peoples, especially those with an animistic worldview. It is also natural, in the sense that there seems to be a natural tendency for people to use its intervals; it appears to be a development of the scale derived from the natural harmonic resonances created when a string is plucked. In other words, such music belongs to a worldview that identifies human experience with the course of nature. The positive value of this is that it gives people an intense personal rapport with the natural world. But in typical tribal animism the powers of nature are worshipped, and this allows little or no development of the cultural mandate.

The second point to note is that Gregorian chant is not purely pentatonic. There may well be two reasons for this: one is that certainly its origins are in Hebrew psalmody, of which we know very little now. But the other is that it is disciplined by patterns of music known as "modes" (rather like, but not the same as, our "keys"). These derive from a Greek tradition going back to Pythagoras, which sees music as essentially a mathematical art, as painting was an art of visual objects, sculpture an art of three dimensions, dance an art of movement, etc). In other words it has a strongly abstract, immaterial quality, corresponding with the Platonic belief that abstractions (in contrast with material

particulars) were a key to knowledge of the Real. A typically Christian version of this view of music is found in Augustine's *De Musica*. What the church did was to "baptise" that attitude, making religious devotion the "spiritual" thing, over against the physical world. The process tended to preserve an attitude to the intellect awkwardly close to the Hellenistic idolatry of abstract discourse.

Plainsong is thus expressive of God as "spiritual," abstracted from the world. Taken as a *norm* for religious music, it expresses a dualistic worldview; the common world becomes in some way sub-spiritual.

Thirdly, it was *homophonic*, that is to say, it was essentially a single line of music without harmonies as we know them today. When other "voices" were introduced (in what is known as *organum*), they were simply reproductions of the line at intervals of fifths and fourths above and below the line; and these apparently corresponded with the natural range of base, tenor and treble voices.

Popular secular music, so far as we can tell, was probably more rhythmic, being associated with dance. Possibly it was primitively polyphonic (perhaps rounds)—we do not know. Troubadour music (c. 1100 and after) was not so.

Such a music corresponds with the social order of the early Middle Ages. Christendom had barely shaken off the tribal animism of Rome's invaders; the early feudal system (say to c. 1120) was a comprehensive, single-minded culture in which high and low were equally and unreflectingly interdependent for their identity and ordered by a Christianity that had inherited a dualistic view of life from its earlier environment.

The first extant manuscript of secular music (*Sumer is ycumen in*), is dated at least a century and a half later (somewhere about 1250, though its six-part harmony suggests a sophistication needing time for development. NB: also there is a Latin religious verse, and it was discovered in an abbey, suggesting that even secular music was under religious supervision).

(ii) *The culture of social interaction—polyphony*

The thirteenth century shows the beginning of a profound change. The *organum* develops some variations, allowing the other voices some latitude, (even allowing tripping rhythms). Significantly, (though there was considerable borrowing between the church and the world) in its musical style the church was strongly resistant to change. (One product of this was the motet, which often had both religious and secular settings.)

In secular music the beginnings of part singing, however, develop, and quite rapidly, so that by the end of the 14th century the techniques have become quite sophisticated. A significant example is the work of Machaud (c. 1300-1372). The tune is uncannily like plainsong sung faster, with quite sophisticated parts either with voices or instruments. But there is no structure, as we know it, to the pieces as a whole.

All this corresponds with a profound change in European culture. The uniformity of Christendom begins to come under question with the failure of the Crusades, the rise of the sects, reforming efforts, criticism of the Papacy—e.g. Francis of Assisi (1182-1226), the Albigensians, the Waldensians, Wycliffe (1329-1384), Huss (1373-1415), John of Paris (1250-1306), and the satire of the poet Langland. This gave rise to a reaction in the increasing centralisation

of the Papacy—excommunication bulls, larger papal claims over the civil powers (especially Innocent III, 1198), the Inquisition (1233), and the marginalising of heretics, witches, homosexuals and Jews. The result is the rise of a new sense of individual identity.

(iii) *The culture of human responsibility*

The rise of Renaissance culture lays new emphasis on form, symmetry, structure, and gives fresh interest in the status of mankind in the universe. This is expressed musically by the interest in pieces of music which have a beginning, a middle, and an end.

The change is then accelerated by the Reformation, in which justification by faith emphasises the significance of the individual, and the consequent change in the conception of society as defined by the mutual interaction of individuals, over against the notion of the individual as defined by the community. The biblicism of the Reformers also led to a new appreciation of the creation mandate, and the human responsibility to bring order into the world.

It is during this period that polyphony really develops its art; from Byrd to Palestrina. It is in this same period that music begins to be *measured*, that is, preserved in divisions that we call “bars.” Timing of the music is finally brought under control. And from Luther onwards, the distinction between sacred and secular music becomes less and less easy to detect. The change is enormous.

(iv) *The culture of a Rationally Ordered Society—“Baroque”*

This ideal of social order develops in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries to the extent that high society is deeply ritualised. Everyone has a place, a type of dress, an etiquette appropriate to their station. Hence the music of the Bach family, which virtually spanned this period, came to its peak in J. S. Bach (1685-1750).

This music is characterised by an elaborate polyphony and structural development of an almost mathematical precision, so that a wrong note in, say, a Brandenburg Concerto stands out like a sore thumb! One can see a parallel in the visual arts in the work of painters such as Poussin. But often such pictures have a nostalgia for nature. Inevitably, there was a reaction.

(v) *The culture of emotional experience—Romanticism*

The shift, it seems, was quite dramatic. Hausner says, “The change of style . . . the replacement of objective and normative by more subjective and less restrained forms, is probably expressed most clearly of all in music, which now, for the first time, becomes an historically representative and leading art. In no other form did the change-over occur so suddenly and so violently . . . that even the contemporary public spoke of a ‘great catastrophe’ having taken place in music. The acute conflict between J. S. Bach and his immediate successors, above all the irreverent way in which the younger generation made fun of his out-of-date fugal form, reflects not only the change from the lofty and conventional style of the late baroque to the intimate and simple style of the pre-romantics, but also . . . from a still fundamentally mediaeval method of juxtaposition, which the rest of the arts had already overcome in the Renaissance, to emo-

tionally homogeneous, concentrated, dramatically developed form . . . The essential point for them . . . was the expression of the flow of emotions as a unified process with gradual intensification and a climax . . . in contrast to a constant feeling spreading itself equally over the whole movement.” (*Social History of Art*, pp. 574f.)

Romanticism in music spread over something like two centuries, from as early as Mozart (1756-1791), to Ravel (1875-1937) in the present century. Mozart and Beethoven (1770-1827), are transitional, and it could be argued that their greatness lies in part at least in the fact that their music has the power of both styles.

(vi) *The disinherited culture*

It is popular, but surely perilous, to assess one’s own cultural environment, and Protestants of a biblical tradition are notoriously condemnatory. But some things are fairly clear.

The First World War was devastating; the optimism that pervaded the world view of the previous century dissolved at a touch, and with it came a sense that nothing in the past could be trusted. Classical musicians (like other artists) looked for new idioms to express the new era. So we have Cage’s anarchism, in which whatever is, just is; Schoenberg’s serial music in which no note means more than any other; Stockhausen’s electronics, in which every note is capable of infinite manipulation. One striking thing is that these composers were acutely conscious about the relationship of their music to their contemporary culture; and their search for relevant idioms was noticeably self-conscious. It is as if the cultural change as they saw it was so radical that it demanded solutions, if there were any, on a level that called every assumption into question.

Conclusion

I do not think that all this means that there is likely to be a “Christian” style of music, constructed to correspond with the biblical world-view, still less one which might become a criterion for judging the Christian-ness of a musical piece. This is not how art works, or indeed, Christianity. Art does not work “to order.” The composer chooses and makes his music because it “sounds right”; it has grasped his imagination as something significant enough to demand expression, and the expression of it is directed by that. It must just “fit.” The artist can only work “to order” insofar as his patronage shares in a profound and instinctive way his own world-view and symbolic system. And, as I have remarked earlier, moods are applicable to many different stimuli.

Serious music, however, does respond to the spiritual aspects of any culture. The “third way” of the Christian as a cultural being is not a rejection of everything in the world of culture. The Christian sees all the cultures of the world as using the good things of creation wrongly: distorted by idolatries, which give elements of creation divine power and authority. The Christian task, then, is to live redemptively, restoring deified things to their proper place. In this case, for instance, Christians would see plainsong as the mediaeval attempt to express God’s holiness in music. We would appreciate the moods of remoteness and independence of time in the music, but reject the idolatry of religion and church which gave it such a special status in its day as *the*

music of faith. There is, of course, an infinite variety in even our limited human experience of God; and it surely would be an idolatry to say of *any* type of music, however much of our vision of God it embraced, that it was in some exclusive way, “Christian” music. For the Christian, the fundamental problem of human culture is its idolatries: the giving of power and authority to things other than God-in-Christ. Idolatry is seldom the direct worship of evil; rather it is the elevation of something in this “good” creation to the place of deity. Thus the Christian’s task is not to reject it, but to restore it to its proper place. In many respects, music is itself an act of worship, or heightening the value of that with which it is associated. Not all worship is *divine* worship, of course; but Christians may often be able to identify the gods of their age from the prevalence of a particular musical form or style.

This does mean that we may understand more clearly what music is doing to us, not only as individuals but as communities. We may enter into moods of awe, ecstasy, and peace, which normally would be beyond us. But we will also

be aware of what it is offering us, and how, as Christians, we may respond to it. Moreover, in considering how we do respond, we may learn more about ourselves.

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THE QUR’ÂN AND THE BIBLE COMPARED

by *Christine Schirrmacher*

Do Christians and Muslims believe in the same God? Is the Allah of the Qur’ân the same God as depicted in the Old and New Testament? Those who advocate dialogue between Muslims and Christians emphasise that both religions have common roots: Both revere Abraham as their ancestor. The Qur’ân as well as the Bible recounts the story of Adam and his wife transgressing in paradise, of Moses and Israel’s marching through the Red Sea. The Qur’ân and the Bible tells us of Jesus, Mary and John the Baptist. But not everything sounding similar has the same content and meaning. Let us look at some of the most remarkable similarities and differences between the Bible and the Qur’ân, between the Muslim and the Christian creed.

GOD	
<p>Christians as well as Muslims believe in one God, the Creator of heaven and earth and the creator of each single individual. God has put down his will in writing in his holy book. On the Day of Judgement, he will call everybody to account at the end of the times.</p>	
Qur’ân	Bible
<p>1. Allah is the creator of the universe and of each single individual, but he is transcendental, i.e., he is separated from creation. There is no connection between creator and creature (sura 55:1-78; 6:100-101).</p>	<p>1. God created man in his image and made him his counterpart. He revealed his character in his creation. Jesus is the bridge between God and man (John 1:14-15).</p>
<p>2. Allah has no children. Jesus may not be worshipped as God. To believe in the trinity is polytheism. To worship more than one God is the most evil sin in Islam which can’t be forgiven, since there is only one God (Allah means “the God” or “the goddess”) (5:72-73 . 75; 4:171-172).</p>	<p>2. God’s only Son is Jesus Christ. Jesus came to earth as a human being and is himself God. Father, Son and Holy Spirit are a single, triune God (John 1:1-2).</p>
<p>3. Allah is not the father of Jesus Christ. He is the omnipotent and merciful God. The Qur’ân accuses the Christians of worshipping three Gods: God, Jesus and Mary. This was probably Muhammad’s perception of the trinity as it was described to him by Christians in his lifetime (9:30-31).</p>	<p>3. God is the Father of Jesus Christ and the Father of his children (Romans 8:15-17). The trinity consists of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Mary was a mere human being and does not belong to the trinity (Mt. 28:19).</p>

JESUS

The Qur’ân and the Bible tell us about Jesus whom God has sent to Israel. The Qur’ân as well as the Bible call him “Christ.” He was born from the virgin Mary, called the Israelites to faith, has ascended to heaven and will come again to earth at the end of the ages.

Qur’ân	Bible
1. Jesus was created by Allah through his word (“Be!”) and was moved by God’s might into Mary. He is but a human being (3:59; 5:75; 5:116-117).	1. Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit within Mary. He was a real human being and true God at the same time and in one person (Luke 1:35).
2. Jesus was one of the most outstanding prophets of history, but Muhammad is the last prophet, the “seal of the prophets” (33:40; 61:6). Muhammad’s coming is already announced in the Old Testament by Moses and Isaiah. In the New Testament Jesus himself announces Muhammad (2:67ff; 7:157).	2. Jesus entered the world as the Saviour and Redeemer who was foretold in the Old Testament. As the Son of God, he is the highest prophet, who announced the coming of the Holy Spirit as counselor (John 14:16). Muhammad is not announced in the Bible and does not fulfill the biblical requirements for a prophet of God (Acts 10:43).
3. Jesus has not been crucified and is not resurrected. The crucifixion would have been a humiliating defeat for Jesus. Even if he had died on the cross, he could not have brought redemption to mankind. The Qur’ân does not state clearly what happened at the end of Jesus’ life. Probably, Allah carried him away to heaven in the face of his enemies. After that, someone else was crucified in Jesus’ place (4:157-158).	3. Jesus died on the cross as it was his Father’s will. He was put into his grave and arose from the death on the third day. By this, he gained victory over sin and death, and he, the representative of mankind, brought about redemption (1 Peter 1:18-19).

SIN, FAITH AND FORGIVENESS

Both the Qur’ân and the Bible emphasise that it is God’s will for man to believe in him and to live according to his commandments. If man transgresses against those commandments and commits sin, he can be granted forgiveness through God’s mercy. The Qur’ân as well as the Bible promise eternal life to those who believe.

Qur’ân	Bible
1. Adam sinned in paradise by eating the forbidden fruit, but man was not cut off from communion with Allah through this transgression. There is no fall and no original sin in Islam (2:35-39).	1. Adam transgressed God’s commandment in paradise by eating the forbidden fruit. With this, he brought sin, death and separation from God for all human beings into the world. Reconciliation with God is only possible through Jesus’ death (2 Cor. 5:18-19; Romans 3:20).
2. Man is always capable of deciding whether to do right or wrong. He can please Allah by obeying his commandments and by doing good deeds. If he transgresses against Allah’s commandments and commits sin, this does not affect or touch Allah. In the first place, man sins against himself (7:19-25; 7:23).	2. Man’s nature is evil after the fall. He is unable to do anything in order to atone for his sins. If he tries to keep God’s law, it will lead him even deeper into sin. His single sins are always directed against God (Rom. 3:10-12+20; Ps. 51:6).
3. Faith means to believe in Allah’s existence, to be thankful towards him and to obey to Allah’s commandments (2:177).	3. Faith means to recognise one’s own sinfulness and damnation, to accept redemption for oneself through Jesus Christ and to live according to God’s commandments by the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:1-18).
4. The penitent sinner hopes to obtain Allah’s forgiveness. The Qur’ân repeatedly praises Allah’s mercy and grace, but in every single case the sinner does not know for sure if he will obtain forgiveness. He does not know for sure in his present life, whether he may enter paradise after his death. Allah is too omnipotent for man to definitely predict his attitude and dealing with man (7:156; 3:31).	4. The penitent sinner knows certainly that God will grant forgiveness to him, since God has definitely promised in his Word to do so (1 John 1:9). Whoever appeals to Jesus’ death and accepts his forgiveness, gets the assurance of eternal life (John 1:12; 1 John 3:1).

GOD'S WORD—HOLY SPIRIT

Muslims and Christians believe that God's genuine eternal word is laid down in his holy book. God's word tells us how God has dealt with people historically. God's word today gives men direction for their lives and their faith. God's Spirit contributed to God's revelation for mankind.

Qur'ân	Bible
1. The Qur'ân is the pure unaltered word of Allah and a genuine copy of the original heavenly revelation. In contrast to the Qur'ân, the Old and New Testament have been corrupted in time. The Qur'ân corrects the Old and New Testament in all places where they differ from the Qur'ân (2:2; 2:97-98; 43:2-4; 2:83).	1. The Bible is God's reliable word. The Holy Spirit supervised its recording. The Bible can be corrected by nothing and remains God's valid word in eternity (Rev. 22:18).
2. The Qur'ân was directly revealed to Muhammad through mediation of the angel Gabriel. Muhammad's own personality played no role in this, and therefore the Qur'ân's genuineness is guaranteed (26:192-194).	2. Various personalities have been inspired by the Holy Spirit, so that the Bible is a mirror of their characters. The personality of the biblical authors becomes visible in the single biblical books (2 Tim. 3:16).
3. The Spirit of God participated at the revelation of the Scriptures which were sent down to single men in history (the Torah to Mose, the Psalms to David, the Gospel to Jesus and the Qur'ân to Muhammad) (16:102). Single persons (e.g. Jesus) were strengthened by the Spirit (2:87; 5:110); but the Spirit also strengthens the believers (58:22).	3. The Person of the Holy Spirit is God himself and belongs to the trinity. He convicts people of sin and guilt. At Pentecost the Holy Spirit came. The Spirit gives spiritual gifts and causes spiritual fruit grow in the believers (Gen. 1:26; John 14:16; Gal. 5:22).

CONCLUSION

Islam and Christianity have several points in common, when it comes to God, the Creator, the Last Judgment, eternal life and eternal death. Characters from the Old Testament like Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and Jona appear also in the Qur'ân. Even Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are mentioned in the holy book of the Muslims. Jesus Christ is called the "word of God," "spirit of God" as well as "Messiah" in the Qur'ân. But to emphasise these similarities would reflect only a superficial understanding of both religions. Especially when it comes to Jesus Christ, the main important differences between the Qur'ân and the Bible become obvious.

As to the biblical testimony, Jesus Christ was not only a prophet, but God's only Son, whereas the Qur'ân clearly denies the sonship of Jesus. While the Old and New Testaments state that Jesus' suffering and his death on the cross were necessary to redeem those who are sold under original sin, the Qur'ân rejects not only the crucifixion of Jesus, but

also original sin and the necessity of redemption for mankind. Crucifixion, redemption, the sonship of God and the trinity are cornerstones of biblical dogmatics, but at the same time for the Qur'ân aberrations of Christendom, and even more, they are blasphemy.

Whereas in the biblical testimony only those who believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and accept his representative offering on the cross will inherit eternal life, the Qur'ân clearly states that it is only those who believe Muhammad to have been the last prophet of God and the Qur'ân to be the very truth who will inherit eternal life. For Muslims, Christians with their belief in the holy trinity (which includes Father, Son and Mary, as the Qur'ân believes) commit the most evil sin, the sin of polytheism. Because of these essential theological differences between the Qur'ân and the Bible, it becomes clearly visible that the one omnipotent creator of the Qur'ân can not be the triune God of the Bible, the Father of Jesus Christ. *C&S*

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THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF CAUSALITY AND THE THOUGHT OF THE BIBLE¹

by Jean-Marc Berthoud[†]

Preamble

Too often, Christian thinking has restricted itself to an intellectual sectarianism which excludes from intellectual fellowship every form of intelligent discourse emanating from those who are, rightly or wrongly, perceived as adversaries of the authentic orthodox faith. This attitude of arbitrary exclusion has been all too common with regard to many of the evangelical revivals of the past centuries. The leaders of these revivals courageously took their stand against the rationalist heresies which had penetrated their churches whose roots lay in the Reformation of the XVIth century. But all too often, in the same movement, they rejected an important part of that biblical heritage rediscovered by the Reformers and consolidated by their faithful successors. These spiritual riches were, by these undiscerning evangelicals, unjustly identified with the liberal errors they so properly combatted. In often rejecting the Protestant past as a whole (with the honourable aim of retrieving the biblical foundations of apostolic times) they abandoned large segments of those benefits poured out by the Holy Spirit on God's church through a Reformed tradition faithful to the apostolic standards of orthodoxy.

To a lesser degree, this pattern was also followed in that tremendous spiritual revival, the Reformation of the XVIth Century. No doubt the Reformers never contemplated cutting themselves off from the fellowship of God's historical church—one, holy, catholic and apostolic—the faithful church of God founded on the person of the Lord Jesus-Christ and on the infallible teachings of his apostles and maintained by the Holy Spirit throughout the ages. Nor did they envisage breaking with the confessional standards (normative but not infallible) of the early councils, particularly those of Nicea (325) and Chalcedon (451).² Nonetheless, in their salutary reaction to the errors that Romanism had

accumulated over the centuries and to the theological and philosophical deviations present in mediaeval scholasticism, the Doctors of the Reformation did not, or were often unable, to differentiate between what in this tradition was to be rejected with the greatest vigour and what had to be respected and preserved as doctrinal perceptions useful to the church of all ages. In their just opposition to the influence of Greek thought on Christian theology the Reformers excluded certain thoroughly biblical elements in the mediaeval tradition which were the outcome of the long debate between scholastic theology and ancient philosophy.

It would be a serious mistake if, out of a legitimate concern for doctrinal faithfulness, we should come to refuse to profit from the theological achievements of our predecessors. It would be a spiritual misfortune to ignore the truly catholic tradition, that doctrinal heritage of Christian thought, not only faithful to the principle of *sola scriptura* but also to that of *tota scriptura*. This tradition is to be found not only in the heritage of the Reformation but also in that of important elements of mediaeval Christendom. Setting aside such a tradition of carefully formulated truth results in the totally unnecessary spiritual and doctrinal impoverishment of God's church today.

In the following pages we shall examine different forms of causal thinking as developed by the Aristotelian and Thomistic philosophical traditions. We have to do here with analyses of a variety of logical structures which are proper to all correct thinking. We shall thus not be concerned, in the first place, with the conceptual content of the thinking under examination but with its logical structures. This rich tradition of philosophical reflection on causality is to be found, first, in the work of Aristotle; then, in mediaeval, particularly Thomistic, scholasticism; finally we find a modern analysis of these logical and causal problems in the work of a number of contemporary thinkers who set themselves clearly in this tradition.

In our first section we shall examine Aristotle's four causes. In the second part, taking up these same issues in more detail, we shall pay particular attention to the four

[†] Translated from the French by Ellen Myers.

1. I wish to express my deepest gratitude to Denis Ramelet of Lausanne who introduced me to Aristotelian and mediaeval thought on causality which is the subject of the following remarks. The French original of this article appeared in "Positions Créationnistes" No. 25 (September, 1996).

2. For an example of this truly catholic perspective see Jaroslav Pelikan's major accomplishment, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the*

Development of Doctrine (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1971-1989, 5 volumes).

modal applications of these causes. As we go along we shall be brought to realise the thoroughly biblical character of this tradition of thought. We shall seek to show the benefits that Christian thought can draw from a respect for these various logical structures which are indispensable to all right thinking, but also the perverse effects which must necessarily ensue if they are ignored.

PART I

The Atheisation of Science Since Galileo

We recently published a paper, "The Great Milestones of the Secularisation of Science,"³ which gives an overall synthesis of the attack launched for almost four centuries against the biblical view of the universe by a science which since its origin at the start of the seventeenth century limits itself to a purely mechanistic and quantitative view of the world.⁴ This view of the world excluded from the study of the universe any kind of teleological considerations (the form of a work witnesses to its purpose) and consequently any divine finality. In fact, man thus arrived at a perspective of reality which denied its meaning and from which God was excluded, unless it be the do-nothing god of the desists, a god who supposedly started this admirable machine but thereafter lost all interest in it. This mechanicalisation of the world led to the quip of the great French mathematician Pierre Simon Laplace (1749-1827) who coldly replied to the question asked him by Napoleon regarding the role God would play in his system: "Sir, I did not need this hypothesis."⁵

3. Jean-Marc Berthoud, *The Great Milestones of the Secularisation of Science* ("Positions Créationnistes," Lausanne, No. 22, June 1995); available in English. The publications of the *Association Création, Bible et Science* which deal with various aspects of these questions can be obtained by writing to A.C.B.S., Case postale 4, CH-1001 Lausanne, Switzerland. See also Jean-Marc Berthoud, "Our Present-Day Idol," in *Christianity and Society*, Vol. VI, No. 4 (October 1996).

4. The bibliography on these questions is immense and constantly growing. On the significance and importance of the scientific revolution of the XVIIth century see two recent books by Jan Marejko, *La cité des Morts. L'avènement du technocosme* (L'Age d'Homme, Lausanne, 1994), and *Dix méditations sur l'espace et le mouvement* (L'Age d'Homme, Lausanne, 1994) as well as the little book by Bryan Appleyard, *Understanding the Present: Science and the Soul of Modern Man* (Picador, London, 1993). For recent studies dealing with the relations between Christianity and Science see, David C. Lindberg and Ronald L. Numbers, *God and Nature. Historical Essays on the Encounter between Christianity and Science* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1986).

On the history of the scientific revolution see the following standard works: E. A. Burt, *The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Science* (Doubleday Anchor Books, New York, 1954 [1924]); Herbert Butterfield, *The Origins of Modern Science* (G. Bell and Sons, London, 1957); Richard S. Westfall, *The Construction of Modern Science. Mechanisms and Mechanics* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994 [1971]) and above all the scholarly and pioneering work of Alexandre Koyré and in particular the following books: *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe* (Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1958); *Newtonian Studies* (Chapman & Hall, London, 1965); *Études d'histoire de la pensée scientifique* (Gallimard, Paris, 1985).

For more recent studies in the history of science in the XVIIIth century see the collection of articles edited by David C. Lindberg and Robert S. Westfall, *Reappraisals of the Scientific Revolution* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994).

5. On the birth of the mechanical vision of the universe see the classical study by Robert Lenoble, *Mersenne et la naissance du mécanisme*

This shows us well that the Galilean and Newtonian view of the universe, whose implications Laplace merely developed completely, had to exclude *a priori* any notion of God as Creator and sustainer such as the Bible teaches, as well as any meaning having a transcendent origin. For the Scripture speaks to us of God not as the one who merely started up the machine of the universe and let it function all by itself thereafter, but of a God who sustains by his omnipotent word the laws which he himself has established, who constantly acts by the very functioning of these laws, who sometimes intervenes beyond these laws by what we call miracles, and who, finally, directly directs even the most modest events which take place in this world.⁶ All this he does

(Vrin, Paris, 1971 [1942]). We there read the following significant lines: "When one studies the thought of the XVIIIth century in continuity with that of the XVIth (as we should properly do) we see that before Descartes and alongside him appear a variety of currents of thought which would in time culminate in what we call 'modern thought.' All have a common denominator: the mechanistic view of the universe. But the prevalence of all these currents cannot merely be attributed to the direct influence of Descartes" (p. 3). "But what can in no way be denied is the modification in the focus of Mersennes's intellectual preoccupations which leads him to attach more and more importance to the discoveries of the natural sciences and to pay a decreasing attention to the religious controversies of his time. . . The scholarship of the period itself shows a constant tendency to forego the study of theology in favour of a growing interest in the new sciences. And Mersenne here is clearly, though no doubt unconsciously, carried forward by this general movement of his time. We can observe the appearance of such a breach in his own scholarly production. His theological work gradually comes to a stop and is replaced by a growing passion for scientific research. This change can here easily be observed but it remains merely a premonitory sign. More than half a century will have to pass before this intellectual divide becomes the chasm so ably described by Paul Hazard in his masterpiece, *La crise de la conscience européenne* first published in 1935" (p. 14).

On the importance of the skeptical current of thought in the XVIth and XVIIIth centuries see, Richard H. Popkin, *The History of Skepticism from Erasmus to Spinoza* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1979) and Richard H. Popkin and Arjo Vanderjagt, *Skepticism and Irreligion in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1993).

Finally on the way in which this mechanical vision of reality invaded and infested Protestant theology in England and in France see, Henning Graf Reventlow, *The Authority of the Bible and the Rise of the Modern World* (SCM Press, London, 1984) and François Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré et l'histoire. Érudits et politiques Protestants devant la Bible en France au XVIIe siècle* (APA - Holland University Press, Amsterdam, 1986). See also my forthcoming study *Jan Amos Comenius (1592-1670) et les sources de l'édologie pédagogique inspiratrices des réformes scolaires modernes*.

6. For a description of the Christian vision of the universe through the prism of an analysis of the thought of John Calvin on these questions see, Susan E. Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory: Nature and the Natural Order in the Theology of John Calvin* (The Labyrinth Press, Durham, North Carolina, 1991) and Richard Stauffer, *Dieu, la création et la Providence dans la prédication de Calvin* (Peter Lang, Berne, 1978). See also the major study (which should rapidly be translated into English!) by Pierre Marcel, *Face à la critique: Jésus et les apôtres: Esquisse d'une logique chrétienne* (Labor et Fides, Genève, 1986). See also the collection of articles by Auguste Lecerf, *Études calvinistes* (Delachaux et Niestlé, Neuchatel, 1949).

Reformed theologians like Wolfgang Capiton and Pierre Viret were very able in reading in God's creation not only the signs of the glory of God but also the spiritual meaning the Creator had so abundantly inscribed into the very detail of the substantial forms of the created order. See how Otto Strasser describes the thought of Capiton (the theologian from Strasbourg, friend both of Bucer and Calvin) on the divinely inscribed meaning present in the cosmos:

"When this Reformer describes God's work of creation he constantly surprises us by his interest for the very details of the created order, interest apparently not, in the first place, of a specifically

while respecting the created reality of the secondary causes which function within (but at another level of) the limitless domain of the action of the *first cause*, the sovereign providence of God. These different powers are quite particularly attributed by the Bible to the second person of the Trinity, the divine person of our Lord Jesus Christ, about whom Paul writes to the Christians of Colossae in these terms:

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all the fulness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. (Col. 1:15-20)

We also read in the letter to the Hebrews:

In these last days God has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. (Heb. 1:2-3).

Thus we can say that modern science since Galileo, a science which seeks to exclude from its thought any idea of finality, any metaphysics and even any theology, which wants to be purely mechanistic and which expresses itself in a language which is abstract and largely closed in upon itself, the language of mathematics, is an enterprise which explicitly rises up against the cosmic prerogatives of Christ as they are expressed in the infallible biblical texts we have just quoted. This leads us to understand that in its foundations such a scientific enterprise can only be considered strictly anti-Christian, that is, opposed to the sovereign cosmic rights of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. In thus excluding the Son of God from the entire domain of scientific thought, Galilean science fired the first shot in the war of the modern world against Christ, the sovereign Lord of the whole universe.

If modern science has thus a clearly anti-Christian character in its basic perspective as well as in the interpretation which it gives of its own results, its true discoveries in its

theological character. It would attract at least as much interest from students of the natural sciences. Capiton is one of those dogmatists, now become all too rare, who, when they speak of Creation are attentive to the concrete details of nature. They thus seek to draw the whole field of nature—as indeed does the Bible itself—towards the domain of the spiritual, that is towards the Kingdom of God. Capiton thus refuses to abandon the natural sciences to their own devices or to degrade them to the level of a purely secular, profane science. On the contrary, his design is to introduce the whole of the natural order in every one of its aspects into the framework of his theological conceptions. Here again he manifests the Catholic (that is universal and humanist) character of his thought. We often find in his writings abundant illustrations drawn from all the fields of the natural sciences. This again witnesses to his intimate understanding of the physical order. We have the decided impression that Capiton does not merely treat of the *locus creationis* because dogmatic tradition called for such a theological development but because in so doing he is animated by an ardent love for that natural order which is the outcome of the Six Days of Creation. So much can no doubt not be said of the work of most theologians in this field.” Otto Strasser, *La pensée théologique de Wolfgang Capiton dans les dernières années de sa vie* (Secrétariat de l'Université, Neuchâtel, 1938), p. 54.

own mechanical and quantitative domain are yet in themselves not *anti-Christian* at all because they correspond to an aspect of the truth about the created world. We must therefore interpret them differently and restore them to their proper place, that is, give them their true first meaning, namely, their meaning in the sight of God, understood through his word, the sacred Scriptures. We must, however, add that this new *Galilean* manner of conceiving of “science” excluded *a priori* from the domain of the “scientific” all that in nature would be found to exceed the limits of the quantitative and the mechanical: theological, metaphysical, moral, aesthetical, affective, etc. meaning. In fact, matter, the minerals, the plants and the animals no longer have any analogical lessons to give to man. In the perspective of a purely mechanistic and quantitative science nature can no longer have any meaning; it becomes mute for man.

We can now ask ourselves how modern scientific thought arrived at such erroneous practices.

Historical Foreword

A modest incursion into the domain of Aristotelian and mediaeval thought on causality will help us here. With Aristotle we find the elaboration of the different structures of thought adapted to the questions to be resolved. The clarification of the causal thought of Aristotle and its adaptation to realities of Christian character (God as Creator and personal, miraculous divine action, providence, etc., to which Aristotle, being pagan, could not have access) has been made by mediaeval scholasticism, especially by Thomas Aquinas. Most formulations themselves which we use here date from the present time and are essentially due to Thomist philosophers like Jean Daujat, André de Muralt, James McEvoy, Jacques Foulon and Paula Haigh.⁷

Let us make clear right away that if we cannot accept the

7. The pioneering studies of J. A. Van Ruler, *The Crisis of Causality. Voetius and Descartes on God, Nature and Change* (E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1995) and Theo Verbeek, *Descartes and the Dutch: Early Reactions to Cartesian Philosophy, 1637-1650* (Southern Illinois University Press, Carbondale, 1992) and Theo Verbeek, *René Descartes et Martin Schook: La Querelle d'Utrecht* (Impressions Nouvelles, Paris, 1988), all show very clearly how in the Netherlands many Calvinist theologians, and in particular their master, Ghisbertus Voetius, had come to understand the immense danger that the elimination in scientific and philosophical thought of all reference to Aristotelian and biblical final causes and substantial forms represented for the Christian faith. The New Science in fact eliminated from scientific thought the created meaning attached to the order of the universe and to the stability of that created order as manifested in the fixed substantial forms established by God at the beginning of all things. See here, for example, the relative stability of species, of chemical elements, of the meaning of words, etc.

On the persistence of Aristotelian thought in the XVIth and XVIIth centuries see Charles B. Schmitt, *Aristotle and the Renaissance* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass., 1983).

From a Thomistic perspective see the following works: Jean Daujat, *Y a-t-il une vérité? Traité de philosophie* (Téqui, Paris); André de Muralt, *L'enjeu de la Philosophie médiévale: Études thomistes, scotistes, occamiennes et grégoriennes* (E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1991); J. Foulon and J. McEvoy, *Finalité et Intentionnalité: Doctrine thomiste et perspectives modernes* (Éditions Peeters, Louvain, 1992). See also the important studies by the American Thomist, Paula Haigh and in particular, *Proofs for the Existence of God and Creation: A Catholic View; Aquinas: Creationist for 21st Century; Galileo's Heresy and Galileo's Empiricism; Some Observations on Primary and Secondary Causality*; finally her very perceptive critique of the scientific thought of Cardinal Ratzinger and Stanley Jaki and above all her magnificent refutation of theistic evolution, *Thirty Theses Against Theistic Evolutionism* repay close attention. Miss Haigh's arti-

pagan religious foundations of the philosophical thought of antiquity (nor those of a scholastics intellectually straddling both Greek and biblical thought), we owe it to ourselves, on the other hand, to use for ourselves the true metaphysical and logical discoveries—true, that is, because in conformity with the criteria of truth contained in the Bible—which we can find in this Aristotelian tradition.⁸

Let us now take a few examples where we will see better what must be rejected and what can usefully be preserved.

We must first of all reject the conception Aristotle forms of reality as a whole, essentially immanent and without real transcendence. His god, the *prime mover*, is in fact only a first element, essential, it is true, of the world system he elaborated. It is the idea which gives its initial movement to all reality, which attracts everything to the fulness of being which is in it. It is essentially an *abstraction*, a being common to the world and to the prime mover. We understand well that a totally transcendent God who is Creator, active, personal and trinitarian can naturally be only foreign as idea as well as reality to the entire thought of a pagan like Aristotle.

We must also reject his divinisation of the world, a thought which made him affirm the eternity of matter. This made any notion of creation *ex nihilo* impossible for him, as this concept was (and still is) fundamentally foreign to all pagan thought. For Aristotle the world thus had a *necessary* character; it *necessarily* was, while we know that it exists by divine decree, that it might not have existed, that it was in no way necessary to God who created it.

Likewise we cannot accept the religiously based motive, the essential presupposition (in different degrees with different authors) of all Greek thought, the motive of a fundamental dualism and opposition between matter and form. This “idea/matter” dualism is particularly flagrant in Plato and the Platonic tradition, precisely a tradition from which all Galilean science issued. In Aristotle, with his constant concern for attentive observation of concrete reality, things are apparently somewhat different. For him it is rather a distinction, reality being always a concrete combination uniting form and matter, the idea and the particular individual. However, even with Aristotle, who constantly seeks to affirm this distinction as having an intellectual character (formal or of pure reason), and who is first of all interested in the concrete individual forms where form and matter, the one and the many, etc. are always united, we must yet point out that the supreme idea which informs everything, the prime mover, is itself also but a new abstraction which informs the whole system, the being which attracts everything to itself. The foundation of Christian thought, the trinitarian God, a single God in three persons, at the same time the one and many, is a concrete universal. This personal God—not an abstraction!—is that personal being (Ex. 3:14) who gives being to all that exists.⁹ He is situated outside

cles can be obtained from Paul Ellwanger, 3830 Old Denton Road, #213 Carrollton, Texas 75007, United States.

8. For a critical appraisal of the thought of Thomas Aquinas from a Calvinist perspective see the appropriate chapters of John Frame’s book, *Cornelius Van Til: An Analysis of his Thought* (Presbyterian and Reformed, Philippsburg, 1995). From an Evangelical perspective see, Norman L. Geisler, *Thomas Aquinas: An Evangelical Appraisal* (Baker, Grand Rapids, 1991). See also, Arvin Vos, *Aquinas, Calvin and Contemporary Protestant Thought* (Washington, 1985).

9. Alain de Libera and Emilie Zum Brunn (Editors), *Celui qui est: Interprétations juives et chrétiennes d’Exode 3:14* (Cerf, Paris, 1986).

of his creation, and it is he who founds all created reality and gives to all beings the character of *rooted universals* which is proper to them.¹⁰ It is he who gives this universal character to the concrete created forms where the particular is always tied to the universal, the one to the many, the form to matter. This trinitarian God gives to human thought itself this character oscillating between the one and the many, the universals and the individuals, from which it can never escape.¹¹ Always seeking its balance between these two poles, it finds its rest only in the truth, in the concrete incarnation of God’s thought, which we find perfectly in the Bible.

It seems to us that Aristotle constantly fought against this underlying dualism of Greek thought, but he never succeeded in truly freeing himself from it. However, in the domain of logical thought we have much to learn from the discoveries (those which do not contradict what the Bible teaches) which we find in the Aristotelian tradition, a thought which later on would be refined and partially corrected by scholastic thought, in particular the thought of Thomas Aquinas. Obviously, this does not lead us to an overall approval of the faulty system of scholastics which vainly tries to marry water with fire, biblical truth and a thought which, when all is said and done, is fundamentally foreign to it, that of Aristotelian philosophy.

The Four Causes of Aristotle

After this indispensable foreword let us return to our question of causality and logic. Aristotle taught that all the phenomena of this world were moved by four causes which could be distinguished on the logical plane but which always functioned together. These causes were the final cause, the formal cause, the efficient cause, and the material cause.

Without going into too much detail, a little illustration will allow us to understand better what this is about. In the construction of a house the *final* cause is the purpose for which the house is built, the fact that people will live there. The *formal* cause is the plan of the architect, the form given to the house. The *efficient* cause is the work, the necessary force for the construction of the house, the masons, the carpenters, the electricity, the fuel, etc. used to make the machines run. Finally, the *material* cause is none other than the raw material necessary for the construction of this building. Let us point out that the *final causes* of the universe are identified in the thought of Aristotle with the idea of a *first cause* which he calls god, but which with him, as we saw, is only a concept, an idea. This *prime mover* of Aristotle’s is not the personal, sovereign, almighty Creator God of the Bible. For that only true God, the ontological Trinity, the living and holy God, at the same time one and many, universal and concrete, marks with his trinitarian seal all that he has created. It is one of the great merits of Aristotle to have understood to a high degree (in contrast to the Platonic tradition) the simultaneously universal and individual character of all created beings. It is by this characteristic of the concrete, visible forms created by God and discernable by

10. Olivier Delacrétaz, *L’Universel enraciné: Remarques sur le racisme et l’antiracisme* (Cahiers de la Renaissance Vaudoise, Lausanne, 1993).

11. Rousas J. Rushdoony, *The One and the Many: Studies in the Philosophy of Order and Ultimacy* (Craig Press, Nutley, 1971). This work contains a carefully documented critique of the thought of Thomas Aquinas.

our minds and senses, that he comes closest to biblical thought. By contrast the Platonic-Galilean tradition of modern science has little time for the concrete forms of beings. What matters to our Platonic science are these pure ideas, the scientific laws, which in the last analysis are of a mathematical character. For modern science the concrete forms given to reality by the Creator only veil the fundamental abstract (mathematical) structure of the universe.

The true God intervenes constantly in the functioning of his work, a work which subsists only in him and by him (Acts 17:27-28). In the Christian mediaeval correction of the Aristotelian system it was specified that the first cause, God, did not act only at the beginning of a phenomenon, initiating, for example, the movement of the mechanism of the universe. In such a perspective the deists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had conceptualised the universe as an autonomous mechanical system apt to function by itself. For Thomistic thought the prime mover of Aristotle, God, was found not only at the beginning of every phenomenon (that is the Creator of the Bible), but also all along the functioning of the phenomenon (it is again God who by his powerful word sustains all things and in particular the things of nature). Finally, at the end of every phenomenon, it is again God who is the purpose, the end and the reason for being, in short, the fulfilment of all things. In this perspective (of which certain elements are found in Aristotle himself) God is never cut off from the functioning of the universe as is the case in post-Galilean science.

You may of course ask, what is our point? Well, it is this: for reasons which we will not specify here (but which are related to the history of late scholastic thought¹²) Galileo came in his study of the universe to eliminate two of the causes of Aristotle as compromising the simplicity of his analysis: the final causes (and in particular the first cause), and the formal cause. By one stroke there were eliminated from the field of scientific thought any divine finality, any presence of God, and any teleology, that is any consideration of the universe as a system where the means relate to an end, as the clock relates to the clockmaker who has made it. And secondly, in eliminating the formal cause one also eliminates from scientific thought any possibility of considering the universe as being the effect of a plan, as being part of a system of coherent meaning, as being the outworking of the eternal purpose (of the eternal decree, to use the language of theology) of the divine Creator, God. True, all finalism also involves the risk of rationalistic simplification (under cover of biblical faithfulness), for we cannot lay our hands on the secret designs of the Creator, all the details of whose purposes essentially escape us. What we know of the designs of the Creator is limited to what he graciously chose to reveal to us in his word. “The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of the law” (Dt. 29:29).

In the Galilean perspective which we have just exam-

ined, the affirmations of the apostle Paul in the first chapter of Romans, according to which “God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen since the creation of the world, being understood from what has been made” (v. 20) become incomprehensible. For modern scientific man affirms from the start that the universe must be studied without taking into consideration either its purpose or its given visible and evident form which speaks to us loud and clear of this final purpose which is God. On the spiritual plane this trick of the Devil of which modern science since Galileo has been the object has had the effect of making men of modern times believe that Paul was altogether wrong when he said of all men that “they are therefore without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him” (Rom. 1:20-21).

Quite to the contrary, modern scientific man considers himself in reality as being entirely excusable, for in his scientific thought there is no longer any room for the final (or first) cause, nor for the formal cause, the design of God, his eternal decree. For modern science by its nature is not only a *science without conscience* (as Pascal so well put it) but especially a *science without God*. Consequently such a reductionist method (as it excludes *a priori* the first or final cause, God) can in no way refer the man of science back to a God who does not exist in the domain of a methodological atheistic science. Modern science has thus had the effect of castrating the men who trust it of their theological, metaphysical and moral dimensions. Having accepted the elimination of these two forms of causality in science (and science having become all by itself the only norm of all true thought), modern men can therefore no longer think theologically or teleologically in the scientific domain. Without first of all rejecting this stunted logic, without refusing this reduced vision of the universe, without a true repentance (rethinking!) in cosmology and science, such scientifically orientated minds are no longer fit to understand what is evident to the simplest child and to all those who have not undergone the warping mould of modern science, that the form of the universe refers to a purpose, to a designer, to a Creator, to God. Paul also speaks very justly of this reductionist science¹³ when he writes to the Christians at Rome:

Their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. (Rom. 1:21-23)

These few remarks allow us to understand certain effects of the elimination from the area of thought and action of modern science of two of the four causes of Aristotle, a logical reflection which as we saw does not contradict what the Bible itself teaches us. When examined from this angle the secularisation of a world given over to such thought finally begins to become comprehensible, and the way of the true return of our civilisation to God becomes more clear. C&S

12. On this subject see, in addition to the titles quoted, Étienne Gilson, *Études sur la pensée médiévale dans la formation du système cartésien* (Vrin, Paris, 1984 [1930]); André de Muralt, *Néoplatonisme et aristotélisme dans la métaphysique médiévale* (Vrin, Paris, 1995); Edward Grant, *Much Ado about Nothing: Theories of Space and Vacuum from the Middle Ages to the Scientific Revolution* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981); Margaret J. Osler, *Gassendi and Descartes on Contingency and Necessity in the Created World* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994).

13. In spite of the numerous modern studies that for at least the last fifty years have demolished the untenable assumptions of the positivistic rationalism which undergirded the scientism of the XIXth century (see the writings of men such as Arthur Koestler, Thomas F. Torrance, Michael Polanyi, Karl R. Popper, Thomas S. Kuhn, Imre Lakatos, etc.), the general domination over the whole of Western civilisation of the scientific world view inaugurated in the XVIIth century has in no way diminished, very much the contrary.

Any Questions

This is the first of what we hope will be a fairly regular feature of *Christianity & Society* in the future. From time to time people have written asking questions about various things relating to issues that have been discussed in the journal and generally about the application of the faith to life and society. From now on we shall try to answer such questions as a regular feature in the journal. Readers are invited to submit questions relating to the Christian faith and its application to contemporary society. These questions do not have to relate to issues that have already been dealt with in *Christianity & Society*. We shall do our best to answer questions. The anonymity of questioners will be maintained and no names will be published.

MEAT AND MORALITY IN ACTS 15:20, 29

I have often puzzled over Acts 15 in which James and the elders at Jerusalem advise the missionary apostles, on appeal, to instruct new Gentile Christians to abstain from things polluted by idols, fornication, things strangled, and blood. It seemed to me that this was mixing ceremonial matters (strangulation and blood) with decalogical matters (idols and fornication).

I recently heard a very satisfying explanation for the recommendation of the Jerusalem council. According to this explanation none of these requirements are matters of the moral law, but are appeals to the Gentiles to show deference to their Jewish brethren on matters the Jews found highly offensive. He said the reference to fornication applied to the specific case of marriage between close relatives, a practice the Jews considered incestuous, but which didn't trouble the Gentiles.

This explanation appeals to me because it leaves the doctrine of salvation by grace intact without descending into antinomian notions of Christian liberty that undermine our ongoing accountability to God's moral law. However, I'm not totally convinced that the interpretation is sound exegetically because of the restrictive interpretation of the term "porneia." This, of course, is the same word Jesus used in the exception clause of Matthew 5:32 and 19:9, and which Paul uses in Romans 1:29 in what seems to be a much broader application. Of course, Paul also uses the same word in 1 Corinthians to refer to the specifically incestuous relationship of a man with his father's wife, which Paul says is even scandalous among the Gentiles.

Two popular modern translations, the NIV and the NKJV render the word "sexual immorality" or "depravity," depending on the context. It strikes me that such renderings are too broad to fit either the exception clause or the council's recommendation about Gentile practices. Yet it doesn't seem that the close relative connotation is sufficiently broad to cover all uses of the word.

My questions: Do you consider this explanation sound? Secondly, is it legitimate to broaden or restrict the connotation of the word based on the context? For example, the admonition to abstain from things polluted by idols is logically equivalent to Paul's admonition about meat sacrificed to idols in 1 Corinthians 9. Taking the admonition this way sets the council's decision in the context of ceremonial matters. It seems legitimate to extend that context to the entire admonition, which would entail restricting the application of the term in question. However,

Paul's use of the term in Romans 1:29 seems broader, but would also work in the restricted sense.

How do you come down on this?

I think the correct way to deal with this is to treat all of these stipulations as *moral* regulations. None of them are ceremonial in my judgement, not even those concerned with the eating of blood. The whole point of the Acts 15 synod was to establish that Gentiles were not under obligation to fulfil Jewish customs or live by Jewish tradition and ceremony. To argue that the purpose of these stipulations was to stop Gentiles from upsetting Jewish sensibilities is to argue the contrary. If that were the case the apostles would have been taking away with one hand what they had just given with the other. "You are not bound by Jewish ceremonial law and custom, but don't do these things because they go against Jewish ceremony and custom and you will upset Jews if you do." Such does not seem credible at all to me. The synod of Acts 15 established beyond doubt that Gentiles were not bound by Jewish custom (surely this was the whole point of it), regardless of Jewish sensibilities, and Paul would hardly have concurred had that not been the case given his strident denunciations of those who did live by such custom. Such an interpretation goes against the context, therefore, and against other New Testament teaching that shows Gentiles to be free from such obligations.

Let's start, first, with the issue of meat offered to idols. In Acts 15:20, 29 we have a regulation laid down authoritatively by the apostles for the Gentile church. It is a moral requirement. Christians, Gentile or Jew, were not obligated to abide by the Jewish ceremonial regulations and Scripture nowhere gives us to understand that they were at the time of the synod of Acts 15. On the contrary, the New Testament gives us the strongest denunciation of such requirements, and Paul calls such requirements "another gospel." I think that clearly rules out Gentiles being required or even asked to abide by certain ceremonial regulations in order not to upset Jews. This goes against other clear New Testament teaching. Furthermore, Acts 15:28 states that these regulations are "essentials" (the word used means *of necessity*,

compulsory). This can only have reference to their practice of the Christian faith. Yet Jewish ceremonial tradition is by no means essential to the practice of the faith. Quite the contrary according to Paul.

Paul subsequently modified this regulation with apostolic authority (Rom. 14, 1 Cor. 8). Had Paul subsequently abrogated this regulation altogether it would have been quite consistent with the theonomic hermeneutic, which states that any standing law remains in force and valid unless and until subsequently abrogated or modified in Scripture, either in principle, as with the ceremonial regulations after Christ's atonement on the cross, or by the repeal of specific laws, as with the food laws (Mk. 7:19). However, Paul does not abrogate the regulation. He qualifies it, thereby modifying its practice. He does not simply say "It is no longer wrong to eat meat offered to idols." What he says is that it may be either sinful or not sinful to eat such meat. Although this qualification does not abrogate the Acts 15 regulation it certainly modifies its application, but not in a way that is inconsistent with the regulation. I think Paul's later qualification and the original regulation of Acts 15 are consistent when taken together in the light of the context and the whole teaching of the Bible.

What Paul says is that one may only eat such meat if one has a clear conscience about it. If the one eating does not have a clear conscience, i.e. if he believes it is sinful to eat such meat, then it *is* sinful for him to eat it (Rom 14:14). The regulation is thus not abrogated but modified in its application. The point is this: could a Gentile, who had so thoroughly imbibed from youth the pagan culture of idolatry and the superstition that goes with it, easily eat such meat without in some sense, if only psychologically (in his own conscience), feeling that he had participated in some form of idolatry and was thereby defiling himself? Some obviously could. But many could not, which is precisely why the issue needed to be dealt with in the first place. There is a cultural element to take into account and it is a real factor in the equation of whether eating such meat is sinful or not. God's moral law is holy and righteous, and it does not change. But the circumstances and the cultures under which it is applied do change. Paul's point very clearly relates to guilty consciences. Eating such meat, in and of itself, is patently not wrong or sinful. But if, because of the influence of pagan culture on the one who eats and the associations this practice has in his mind, eating such meat is thought to be sinful, then it is sinful for that person to eat because he acts against his conscience in doing so.

The state of mind, the associations, the cultural baggage that went with eating such meat, was a stumbling block to many Christians in pagan Gentile cultures. Eating such meat gave them a bad conscience because of these things, even though they knew in principle, now that they were Christians, that idols are dumb pieces of wood and stone, created by God and abused by men. But after two thousand years of Christian culture this is no longer a problem to us. We are not affected by such things. They don't give us a bad conscience. It would give me no problem if I were served food in a restaurant that had been offered to an idol. There were also people in the Gentile world of Paul's day who had strong consciences, perhaps because they were older and more mature in the faith, or perhaps because they were just more thick-skinned, who did not have a bad conscience about eating such meat, and who saw this meat for what it

was, part of God's creation to be received with thanks and enjoyed to the glory of God. Paul's modification of the regulation gave freedom to those who ate without sinning, but not to those who could not eat without sinning against their consciences, and thus against God. For such it was a sin to eat meat offered to idols.

My point is this: the whole of Paul's argument is a piece of *moral* casuistry. It is not concerned with what is ritually clean in the Jewish sense at all. He deals with moral principles, the state of a man's conscience, i.e. whether he is guilty of doing what he believes to be sinful or not. Certainly, his argument has nothing to do with the Jewish food laws since meats that were clean in terms of Old Testament food law were also offered to idols, and therefore also covered by the regulations of Acts 15:20, 29. If this regulation relates to ceremonial laws, the transgression of which would offend Jews, which category does it fit? Not the food laws for sure. Ritually clean meat offered to idols is also covered by the Acts regulation, not just meat that is ritually unclean in terms of Jewish law. Then what category does it fit? There is not a ceremonial category to fit this case. Whatever judgement on this issue we come to, this is clearly a case of morality, ethics (is it sinful or not sinful to eat this meat?), not Jewish ceremonials, (will it make one ritually unclean?). This latter concept was meaningless to Gentiles as it is to us today.

Second, *porneia*. I find the idea that the word means in this context incest (close relationship marriages forbidden to Jews) unconvincing. The word means sexual immorality in this context. It meant originally "prostitution," or "harlotry," but even among the Rabbis it later signified a much broader notion of sexual immorality, and it often means "adultery" (see the entry in Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. VI, p. 587ff. for proof of this). The word should not be taken in the narrow way it has been suggested, to mean incest, though it obviously includes this. Sexual immorality was very common in the Gentile world. Again, the reason for inclusion of this in the list of things from which Gentiles were to abstain in Acts 15:20, 29 is because of the influence of pagan culture upon Christians who lived in such cultures. The apostles are admonishing Gentiles to avoid those things that are immediately dangerous to them. In a culture surrounded by sexual immorality and idolatry it is just such things that the apostles would naturally warn believers about, rather than about moral dangers they were not likely to encounter very often. But unlike the meat offered to idols issue, sexual immorality of any kind is sinful. Fornication is not something God permits us to practise provided we have a good conscience. Meat is given by God for food. Fornication is not one of God's gifts to man. But the Gentile world did not make such distinctions. The sexual appetite was viewed in the same way as the appetite for food. Of course the sexual urge is natural, i.e. God-given and entirely good in itself; but God's law requires that this urge must be gratified only within the confines of heterosexual marriage. But the Greeks also saw the gratification of this natural urge in the same way that they saw the gratification of the appetite for food. One indulged in fornication without any moral disapprobation being associated with it, even if one were married (though wives were not permitted to do this). The reason the Acts letter includes the prohibition against fornication was because fornication was so rampant in the Gentile world. Because of the influence that one's culture exerts upon one's life and behaviour the apostles

were warning the Gentiles to be watchful and to renounce this sexual immorality. Gentile believers were being warned not to be tainted with their pagan culture. This had nothing to do with not offending tender Jewish consciences, but everything to do with the practical realities of living the Christian life in a pagan, and very debauched culture. The apostles spoke of those things that were pertinent.

I could give a similar example: If my church had sent missionaries to the USA (please suspend disbelief for the purpose of the illustration) and I were writing a general pastoral letter to them, I might very easily say “Shun immorality, particularly extra-marital affairs and divorce.” Why? Because this is so much a part of American culture that it affects even Christians very much more than many realise. The sexual laxity of American culture is quite in contrast to British culture and moral sentiments (although through the media and Hollywood, and the general Americanisation of British society that is going on at present, sexual immorality is becoming increasingly common here also. It has not yet gone as far as in the USA, but is well on the way). Most Americans I know are divorced, and even among Christians there seems to be little shame associated with sexual infidelity and divorce (I’m speaking from my experience of Americans and American culture; I’m not saying every individual is this way). This moral laxity is a facet of American culture generally, and its acceptance as normal behaviour in American culture makes it much more difficult for Christians in such a culture to avoid such sin. One cannot easily escape one’s culture and its moral norms. Therefore, I would remind missionaries to such a nation, or indigenous Christians of that nation if I were in a pastoral situation, to be careful not to be led into sexual immorality. Despite the deterioration of morality in Britain, this would be more of a problem in the USA for Christians than in Britain.

In Britain we have different problems. For example we have a terrible apathy problem. From what I’ve seen of US culture this is not a problem in the United States to the same degree. Here Christians are extremely apathetic, and because of this apathy the faith is compromised a great deal. For instance many Christians who are socialists will justify theft disguised as welfare handouts. This is a problem that relates to our culture. This not to say that there are not apathetic Christians in the USA, or that Christians in Britain do not fall prey to sexual immorality. They do. But our problems in Britain may be different from those faced by people in the USA because of cultural differences. I think British culture has fallen prey to the sin of envy (and it is a terrible sin, and a great social blight). This afflicts Christians here more than in the US because British culture has become steeped in it over the past fifty years. Envy has been institutionalised in the Welfare State and baptised by trendy clergymen who are really Marxists and socialists dressed up in clerical garb. It has the highest endorsement from the Archbishops down to just about every level of church life where clever, “socially aware” ministers (who, it seems, are no longer required to believe in God) constantly peddle more taxes and State handouts as the responsible Christian answer to just about every problem society faces. I don’t think American culture suffers from this problem in the same way. I would be much more likely to exhort Christians here to avoid this envy problem than sexual immorality if I were writing a general pastoral letter. It would be the other way round in the US.

The point is that it is difficult to divest oneself of one’s cultural identity. So here in Acts 15 the apostles remind Gentile Christians to shun sexual immorality because it was so common in their culture and they were bombarded by this culture constantly. Again, this is moral instruction. “Do not give in to the cultural norms of a pagan society. Fornication is immoral, even though the Gentile world of which you are a part does not understand it to be so in the same way as Christians do. Therefore avoid it.” This is all the apostles were saying. They were not referring to some practice that would offend Jews but not Gentiles, certainly not some ceremonial ideal that is not binding on Christians in other circumstances. Indeed, as you mention, Paul says such incestuous relationships do not exist even among Gentiles (1 Cor. 5:1), which overturns any idea of such a relationship being a Jewish foible that the Gentiles did not consider immoral. This is clearly a case of immorality even for the Gentiles.

On this issue also, therefore, the Acts 15:20, 29 letter relates to moral issues.

Third, eating blood and strangled meat. These two refer to the same thing. Meat that has been strangled is meat with the blood still in it. It is not bled meat. Therefore to eat it is to eat meat with the blood in it, a practice condemned in the Bible. On the face of it this law seems to be linked with the ceremonial law in that it is explained in the law of Moses (Lev. 17:11) in terms of sacrificial (atonement) ritual, i.e. the life is in the blood and the spilling of blood makes atonement. But we must not be too hasty in this judgement since it is a law that predates the sacrificial ritual and is given first in Gen. 9:4.

This is the most difficult aspect of what you have asked about. If we look back at the sacrificial laws of Moses (atonement laws) this law obviously has a place in the category of sacrificial law. Moses teaches that blood must not be eaten since the life is in the blood, and it is because the life is in the blood that the shedding of blood makes atonement. Ergo we are not to eat blood. Although this does not explain why eating blood would be wrong, it does positively link the prohibition on eating blood with the atonement laws. Why, then, does the New Testament repeat this law after the sacrificial rites have come to an end? But we must also ask why it was given as a law before the sacrificial law was given. The ceremonial law is no longer observed, so why is it binding of Christian Gentiles? The answer, it seems to me, is that this law fits into both the ceremonial and the non-ceremonial category. The Bible does not say this specifically of course. But it does give us another, and very important, law that fits both the ceremonial and non-ceremonial category: the sabbath law.

According to Paul the sabbath had a ceremonial element that is no longer binding; it was a mere shadow of what is to come, viz Christ (Col. 2:17). However, the ceremonial aspect does not exhaust the sabbath law, and therefore the fourth commandment still stands, not as a ceremonial law, but as a moral law, a creation ordinance. Of course, the penalty for disobeying this law is no longer in the hands of the magistrate or the church authorities. Paul makes it clear that we are not to judge people on the basis of their sabbath practice or let them judge us (Rom. 14:4; Col. 2:16). But in Rom 13:8-9 Paul also says that the commandments (and his reference to “any other commandment” clearly includes the fourth) are still in force, and that we love our neighbour by

obeying them. Ergo, the sabbath law had both a ceremonial element (it pointed to Christ's work), which has now been fulfilled in Christ and is no longer to be observed, and a non-ceremonial element, the fourth commandment, which is still to be observed. The penalty clearly related to the ceremonial aspect of the law, since Paul makes it clear that we can no longer judge or be judged by men in respect of this law. It is now in the category it was in before the law of Moses brought it into the ceremonial sphere, namely that of being a law that we are required by God to obey but disobedience to which is not punishable by men, either in church or state (it is a law for self-government in other words). The ceremonial component has gone, but the moral component remains. It is a creation ordinance, and morally binding.

It appears to me that the law forbidding the eating of blood is very similar. It is first given as a creation ordinance when men start eating animals or at least when they are first specifically permitted to eat animals (Gen. 9:4). At this point no reference is made to atonement and we are told simply that mankind is not to eat meat with its life, i.e. its blood, in it. This seems to be a law of creation that God announces for the whole race. Later, as with the sabbath, the law acquires a ceremonial element with a rationale for not eating related to that ceremonial element. This element has now gone and is no longer to be observed. Christ has fulfilled the ceremonial law by permanently putting the principle it taught into effect (viz that without the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness) once and for all time in his death on the cross, thereby rendering its observance redundant. Christians should not observe the ceremonial law. For them to do so would be as idolatrous now as not to observe it would have been before Christ came. It would be to look to the shadow as being more important than the reality.

This is why I cannot accept the idea that any of these regulations, including this one, relate to Jewish ceremonies. To observe the ceremonial law now would be to slight Christ's finished work on the cross, to treat it as ineffectual and needing to be supplemented by rituals performed by men. This would go against the whole of New Testament teaching. The shadows have gone. We look now to the reality they typified: Christ. Even if, therefore, the apostles made this regulation (or the others) binding upon the Gentiles out of deference to Jewish sensibilities—which I deny—this would still be a *moral* regulation, i.e. it would be a regulation binding for moral reasons (not causing offence to one's neighbour) not ceremonial reasons (avoidance of ritual impurity), and so it would be wrong to say that it is *not* a matter of moral law. It could *only* be a matter of moral law. The ceremonial has gone, and Paul makes it clear that to resurrect it is to become a transgressor (Gal. 2:18). If this regulation were obeyed because of deference to Jewish sensibilities, it would *not* be a ceremonial obedience. Its purpose would be far different from the purpose of ceremonial law. It could only be moral even if such a construction were put upon it. But I deny this anyway.

It seems to me, therefore, that this law had both ceremonial and non-ceremonial elements to it, and that the reason for requiring its observation by the Gentiles could only be moral, whatever construction was put upon it or however it was understood to be of importance. This moral element, like the moral element of the sabbath law (the fourth commandment), predated the ceremonial law, and is binding after the ceremonial law came to an end.

As for the reasons for this moral element to the law, the Bible gives us no definite answers. Various constructions have been put upon it. According to Keil and Delitzsch "This prohibition presented, on the one hand, a safeguard against harshness and cruelty; and contained on the other, 'an undoubted reference to the sacrifice of animals . . .'" (*Commentary* on Gen. 9:4, p. 152). Some commentators think the first part of this explanation relating to the moral prohibition somewhat fanciful. It seems a little forced to me. The prohibition has also been assumed to relate to the seven laws of the Noahic covenant that the Jews believed were binding on the Gentiles, and in this case it is also understood by some to relate to the eating of flesh cut from a living animal. Both of these explanations seem to me to be irrelevant, the latter being part of Jewish oral law not Christian theology, and the former being a mere extrapolation. Whatever the reason, the prohibition is given as a universal law binding upon mankind. Traditionally in the West, meat is not eaten with the blood in it. As I understand it, properly butchered meat in the West is bled meat—certainly this is the case in Britain. I suppose the moral of this is simple: don't eat black pudding!

STEPHEN C. PERKS

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Book Reviews

SERVANT OR SAVIOR? PUTTING GOVERNMENT IN ITS PLACE

BY DAVID W. HALL

Oak Ridge, TN: Kuyper Institute, 1996, 399 pages
(including index); cloth: US \$23.95, ISBN 0-9650367-1-5;
paperback, US \$18.95, ISBN 0-9650367-0-7

REVIEWED BY COLIN WRIGHT

David Hall has written this book as a plea for Christian commitment to political involvement in the life of the American nation. It is specifically addressed to those he styles “evangelicals.” But though it is particularly addressed to those of his own country, it is equally applicable in Britain. Whether it will succeed in convincing them of its thesis is debatable, given their widespread inability to break out of the strait jacket of their obscurantism. Another hurdle stands in the way: the book runs to 400 pages, and evangelicals in my experience just do not read anything more than the “spiritual” equivalent of the *Sun* (our overseas readers may like to know that this daily rag makes the gutter press look positively intellectual).

Still, it is a noble attempt. For those of us who are trying to get the message across to our fellow believers that Christ is Lord of all life it provides useful and, at times, profound arguments for “putting government in its place.” Hall’s thesis is simple and direct: modern Christians, by abandoning the idea that God’s word speaks to the political dimension, are flying in the face of history. For most of the book he has marshalled the views, opinions and practices of believers from the year dot. The first 160 pages, seven chapters, are a commentary on political thought and action from Genesis to Revelation. The next 176 pages, five chapters, outline the involvement of believers from 100 A.D. to 2000 A.D. Two concluding chapters—“Systematic Absolutes” and “Systematic Considerations”—draw the book to a close.

This is an excellent way to proceed, and the author has laboured hard to produce his evidence from a wide range of sources. He clearly shows that, in regard to his thesis, evangelicals are out of step with church history (and thus in their own estimation the only ones marching in step). It is not simply that they are out of step with one offshoot of the church but virtually all of it. He has read widely and gives us the benefit of a broad vision on our past. For this we are grateful and hope our readers will find much here that is worthwhile and instructive.

Nevertheless there are a few disturbing aspects of Hall’s argument that ought not to be passed over in a review of this nature. It is not meant to be an advertisement but a critical

appraisal of the book’s contents. We hope that our comments will stir the author and others to reconsider their position on these issues and engage in dialogue that will lead us all to a better and more effective understanding of a really thorny problem for Christians in this post-Christian era.

Firstly, then, I do find disturbing Hall’s use of events in Scripture as justification for principles in which he believes. Now, it is certainly right to maintain that events are useful corroborating evidence of a didactic statement. If the Scriptures reported no historical relationship between the way Israel lived and the law given by Moses something would smell pretty fishy. But norms can never be derived purely and simply from historical facts. For instance, Hall says on page 68:

David led Israel in many battles and wars, none of which were condemned by God. He also erected garrisons in the captured territories. Throughout his administration there were also various strata of leadership, including elders, various royal cabinet members, and extraordinary military experts. This establishes the legitimacy of governmental service and also exemplifies a division of labour.

Hall is saying that the simple fact that these things happened without any explicit intervention by God to condemn them makes the historical facts of David’s life normative. Surely he cannot mean this. But the words and the argument strongly convey that message. If David did something that God does not condemn I may follow suit, indeed I must. Let us apply the same test to other incidents in David’s life with the following (hypothetical) statement:

David was married to a number of women simultaneously, none of which marriages were condemned by God. Indeed God explicitly claims that these wives were his gift to David. This establishes the legitimacy of polygamy and also exemplifies a division of labour within the home.

Furthermore, it may be questioned whether David had a legitimate claim to appoint his successor. He did so, but I hardly think Scripture teaching would support his right to do so. Saul, his predecessor, had similarly appointed his own son. Similarly, on page 124 he says, “Many other passages mention aspects of civil government. The fact that they are not overturned demonstrates, at least, the implicit acceptance of Jesus.” On page 125 he includes the following: the continuing validity of Old Testament law, capital punishment, free enterprise, profit, free ownership of property. And at the end of page 125 he adds for good measure: “Incarceration of prisoners is also a valid function of civil government. When John the Baptist was in prison, Jesus respected punitive institutions. He did not try to help John escape, nor call his disciples to destroy prisons.” Similar

statements occur regularly throughout the book.

True, Jesus did not help John escape from prison, but Hall's normative conclusion is a non sequitur. Other incidents in Scripture, let alone normative statements, invalidate his conclusion. God helped Daniel's friends escape the fiery prison of Nebuchadnezzar in the most astonishing way. And he sent an angel to spring Peter out of jail some while later even though he knew it would lead to the very unfair execution of the prison guards. God had no respect for Herod's "punitive institutions." As Augustine later commented, when kings get to this state they are nothing but gangs of thieves . . . but we shall come back to this in a while. In fact, these incidents do not prove anything either way concerning the validity of incarceration as punishment. But to say that Jesus "respected punitive institutions" by leaving John in prison is as illogical as to say that he respected crucifixion as a legitimate form of torture because he was willing to die such a death without criticising it. Incarceration, other than short periods on remand for those charged with serious offences, is cruel and inhuman. It is never justified in Scripture as a legitimate form of punishment for criminal activity. What's more, it flagrantly flies in the face of clear Scriptural commands that punishment should be by restitution to the victim, and for repeated or serious crime the death penalty is mandatory.

In effect, Hall has worked from a presupposed, if hidden, premise, namely, what God does not condemn in the historical narrative of Scripture is normative. But where in Scripture is this principle to be found? And of all people, a Presbyterian minister is propounding it! Whatever happened to the "regulative principle"?

Secondly, although David Hall is versed in the writings of modern American theonomy he is not convinced of its overall tenability. (Indeed, he seems to take a *via media* on every issue, regarding deviations from his more balanced view as extremes). Nowhere is this more clearly seen than in his principle for deciding the validity of Old Testament laws for contemporary society. Theonomy has always maintained, and I believe rightly so, that God's laws stand until repealed by him. What is at issue in theonomy circles is the manner of contemporary application of those laws, not their validity. Hall takes precisely the opposite tack: unless Jesus specifically reiterates an Old Testament law, it has no continuing authority. He says categorically and explicitly,

The canon for determining which of those Old Testament judicial laws are to continue or not is none other than the teaching and example of Christ himself. If he reiterated aspects of the judicial law, they have continuing normativity. (p. 54)

Again, he has worked from a criterion that, in this book at least, is only presupposed and never defended. Furthermore, is this latter principle not at serious odds with the former? On the one hand he would have us elevate the historical detail of the Old Testament into norms as long as Jesus says nothing against them, and on the other hand he here would have us follow none of the explicit commands of God unless Jesus specifically endorses them. I think we are entitled to some justification for this seeming paradox. It is a pity that a book which so commendably claims to take very seriously what Scripture would say to us regarding this important aspect of life should have its fundamental thesis, which I fully endorse, vitiated by such questionable foundations. It is to be hoped that the author can work them out in

later publications.

Thirdly, Hall bravely grasps the nettle of a Christian's submission to political authority. But one is not always sure where he stands. His mediating tone, so reminiscently *à la John Frame*, is surely not what is needed in the current climate. One comes away from this section of the book wondering where Hall really stands. He has chosen, by and large, the contemporary academic approach of dispassionate and remote discussion around a topic but never settling on a specific position that he is prepared to defend as an authoritative one. This is delightful drawing room stuff but we are engaged in a battle here not a tea party. We cannot wait until we have a perfect answer; we have to work with what we have. It reminds me of the old proverb, that while truth is doing up its shoelaces, error has run halfway round the world. The "discussion" has not been worked out that well anyway, and in one passage there is a seeming gaff of major proportions. On page 176 he records the instance of Corrie ten Boom and the Dutch Resistance in Holland sheltering the Jews at the risk of their own lives and in direct contravention of *de facto* government orders. But for Hall this order was legitimately disobeyed only on the ground that it was known the victims were to be murdered. He plainly states:

Had the government [i.e. the Nazis—CW] not required direct participation in murder, Christians could have submitted. Christians are called to obey the state, even if it is less than perfect. Christians disobey it, only when it reaches a point of corruption such that it legislates in opposition to God.

As a theonomist, I find this incomprehensible as a representation of the biblical position. In fact, it beggars belief. I have to conclude from this quotation that as long as Hitler didn't intend to slit the throats of these poor wretches, Christians were obliged to hand them over to be tortured, maimed, dehumanised and plundered as an act of obedience to a divine institution! Thank God for a better theology among Forties Dutch Christians. As Milton said of such rulers, it is God's decree that the nearest man to them with a sword sinks it into their hearts without delay or remorse. A position of power does not constitute legitimate authority, and Christians in history have been foremost to establish this fact in theory and in practice, often at the cost of their own blood. Paul's definition of a truly divine government is clear in Romans 13, where not the prevailing but the true government is delineated. Its role is limited to the execution of justice between man and man. It is a ministerial and not a magisterial role. As John H. Yoder—quoted by Hall—much better puts it:

What is ordained is not a particular government but the concept of a proper government, the principle of government as such. As long as a given government lives up to a certain minimum set of requirements, then that government may properly claim the sanction of divine institution. If, however, a government fails adequately to fulfill the functions divinely assigned to it, it loses its authority. (p. 176)

Hall's only answer is to deny that this was the teaching of Calvin and Knox (so what?) and to maintain that, "All in all, the Reformation doctrine of forfeiture provides a better conceptual framework" (p. 176). He nowhere explains what this "conceptual framework," this "doctrine of forfeiture," is or in what ways it is better. In the next paragraph he remarks, "If they [specific governments—CW] consistently

and wilfully disobey God, they may reach a point at which Christians cannot obey.” Forsooth! and must we eagerly spend our days scanning the deeds of these rascals until they are “consistent and wilful” before informing them that at that point we Christians might, just might, refuse to do as we are told?

And how does this sit with Hall’s apparent disavowal of this reticence to act, on the next page: “They are not licensed to do anything they wish, but to serve the wishes of God. If they abandon that charter, they lose their license.” Amen. The logic of this statement is clear enough I would have thought: Western governments, at the least, have lost their licence, and they need to be told . . . and the people need to be told. But Christian pulpit and press have shirked their responsibility. As an institution, the Christian church has failed this century in its task of being salt and light to the world. The pulpit in particular is as dead as the oak out of which it is made. At the end of the day we are told that civil disobedience, and the right to change our governors even if they don’t like it, is not on. (On the Internet earlier this year even American recons and theologians were arguing about whether the thirteen colonies had been right to tell king George what he could do with his teabags). Murdering millions of innocent children by the year, legislating sodomy and perversity, stealing billions of hard-earned cash by fraud, deceit and violence, denying justice in the courts to millions of ordinary people, does not seem to constitute the essential acid test of “consistent and wilful disobedience.” It’s time to read the real Christian teachers and listen to their voice. Augustine, over 1600 years ago, hit the nail on the head so hard its sound echoes down the centuries to this day:

Justice being taken away, then, what are kingdoms but great robberies? For what are robberies themselves, but little kingdoms? The band itself is made up of men; it is ruled by the authority of a prince, it is knit together by the pact of the confederacy; the booty is divided by the “law” agreed on. If, by the admittance of evil men, this evil increases to such a degree that it holds places, fixes abodes, takes possession of cities, and subdues peoples, it assumes the more plainly the name of a kingdom, because the reality is now manifestly conferred on it, not by the removal of covetousness, but *by the addition of impunity*. (*City of God*, Book IV chapter 4)

The addition of impunity is the one striking difference between the vast majority of modern governments’ actions and those of the criminals they claim to pursue. I believe the only reason why Christians in America and Britain (or even France or Germany) should not rise up in revolt is the simple one of prudence: we don’t have the fire-power to achieve the goal. So we need to work harder through the system to take over the reins.

Fourthly, I could not fail to notice, in many little ways, the lack of real knowledge of English, let alone European, history that is a hallmark of our brethren across the pond. It shows itself in remarks like that on page 145 where the Earl of Shaftesbury is described as having been a leading light in the anti-slavery movement (in which he took no part at all; it was all over bar the shouting by the time he was born). Again, Hall has this strange idea (pp. 240, 252 esp.) that the English “Puritans, Dissenters and Congregationalists” were against the principle of an established church (almost to a man they were for it). And somehow, he thinks (page 254) that the divine right of kings is a particularly English

tradition of long-standing (it was hardly known until the Normans and only really articulated and defended by the wretched Scottish Stuarts). And finally, he is under the impression (page 286) that unlike the USA, Britain has no constitution to speak of!

I’ll round off with a really funny bit that I’m not sure was intended, but it made me smile. In discussing king Asa’s reforms he states: “[Asa] even deposed his grandmother Maacah from her position as Queen Mother. Asa had not only the courage to take on the sacred cows of his day . . .”

Despite the few reservations above I would like to see this volume widely read. Unfortunately it is unavailable from any outlet in the UK. For a copy contact David Hall at The Covenant Foundation, 190 Manhattan Ave., Oak Ridge, TN 37830, USA, including US\$3.00 for handling. They do not take plastic unfortunately. Also, a banker’s draft will cost in the region of £7-10 in the UK, making it pretty prohibitive. I am prepared (as a non-profit-making service) to process all orders if a reasonable number want them so that we can spread the cost of the draft. If we get ten or more David Hall has promised a discount that will cover the cost of handling. In the first instance, phone me on 01639 637922 or e-mail me at colin@wychtree.co.uk.

The Kuyper Institute is one of many “institutes” (really Web pages) on the Internet site known as the Center for Advancement of Paleo Orthodoxy. This is a ministry of the Covenant Presbyterian Church, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, of which David Hall is pastor. We strongly recommend this site for its many excellent pages, articles and magazines. Contact: www.usit.net/public/capo/capohome.html. C&S

ETHICS AND GOD’S LAW: AN INTRODUCTION TO THEONOMY

BY WILLIAM O. EINWECHTER

Mill Hall, Pennsylvania: Preston/Speed Publications, 1995, 85 pages, including suggested readings and scripture index, paperback. ISBN 1-887159-02-9

REVIEWED BY DOUG DAHL

As a layman and relatively new student of theonomy, I found William Einwechter’s little book, *Ethics and God’s Law*, marvelously simple and straightforward. Though far too short at a mere 74 pages to satisfy advanced students, this book presents an excellent introduction to the topic for Christians in the pews, most of whose ethical foundation extends no further than Romans 6:14b.

Rev. Einwechter clearly has a lay audience in mind. His first chapter defines both theonomy and ethics, mounting theonomy solidly to the wall of *sola scriptura*, a doctrine that most evangelical Christians would acknowledge explicitly, if not implicitly in their daily lives. “Theonomy is that view of Christian ethics which believes that God’s law as revealed in Scripture is the only proper rule and the only acceptable standard for judging the rightness or wrongness of any and all human behavior” (page 6). One can almost hear the low murmurs of “Amen” from the appreciative congregation, though they might not be ready to acknowledge the full implications of their assent.

The heart of the book consists of eight brief chapters, each addressing one theological issue of long-standing debate: the

scope of the law, autonomy, natural law, antinomianism, legalism, the proper use of God's law, hermeneutics, and civil law. In each, Einwechter presents a brief, scripturally based description of the theonomic position with respect to the issue. For example, "Theonomy and Legalism" runs a mere three pages, yet firmly establishes that theonomy "condemns all types of legalism" (page 32). He argues that legalism, in whatever form it rears its head, always entails man earning his own salvation by something he does himself. While God's law remains the only permissible standard for judging human conduct, ". . . Theonomy strongly rejects any system of salvation by the works of the law" (*ibid.*). Obedience to God's law is a work of grace born of love, and only made possible by the action of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. The "Amen" chorus grows perceptibly louder.

Einwechter devotes his longest chapter (nearly 13 pages) to the thorny issue of civil law. Knowing that most modern evangelical Christians blanch at the severity of Old Testament penology, Einwechter does not flinch in his insistence that the civil law and the civil magistrate are bound as much to God's law as are the individual and the church. "Theonomy contends that the law of God ought to form the basis of all civil law, and that the civil magistrate is a servant of God who is responsible to uphold all aspects of the moral law that directly relate to the social order, public morality, and civil justice" (page 47). The "Amen" chorus is no doubt muted at this point.

Modern Christians have bought into the idea, which springs forth from the depraved mind of autonomous man, that the state must create and administer law from a posture of moral neutrality. After all, ours is a pluralistic society encompassing many religions. We must never permit one to dominate the others by enshrining its morality in the law. Einwechter will not permit them this easy way out. To accept this notion is to elevate man's standards above God's, leaving the populace at the mercy of sinful men guided by no objective, written standard. That is inevitably the path to despotism.

Nor does Einwechter permit modern Christians the comfortable refuge of an amorphous natural law as their way of escape from the demands of biblical law. He rightly argues that natural law is necessarily a lower standard than God's law, and that there is no objective, universally agreed-upon conception of natural law to which the civil law may be tied. This no doubt plunges the "Amen" chorus into a deafening silence.

The most useful feature of the book, from the standpoint of the layman trying to evangelise a reluctant church, is the final chapter, "Theonomy and Response." This is the salesman's delight, the classic close in which the author summarises his presentation and "asks for the order." Here he tacks ever so slightly back into the wind, re-gathers his momentum, then bears resolutely for the finish line.

"Theonomy and Response" poses seven persuasive reasons why Christians should "make a decision for theonomy." These seven reasons turn out to be what every sincere Christian wants from his life. First, theonomy glorifies God, fulfilling our highest purpose in life. Second, theonomy sets forth man's true duty, both to God and to his fellow man. Third, theonomy is the true ethic of love, telling us specifically what we must do when we are committed to doing what love demands. Fourth, theonomy is the proper response to grace, showing us how to obey the God who has saved us by grace. Fifth, theonomy is the path of blessing, activating all the promises of God to those who keep his commands. Sixth, theonomy is the way of victory: victory for the individual over his besetting sins, and victory for the church over the spiritual forces of darkness. Finally, theonomy is the way of revival and reformation, teaming up with prayer to set up the necessary conditions for revival.

Exhaustive (and exhausting) tomes have been written on each of the issues Einwechter raises in his feather-light treatise. Those of us in the laity who have gotten cramps in the brain as well as in the back from hefting those mighty volumes will rejoice in Einwechter's succinct summation of this crucial theological position. This is a book for the rest of the church,

one that closet Reconstructionists in our Arminian churches would do well to distribute by the case lot. Our unwittingly antinomian friends can easily digest Einwechter's thoughts in a couple of hours, and they might just find it an eye-opening experience. Who knows? It might even spark a revival.

And everybody thundered, "Amen!" *C&S*

LOGOS LIBRARY SYSTEM, 2.0

by Logos Research Systems, Inc.

SOFTWARE REVIEWED BY KENNETH L. GENTRY

Stanton Delaplaine once expressed the widespread sentiment of those who were being forced by technological advance to use computers on the job: "The computer is down. I hope it is something serious." Today, however, increasing numbers of Christians are becoming computer literate not only by necessity, but by choice. Three major selling points for Christian computer research are: (1) faster research capability (instant access to minute words buried deep in huge volumes); (2) less expensive library acquisition (purchasing CDs loaded with many volumes is much less expensive than buying print editions); and (3) greater enjoyment (ask your kids: computers are fun!).

Logos Research Systems, founded by former Microsoft programmers in 1992, has quickly leap-frogged to the top of the Bible research market with their Logos Library System (LLS). The power, enormity, and scope of the program are considerable. In this article I will review its library system search engine and its biblical concordance capabilities. The review will serve as something of a news report; those interested in computers know the importance of keeping up-to-date. And this is big news for Christian researchers.

First, what is going on here? Logos is setting a standard for the whole electronic publishing industry that eventually will allow book publishers to provide computer access to thousands of volumes of Christian literature. With their Microsoft programming experience, the developers at Logos are able to take full advantage of the power of, and offer full compatibility with, Windows 3.x and Windows 95. Presently over 120 electronic books have been published under the LLS electronic publishing standard. There are over 200 more in development, and in the next twelve months projections are for a total of 1000 titles. This is truly a massive undertaking.

Second, what are the advantages of the standard that Logos Research Systems is setting? The pre-LLS situation in electronic publishing was intolerable. Different publishers produced their works for operation under different programs. For instance, I have several CD libraries, but each one operates differently and all are mutually incompatible. There are four important advantages of the LLS standard:

(1) Unified data structure. This allows all books, whether Bibles, atlases, dictionaries, or whatever, to be produced with a common structure so that they can all be searched simultaneously with a single search command. This is one reason we must not think of LLS as a Bible concordance program like so many others. It is much more than that in that it allows you to search, not only the Scriptures, but your whole electronic library in one motion!

(2) Dynamic library. This allows you to add to or take away books from your electronic library, without confusing the program. LLS not only knows what books you have, but lets you leap over boundaries separating various books through

cross-linking. That is, when you find subject material in one book, the system links it with related articles in other books. Your research is not limited to your knowledge of the content of one book! Other books you might have overlooked can be drawn into your research. In addition, the program is virtually infinitely expandable; there is no limit to the number of books it can manage.

(3) Language sensitivity. Biblical research is necessarily multi-lingual: the Bible was written in three languages and biblical research has been published in many other languages. Thanks to the new Unicode technology used by LLS, you can, for instance, search for and display a left-to-right Hebrew phrase (in original characters) quoted in a right-to-left English sentence.

(4) Library science compatibility. All books in LLS have a correctly formatted library card and an electronic MARC record compatible with the Library of Congress. And as you cut and paste from any LLS book to your word processor, the program automatically provides a footnote with full bibliographic data.

All the books in the LLS have a look and feel like the original. That is, type fonts, page layout, maps, graphs, and so forth are shown on screen just as on the printed page of the print version.

Furthermore, LLS provides an elaborate, electronic note-taking system. You may attach your notes to any article or word in your electronic library. The notes can be as long as you like and in whatever language you like. They may also be fed into your word processing program.

There are four package levels available at present. I am reviewing the largest package, which contains (in part) the following books in their original language characters: seven Bible translations; *Novum Testamentum Graece*; *Septuaginta*; *Biblia Hebraica*; *Textus Receptus*; the *Vulgate*; *Arndt-Gingrich Lexicon*; *Liddell-Scott Lexicon*; *Kittel's abridged Theological Dictionary*; *Vine's Expository Dictionary*; two Bible dictionaries; four Bible commentaries; *Strong's Lexicon*; *Nave's*; and much more.

This is truly a remarkable program with breath-taking capabilities. Your biblical and theological research will not only be accelerated in time, but expanded in content.

I will now focus more narrowly on one aspect of its usefulness: its Bible concordance program. You must remember, however, that LLS is not simply a Bible concordance program. It is an infinitely expandable library program that will co-ordinate all your electronic books with your Bibles for detailed research.

Nevertheless, Logos is also a Bible concordance program. And perhaps the premiere program available. The power and size of Logos establish the program as a Bible research specialist's tool; its user-friendliness and expandability invite even the occasional Bible student. Those interested in serious Bible study who have yet to try computer-enhanced study do not know what they are missing. Computer assisted Bible study opens up whole new worlds of research possibilities and increases output by speeding up that research.

Due to the library expansion capabilities of the Logos Library System, a very handy feature of the program is its "Library Browser." This is a list of the various Bible versions and books you have purchased for use with LLS (you can purchase LLS in four different levels: each successive level containing more books, with Level 4 offering a total of thirty-eight). Upon opening the program, the Browser appears on the left in a three inch wide window running the full height of your screen. It makes all of your research tools available with just a click of the mouse. No directory and file names to remember;

no drives and sub-directories to search through! And if you decide you need the screen space, you can temporarily remove the Browser with a click of the mouse.

As with any computer concordance program, you can search for words and phrases, or for biblical references in a flash. You can display several of your favorite versions on screen at the same time and can “link” them so that as you scroll through one version, the others follow right along. Or, if you prefer, you can leave the texts unlinked so that you can keep one passage before you while drawing up another (in the same or a different version) alongside. You can also have some of your favorite study tools on the screen and available as you search through the Scriptures. By means of the scaled text magnification feature, if you need more screen room, you can reduce the text size; if you have difficulty reading smaller text, you can increase the text size.

A remarkable feature of the program is the way it helps you dig deeper. If you open the KJV to a particular text you can scroll through the verses with your mouse pointer and, as you do so, you will notice a note at the bottom of the screen indicating which Strong’s Concordance number the highlighted word is based on. A quick click and you are in Strong’s!

Or if you open a Greek version of the Bible, the same simple scrolling will produce a note at the bottom of the screen parsing the verbs and declining the nouns for you—and giving you their root meanings! If you right click on a Greek word twice, you will have a fuller display of grammatical information. This will be especially helpful for pastors and others who have had some study of Greek. In fact, the ease of use and clarity of the helps will open up Greek (and Hebrew!) information to those who have not had training in the original languages, as well. In addition, the often confusing system of abbreviation in Greek lexicons is unmasked by simply clicking on the colour coded abbreviations, thereby expanding the abbreviation to its full reference. And for the scholar, LLS will perform morphological searches. This is truly a program for Christians at all levels of study.

You are not only able to highlight text in your Bible version and copy it into your favorite word processing program, but you can even do so with the original language characters intact (you will have to remember to change your font in your word processor, though). Logos uses the Windows clip-board feature for fast and easy pasting between programs. It couldn’t be easier!

As in a good wide-margin print Bible, you can append your own notes to biblical texts—and in any combination of languages. You can even copy material from the research tools and put it in a note attached to the passage you are studying. And you don’t have to worry about running out of room in your “margin” or having to devise ways to strike out faulty notes. It is all computer enhanced.

A fun feature of all four levels of LLS is the music. As you open the program, you hear played a small portion of “I Sing the Almighty Power of God.” Then as you close Logos, you hear the musical “amen”! The Logos Hymnal (which comes in all levels of Logos) has 100 hymns that are fully searchable by text. They can even be played in the background while you study. Try doing that with a print version of Strong’s Concordance, or with a printed Bible! Pastors will love this tool for coordinating hymns with their sermons.

Finally, let me mention the Logos Bible Atlas. This tool has integrated precise satellite data with multi-layered historical data to provide printable sharply detailed graphic maps. These also have much research data attached, as well. The maps are also linked to biblical passages in the concordance program for instant reference to the biblical data.

Each day as I use Logos, I am amazed and surprised at new features I stumble on. Logos is a real Godsend! I highly recommend your looking into the Logos Library System. But don’t tell your wife: you may be tempted above that which you are able!

For information contact: (800) 875-6467. Expandable electronic research software. Minimum system requirements: Windows 3.x; 386sx (486 recommended); 4Mb RAM (16Mb recommended); 5Mb free hard disk space; 2x CD-ROM drive. C&S

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