APPRAISAL

A Journal of Constructive and Post-Critical Philosophy and Interdisciplinary Studies

Vol. 1 No. 2 October 1996 **ISSN 1358-3336**

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wife, a new independent school at Wennington. Among his books is *Energy Unbound: The Story of Wennington* School (1980).

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Mr Paul Gee is a person-centred counsellor and psycho-therapist and a trainer of counsellors. He has research interests in the philosophy of psycho-therapy (at Keele University) and has made a particular study of the work of John Macmurray.

EDITORIAL

'An obscure Scottish philosopher' is how one newspaper columnist recently referred to the subject of this the first of an occasional series of Re-appraisals of philosophers of the 20th century whose work deserves to be more widely known. The columnist was commenting on Mr Tony Blair's statement that he had been inspired by the work of John Macmurray. Irrespective of how one might feel about Mr Blair's politics and 'New Labour', we hope that John Macmurray will not be quite so obscure as a result of this Re-appraisal.

The emphasis in our Re-appraisals will be upon the continuing application of the ideas and principles of the philosophers concerned, in order to show that the subjects chosen have something valuable to say to us today.

That aim is amply fulfilled in the following articles upon John Macmurray, all of which, not only expound some aspect of his philosophy, but also apply it to more recent questions and problems: personal knowing, the family, politics, and psycho-therapy.

As can be seen from the Biographical Notes, Macmurray had a distinguished academic career, culminating in his apppointment as the Gifford Lecturer for 1953 and 1954. Yet his name does not appear in any of the encylcopaedias or dictionaries of philosophy (perhaps the forthcoming Routledge encyclopaedia will change that); his books are unlikely to appear on reading-lists; those in the university library which I use, are rarely borrowed; and rarely does one see his named mentioned in other books and articles.

> 'Reality in human life is action . . . The real world is the world defined by action, in action. Ideas are the eyes of action'.
>
> *Creative Society*, p. 151.

Whatever may be the causes of this neglect, this Re-appraisal attempts to alleviate that neglect. Macmurray's principal claim on our attention arises from his refusal to confine philosophy to a merely technical discipline. As Mr Barnes shows in his notes upon his friendship with Macmurray, Macmurray's philosophy was born out of his experience, not simply out of books and academic problems. Hence Macmurray's profoundly anti-Cartesian stance: reflection follows upon and must always refer back to action; men are primarily agents, not detached observers, and are persons in relation, not isolated egos, empirical or transcendental; and reason is emotional and emotions are rational. It is a philosophy that flows from life and in turn illuminates life. He wrote for the general reader, and without distracting foot-notes, not just for fellow academics nor to continue the disputes of the journals.

We are grateful to the John Macmurray Fellowship for help in compiling this Re-appraisal

> 'Reason is primarily an affair of emotion, and . . the rationality of thought is the derivative and secondary one. For if reason is the capacity to *act* in terms of the nature of the object, it is emotion which stands directly behind activity determining its substance and direction, while thought is related to action indirectly and through emotion, determining only its form, and that only partially'.
>
> *Reason and Emotion*, p. 26

JOHN MACMURRAY

Biographical Details

Born 16th Feb. 1891 at Maxwellton, Kirkcubrightshire.
Graduated from Glasgow Univ. in 1913. Snell Exhibitioner and Newlands Scholar of Balliol Coll. Oxford 1913.
Joined Royal Army Medical Corps, as a private, 1914.
Commission as a Lieutenant, Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, 1916.
Awarded the Military Cross.
John Locke Scholar in Mental Philosophy, Oxford, 1919.
Lecturer in Philosophy, University of Manchester, 1919.
Professor of Philosophy, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, 1921.
Fellow and Classical Tutor and Jowett Lecturer in Philosophy, Balliol Coll. Oxford, 1922-8.
Grote Professor of the Philosophy of Mind and Logic, University of London, 1928-44.
Professor of Moral Philosophy, University of Edinburgh, 1944-58.
Gifford Lecturer, Glasgow University, 1953-4.
Died 21st June 1976.

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EXPERIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY

My friendship with John Macmurray

Kenneth C. Barnes

I first met John in 1932 and a friendship was formed that deepened throughout life. It included my wife, who was a teacher of literature and a writer of poetry, while Betty Macmurray was a most interesting painter. When Frances and I founded a boarding school in 1940, to provide a refuge from the chaos of war, John Macmurray became chairman of the governors and a frequent visitor.

The First World War broke out when he was about 22 and had moved from Glasgow to Oxford to complete his classical education in Balliol College. His Christian commitment inclined him to pacifism, but he decided to join the Medical Corps. Before long he recognised that this was not saving his integrity; he was merely patching up wounded soldiers to go back to do the dirty work of fighting. So he joined the Cameron Highlanders and soon became an officer. That 1914 war was in a way more hideous than the last one. There were long periods of stinking stagnation. Four times as many of our men were killed. Many of the men who suffered its horrors could not speak of them afterwards. They pushed them to the back of their minds and tried to forget them. But John was not like that. He had to

assimilate all experience, to bring it into consciousness and make it part of his ongoing reality.

This was shown in the lecture to the Yearly Meeting of Quakers in 1966, *The Search for Reality*. (He became a Quaker late in life). He told how he lost his fear of death by squarely facing horror. When he first went forward to take command of a platoon on the Somme, he joined the men at an angle of a trench. It was quiet evening. The men were quietly talking and joking when suddenly there was the whine of an approaching shell. It exploded round the bend of the trench. John rushed round. He found one man almost cut in half, another so hacked that he could only bleed to death.

He described also a kilted highlander long dead and caught up in a mass of barbed wire between the opposing trenches where he could not be reached. John wrote: 'So there he remained, day after day, almost as if he were one of us'. For John these experiences resulted in 'a quick and complete acceptance of death, for myself as well as my comrades'. Before the war it had seemed an end to dread. Now it became an incident in life, and in the result it removed for ever the fear of death.

His reflection on this incident illustrates so well his plea for coming to terms with emotion, so that it becomes truly related to reality. He thought of life as precious because it is short: and because it may end at any moment we must live so that every day would be a good day to die in, if death should come.

He wrote, 'Without this knowledge of death, I came to believe, there can be no real knowledge of life and so no discovery of the reality of religion'. It illustrates also what he regarded as perhaps humanity's most dominant need, to be freed from fear. 'The fear of death is the symbol of all fear, and fear is destructive of reality'. Carefully reading through the Gospels he came to the conclusion that every time Jesus referred to *faith*, he meant not belief but freedom from fear, the freedom that, metaphorically speaking, would enable us to move mountains

In a letter in October 1929 he wrote:

> I am giving tomorrow the first of a series of five public lectures in University College . . . about Personal Freedom and the problems of ethics. It may be only my pride or blindness, but I think I am entering a field which is absolutely virgin soil for the philosopher and calling for a reconstruction of modern philosophy from top to bottom. It seems to me that we have never yet begun the effort to understand the personal at all.

Not long before that he had felt depressed. He was not sure he could put his philosophical conclusions into everyday speech. He was haunted by a fear expressed in these words:

> that I am sheltering under the wing of a Christianity that I don't really believe in—or at least being *interpreted* in terms of a Christianity which is poles asunder from my central meaning. I feel inclined to write a pamphlet on the question 'Was Christ a Christian?'—with a thoroughly negative answer. What Christianity there is seems to me sometimes so completely bound up with a civilisation which is fundamentally incompatible with the attitude of Christ.

Soon he gave the broadcasts that were subsequently published as *Freedom in the Modern World*. It is difficult to believe now that they caused a great stir and violence in the Press, one tabloid going so far as to call him 'The Red Professor of Gower Street'. There was some understanding in the churches and later a great deal more.

The official name of the Quakers is The Society of Friends. It is thought to have originated in the description of the founders as Friends of the Truth. But many of us like to associate it with that most significant and moving statement of Jesus: 'From now on you are not my servants; you are my friends'. This is most important, because it could be taken as a text for *Freedom in the Modern World* and much of what John later wrote. He dismissed service as the supreme moral requirement. Service can be used to justify unthinking obedience to the state or to a church that allows no room for independent thinking. Even social service is inadequate, for it may imply merely a duty rather than a compassionate response to a need.

John wrote nothing about his own marriage But it was a fine, unusual marriage. The quality of his marriage largely determined the sensitivity of his thinking. He deliberately set out to understand what it is like to be a woman. He went to course in dressmaking with this in mind and made dresses for his wife. Without losing any of his masculinity he could express deep tenderness. It is mainly in *Reason and Emotion* that he deals with the relation between the sexes. He repudiated the view, inherited from the Stoics, that emotion should be controlled by reason, will and law. Chastity for him meant not a physical condition. It meant understanding the quality of your feelings, the true origin of your motives set in the wholeness of the personality. It is emotional sincerity. Morality has been taken to mean conformity to a pattern, irrespective of underlying quality. The reaction against it, without an inner quality to take its place, has led in general to a sexual life in society that is 'Blind, barbarous and unreal'.

The upsurge in feminism took place after he had ceased writing, but in *Reason and Emotion* he foresaw the problem. Men had been expected to be the intrepid ones, while women specialised in the emotional life and guarded the delicate spiritual attitudes that made for unity in social life. This sharp differentiation had to go.

MACMURRAY'S NOTION OF LOVE FOR PERSONAL KNOWING

Philip Mooney

As we move down the information highway in this final twentieth of the twentieth century, we enjoy a reservoir of data that is literally at our fingertips. We tap the key-board or roll the 'mouse' and up on our monitor appears Stendahl's critique of Shakespeare, the value of the dollar on the foreign exchange, or a map for our next trip. Yet what currently commands national attention on the multimedia screen is the trial of a famous athlete indicted for the murder of his ex-wife. Crime and violence in our society have ruefully kept pace with technological advances that can now embed 5.5 million transistors on a computer-chip the size of a soda-cracker. If information processing abounds, personal relations confound—as domestic violence, vitriolic divorce, and rampant murder reach levels in verbal and physical abuse that rival the lawless days of the West. Sociologists, psychologists, clerics and criminologists all agree that this upheaval in our society points to a break-down in inter personal communication, no matter what labels like 'dysfunctional' or 'latch-key' they put upon the malady. Tagging a problem, however, does not alleviate it; in fact, filing it in a 'directory' on our 'information highway' may make its solution more elusive for having eliminated its 'personal' features. Encyclopaedic data about the world may be as close as our 'lap-top'; knowing 'You' is not—not even on 'Touch-Tone.'

Paul of Tarsus had cautioned us about this long ago: 'If I . . . understand all mysteries and all knowledge . . . , but have not love I am nothing'. (1 Corinthians 13.2) In our time, John Macmurray tailors the biblical lines to the context of personal relationship: 'My knowledge of another person is a function of my love for him or her'.[1] French aviator-author Antoine de Saint Exupéry echoes the Scottish philosopher in his book *Pilote de guerre*: 'Only love can tell what face shall come forth from the clay; only love can direct a person to that countenance; intelligence has meaning only in implementing love'.[2] Significantly, for validating their respective insights on love as the key to knowledge of other persons, philosopher and pilot were each decorated for war-time valour near the French town of Arras. John Macmurray, while serving in the trenches during the battle of the Somme as a World War I Cameron Highlander, took shrapnel in his face in pulling a fallen comrade to safety from the mine-pocked 'no-man's-land' beyond the barbed-wire lines. For this selfless deed, the gentle man from Maxwellton received the Military Cross. Antoine de Saint Exupéry was awarded the Croix de Guerre for bravery as a reconnaissance pilot over Arras during the battle of France in May, 1940 on a mission whose lasting impact he relates in *Pilote de guerre*:

> I enkindled my love for my people through the gift of my blood during that sortie . . . If I had turned around a moment earlier, I would never have come to know myself. I would never have experienced the tender affection that now fills my heart . . . I am flying back to those I belong to . . . I am going home[3].

Saint Exupéry did not survive the war. He was lost in action July 31, 1944, flying reconnaissance just prior to the Allied landings in the south of France. His literary legacy can be summed up in his most cited line that comes from *The Little Prince*: 'A person can only see clearly with the heart—the essential is hidden from the eyes'.[4] This same maxim had engaged the attention of St-Ex's fellow veteran of Arras ever since the Armistice of 1918. John Macmurray continually reiterated the principle of love for personal knowledge and communion from his first radio addresses over the BBC in 1930 through his Forwood lectures at the University of Liverpool in 1960. The career of this leading personalist stretched from the thirties when he was Grote Professor of Mind and Logic at the University of London through the fifties at the University of Edinburgh where he had been appointed professor of moral philosophy after World War II. John Macmurray died in Edinburgh on June 21, 1976 at the age of eighty-five and lies buried beside his wife of 60 years in the Quaker burial ground at Jordans, Bucks—not far from William Penn. He had joined the Society of Friends because of their witness of love. We now do the memory of this fine philosopher and close friend in probing his notion of love as central to personal knowing and relationships—a needed ingredient in our computerised times that are so fraught with human violence.

1. Intellectual and aesthetic ways of knowing

Information versus knowledge

First we have to get clear the difference between information and knowledge of persons and their respective modes of comprehension. We tend to confuse acquiring personal data about someone with really knowing the person in his or her uniqueness. There's a computer company named 'Data General'; and, symbolically, that is the extent

to what even the most sophisticated 'on-line' network can provide—general information. All data-entry must be done in terms of 'common characteristics' that are all the CPU is empowered to process. Of course, the machine can lattice the co-ordinates of available data to pinpoint the specific item of information being sought, sparing detectives, for instance, huge amounts of time in establishing the identity of a criminal suspect. But the 'output' remains only information about a person, not knowledge of him or her. John Macmurray set out the limits of this 'scientific' culling of information six decades ago:

> This concentration on the object, this indifference to the persons concerned, which is characteristic of the 'information' attitude, is often called objectivity. It is really only impersonality . . . Information is always information about something, not knowledge of it . . . Science is concerned with generalities, with the more or less universal characteristics of things in general, not with anything in particular. And anything real is always something in particular.[5]

Intellectual and emotional reason

Here we encounter the pivotal point in Macmurray's philosophy of human knowing: to know any thing 'in particular' necessarily engages our aesthetic way of knowing, or, as he often terms it, 'emotional reason'. What separates humans from the animals is our 'reason' or 'rationality' which, in Macmurray's rendition, is our 'capacity for objectivity'. He observes that we are the only beings that live, think, feel and act in terms of what is not ourselves. He sometimes describes this defining quality of ours as the thrust for 'self-transcendence'. He distinguishes the two dimensions of the rationality characteristic of humans as, respectively, the intellectual way of knowing and the aesthetic (artistic/contemplative) way of knowing. The latter is the appreciation of the unique worth or value of each particular being in one's experience in contrast with the other mode which is the classification of all beings in one's experience in terms of their common characteristics. Our intellect remains the best CPU on earth for assimilating instrumental knowledge of the world through its cataloguing ability. But Macmurray insists that knowing the intrinsic value of another as other in his, her, or its unique being is beyond the ken of the intellect because 'value is emotionally apprehended'. So, while the mother of the newborn child is intellectually gathering facts for herself about her baby's identifying features whether in chin-set or turn of the eyebrow, aesthetically she is appreciating his precious worth as—to invoke Chekhov—her 'golden one'. Macmurray reminds us that while our intellect identifies the object of our knowing as a matter of needed factual information, our 'emotional reason' is appraising his, her or its intrinsic value.

Aesthetic way of knowing

We are all quite aware of the validity of the aesthetic way of knowing; after all, the choice of spouse or career ultimately rests upon the perceived intrinsic value that responds to each person's fundamental yearning for fulfilment that is unique to each of us. But, we are hard put to explain 'what we see' in her—the bride-to-be, or it—becoming an engineer, simply because it comes of our aesthetic way of knowing. Macmurray speaks to this:

> To describe the process of contemplation (aesthetic way of knowing) is extremely difficult perhaps, in the end, impossible. This is because it is not an intellectual process; it has its own mode of expression which is by means of imagery, by the construction of images. We might say that it is largely 'unconscious'; that it is not discursive but intuitive; that in the end, if our reflection is successful we just know that we are right, but we cannot tell how we know and can certainly not prove that we are right. All this is as it must be and throws no doubt upon the validity of the appraisal, provided, of course, that the conclusion remains hypothetical and subject to continual revision.[6]

This prompts his definition of the aesthetic way of knowing: 'It consists in a critical appraisal of something through a continuous modification of feeling'.[7]

Cultural resistance to the aesthetic way of knowing

Since knowledge of the intrinsic values that direct our choices comes only through this aesthetic mode of knowing, why is so little acknowledgement given to its validity and, consequently, to its development? Macmurray sees three cultural factors as responsible for this lassitude and resistance. First there is the Stoic mistrust of the emotions as a responsible way of comprehending the reality of the world in our dealings with it:

> In contrasting reason with emotion we are under one of the strongest influences in our Western tradition—the Stoic dualism of Reason and the Passions, with its prejudice against being emotionally involved in the results of our action.[8]

If Stoicism inserted the wedge in the culturally acceptable connotation of 'rationality,' Descartes drove it home in asserting that the only 'truth' we can be sure of is what we can measure as 'substance'. This postulate served as prelude for the modern scientific revolution signalled by his fellow mathematician Sir Isaac Newton in the 17th century. Its ever expanding impact in technological advances extends from the moon-landings to the space-satellites that facilitate our instantaneous, world-wide E-mail. Without disparaging the beneficial results for humankind that the applications of scientific research have brought, John Macmurray calls attention to the overwhelming manner in which the intellectual mode of knowing appropriate to the laboratory has come to permeate our cultural outlook:

> The type of mental outlook which is necessary for the prosecution of scientific research can be adopted as the desirable attitude far beyond the boundaries of science. Where science

is dominant this is bound to happen, with greater or less rapidity according to the effectiveness of the opposition that is offered by traditional values and the institutions which embody and maintain them . . Educational procedure will be affected; the schools and universities will be required to transfer the centre of gravity from the arts to the sciences, while the arts themselves are increasingly taught in a 'scientific' fashion. The result is the spread of an attitude to life which sees it as a series of problems to be solved, and for which all problems are technological, and what is needed for their solution is a 'scientific' approach untrammelled by traditional taboos. It is the negative aspect of this that is most important. The concentration of interest upon instrumental values involves a growing unawareness of and insensitiveness to intrinsic values; and our sensitiveness to intrinsic values is the measure of our civilisation[9].

Detriment in canonising the intellectual way of knowing

John Macmurray alerts us to the hazards for society that canonising the intellectual mode of knowing engenders. In itself, the intellectual way of knowing is self-oriented—

> One cannot really know about anything unless one first knows it. Intellectual awareness is egocentric. It uses the senses as its instrument[10].

In being disengaged from its counterpart in the aesthetic way of knowing the other in his, her or its unique worth, this 'scientific' attitude—that is concerned solely with information about others—depersonalises the other in that 'we should require to be completely objective, unemotional, impersonal'.[11] Sociologist Emmanuel Mounier concurs in asserting that this posture

> begins with an abstraction, ignoring anything that cannot be utilised . . . By dint of ignoring, we forget, and by dint of forgetting we deny![12]

Antoine de Saint Exupéry, for his part, reinforces Macmurray's critique through a parable of this attitude at work in wartime:

> If one of their battalion should become gravely wounded and was hampering the army's advance, they would finish him off. They look at the common good only in terms of arithmetic—and arithmetic controls their outlook so that they would not risk going beyond themselves to become greater than they are[13].

John Macmurray seals his consideration by underscoring the mores and fallout for society that the dominance of this attitude can foster:

> We would, in fact, look upon and behave towards other people as if they were things for our use, so far as our power made this possible. The others would, of course, treat us in the same way, and life would be possible in society only through compromise . . . I should merely suggest that this spread of the technological mind beyond the proper bounds throws light on many of the social problems of our time. The growth of juvenile delinquency throughout the civilised world, the increase in crime under conditions in which the natural incentives to crime are less than they have ever been, and the imbecilities of the armaments race are obvious examples.[14]

Aesthetic appreciation of another as a way of love

Macmurray's earlier comment that this 'scientific' perspective construes life as a series of problems to be solved calls to mind an anecdote of the late Bart Giamotti. The former president of Yale remarked that, at Harvard, all problems were political and, therefore, susceptible [his word] of a 'public policy' remedy; at Yale, all problems were ethical or moral and would be overcome by 'doing better'. At Princeton, however, all problems were personal and could be taken care of by a walk in the woods. This delightful icon beams wisdom—especially the final leaf in the triptych. Getting to know the other in person through the aesthetic way of knowing means shedding the 'utilitarian' mind-set characteristic of the 'technological' penchant of our times. Saint Exupéry had 'homed' to this insight with another fine line from *The Little Prince*—'It's the time you have squandered upon your Rose that makes your Rose so special'.[15] Macmurray, that other man from Arras who was keen to such things, is on the same 'wave-length:'

> When you love anyone, you want above all things to be aware of him, more and more completely and delicately. You want to see him and hear him, not because you want to make use of him but simply because that is the natural and only way of taking delight in his existence for his sake. That is the way of love, and it is the only way of being alive. Life, when it is really lived, consists in this glad awareness. Living through the senses is living in love. When you love anything, you want to fill your consciousness with it. You want to affirm its existence. You feel that it is good that it should be in the world and be what it is . . . In fact, you are appreciating it and enjoying it for itself, and that is all you want.[16]

Macmurray in this little paean for aesthetic knowing puts the Stoics at bay in reminding us that all knowledge begins with the senses and stalls Descartes in suggesting that you can't put callipers on the love and appreciation of another person. He also puts the 'utilitarian' agenda out of court for its blocking out any consideration of the other that does not serve one's set purposes. Macmurray is careful, however, not to confuse aesthetic 'appreciation' which is the 'way of love' with the personal love that creates and sustains communion in friendship. But the beginnings of love are in every non-utilitarian, aesthetic appreciation of another person precisely because the focus is on the other as other. Could this 'so-called' appreciation of another be self-oriented emotional or sexual desire for the company or possession of another as treasure rather than sincere regard for the other as other? Could not Giamotti's walk in the woods be mutually self-satisfying and, therefore, reciprocal 'desire' rather than non-utilitarian appreciation for the other as other? So soon as the other is for my use or delight, the authentic appreciation that is the prelude to personal communion in friendship is shunted aside. Macmurray puts the critical question frankly:

> In feeling love for another person, I

can either experience a pleasurable emotion which he stimulates in me or I can love him. We have, therefore, to ask ourselves, is it really the other person that I love or is it myself? Do I enjoy him or do I enjoy myself in being with him?[17]

Genuine aesthetic appreciation of a person

This is the crux of Macmurray's concern that in the aesthetic mode of knowing the reference must be to the other and not beguiled by the self-gratifying reaction to his or her exhilarating company or good looks. The outcome of the intellectual mode of knowing is valid in so far as its reference to the reality of the world is truthful; the 'error,' for instance, in misconstruing the pertinent data regarding the health hazards of asbestos indicates that often it is not. Similarly, the aesthetic way of knowing can go awry if the reference to the other mistakes the first-blush impressions of the other in which 'I like you' for the sensitively reappraised evaluation that comes to know that 'You are good'. This 'modification of feeling' that undergirds authentic aesthetic appreciation is valid for being an appropriate comprehending of the reality of the other as other. Macmurray etches his meaning:

> Thus the process of valuation, the passage from 'I like it' to 'It is good', is a process in which I get rid of the reference to my own experience and transcend myself. Instead of characterising me, my judgment characterises the object. Yet it is my feeling that is the basis of the judgment . . . And as the seeing of it—the knowing of it by critically looking—becomes more adequate, so the feeling of it—the valuation of it by feeling—becomes correspondingly more adequate.[18]

John Macmurray is quite aware of the difficulties that can blur this caring appraisal of the other, especially when sexual promptings are involved. Here, again, for the couple

> a complete emotional sincerity is required of them . . . Only that can save us from self-deception where strong feelings are engaged, and preserve our emotions unsullied by organic excitement, free for their personal function, to grasp the realities of value in persons and in the world outside us.[19]

But, while emotional infatuation or sexual attraction can distort appropriate appreciation of the other in the aesthetic mode of knowing, it is still nearer to grasping the individuality and value of the other in his or her otherness than is the case in the intellectual mode of knowing. For the latter deals only in the generalities of information that can identify the other as a matter of fact but, for all that, remains impersonal—in delivering merely useful information about the other without ever genuinely being in touch with the other in his or her unique personal reality.

Sincerity is the touchstone for all reflection—in its authentic reference to the real object in the world under consideration. The ultimate verification of Dr. Alexander Fleming's painstaking analysis of the properties of a single laboratory 'mould' came with the medicine we know as penicillin that has saved so many from the onslaught of pneumonia. On a different scale, a music lover's appreciation of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto may have had to get by initial dislike for the piece's classical complexity that had put him more 'in the mood' for Glen Miller before oft repeated listening to its poignant 'andante' movement made him keenly aware of its inherent magnificence. The 'Miller sound' appeals upon first hearing—whether the number be 'Moonlight Serenade' or 'Little Brown Jug'. A Mozart work, however, may involve the 'modification of feeling' that culminates in profound appreciation of the young genius' eternally sparkling celebration of what it means to be human. Similarly, even the most ardent Norman Rockwell devotee stood awe-struck in beholding Michelangelo's 'Pietá' enshrined in designer Jo Milzeiner's muted blues at the 1965 New York World's Fair. There are levels of aesthetic appreciation and what a person may, at first, dismiss as reserved for the 'elite' can become the abiding centre of interest for his or her sensibility in response to a particular artist's visual or melodic imaging of the world of human 'worth'. This appreciation would in no way diminish the enduring value, for instance, of Tommy Dorsey's rendition of his theme song: 'I'm Getting Sentimental over You;' T.D'.s silken trombone evokes as authentic an aesthetic response as the Metropolitan Opera flutist's obligato solo in Donizetti's *Lucia Di Lammermoor.*

Mutuality of aesthetic appreciation

But, what if 'the object of my affection' (to borrow a line from a popular standard) is another per son? Then, the context is radically altered. At the Musée D'Orsay's Impressionist exhibition, I was free to set my own evaluation upon Renoir's 'Girl with the Blue Hat,' just as years earlier I had been in experiencing the azure-blue, sun-gleaming Glen Lake from atop Michigan's Sleeping Bear sand dune. Neither the master's lovely canvas nor nature's blue jewel would take exception to my appraisal of them. But the nice-looking girl—the one with the sky-blue eyes and 'dark Rosaleen' hair whom you've been admiring at the Air France bus stand at the Orly terminal—can! She has noticed your interested glances—giving a new hue to the situation, as Macmurray describes:

> You are now two people aware of one another: the emotional awareness is mutual, and with it comes self-consciousness. The watcher is being watched by his object. The consciousness is not one-sided; it is a consciousness between two people—a mutual awareness of one another. The artistic awareness must give way to another one. Reason—emotional reason—if it is to persist and not to be destroyed by the fear which lurks in self-consciousness, and makes the word a synonym of shyness, must itself become mutual. It must express itself now as the mutual

self-revelation of two persons to one another. Contemplation must be replaced by communion . . . That capacity for communion, that capacity for entering into free and equal personal relations, is the thing that makes us human . . . It is based upon and it is impossible apart from the artistic reason which recognises the significance, reality and value of the other persons in the world. But it transcends this and completes it by the simultaneous recognition that I am one of them, and that I am recognised and appreciated by them as they are by me.[20]

The pre-eminent personalist philosopher of the twentieth century has laid out the preliminaries for coming to know another person in person. This knowledge begins with a reciprocal appreciation of the other as a person through the aesthetic mode of knowing. But, neither can impose an evaluation upon the other, save respect for the other as a fellow human being—if they are to enjoy bona fide knowledge of one another as a person. For, ultimately, each of us rejects being treated or regarded other than as a free and equal human person. (The U.S. A'.s *Declaration of Independence* is based upon this principle—though human prejudice, greed and lust for power have in its short history made the national implementation of it most difficult.) In appreciating you as a person, I shall come to know you as loveable in your personal uniqueness if you choose to reveal this to me. My initiative of loving regard for you may kindle a corresponding response in you that can spark the beginnings of your revealing who you are to me as our friendship starts to take hold. But if you refuse my overtures and keep to your 'role' or adopt a stance of cool aloofness, we will simply be two human beings who continue on their respective ways without any imposition upon the other or without any incipient bonding either. Nevertheless, I—in my personal integrity—could not have sincerely appreciated you in person without inviting friendship. Macmurray is forthright about this: 'In the personal field appreciation is a blasphemy if it stops at appreciation and refuses communion'.[21]

2. The Meaning of Love

Love as affirmation of You

The appreciation of you in your uniqueness as a person sees you as belovable in person and draws forth my unique spirit of interest and love. To shunt aside this affirmation of you after having come to realise your unique worth as a person would be the nadir of insincerity. To stop short or walk away would show that my interest in you was self-oriented 'desire' and bereft of any genuine regard for you. If my knowledge of you is 'a function of my love' for you, then I must genuinely affirm you as You—if ever there is to be the knowledge of you that will flourish in the mutual communion in friendship. Consequently, the love that both Macmurray and Saint Exupéry proclaim to be the way of knowing another in person is the affirmation of You. Macmurray rounds out his meaning:

Only another person can elicit a total response in action, of such a kind that the self-transcendence of every aspect and element of our nature is expressed and fulfilled. This is the implicit intention of all fellowship—the complete realisation of the self through a complete self-transcendence. If this intention could be realised in an actual instance, the self would 'care for' the other totally; in action and in both modes of reflection, intellectual and emotional. 'I' would think, feel and act for 'you', in terms of 'your' nature and being. In this way, and only in this way, could a personal being achieve and experience a complete objectivity, a complete rationality, a complete self-realisation. The ground of friendship is, therefore, the inevitable need we have to be ourselves. It is our nature, as persons, to live in the world and not in our selves; to have the centre of intention and realisation outside ourselves, in that which is other than ourselves. The basic condition of this is that we should enter into fellowship, that we should love the other. So love may be defined as the complete affirmation of the other by the self.[22]

Characteristic dispositions

If the primary meaning of love for Macmurray is the total affirmation of You, there is a correlative connotation of love that refers to the other-centred disposition within a person that is prerequisite for this self-transcendence. This has to do with the dominant habitual attitude of a person which Macmurray considers to be his basic character. Since personal fulfilment is in belonging to You, my elemental fear is that of isolation, should you refuse to respond to my yearnings for friendship. A person's fundamental disposition, therefore, is always bipolar—a love or longing for personal realisation in communion with You coupled with fear of isolation from you as ultimate frustration. Persons, over time, develop their characteristic disposition through their particular encounters with other persons. If from infancy a person, in going out to others as potential friends, has met with a positive response from others as special bonds are formed, his characteristic disposition develops into one of other-centred love and trust. If, however, a person has had dismal past experiences in seeking belonging either early on or later in life, his characteristic disposition will become defensive and harden into one of self-protective fear of isolation. 'Once burnt, twice shy,' is the way Irish playwright Sean O'Casey describes the scar on the spirit a rebuff can inflict. If a person's characteristic disposition is a caring, other-focused attitude, fear of isolation, then, is the subordinate component that serves him well in going out to others as potential friends. This salutary fear is precisely what motivates his reflection about the needs of the other so as to 'affirm' the other in an appropriate way. This healthy fear of the devastating isolation that is the consequence of sinful guilt, wrenching misunderstanding, or the inevitable rupture of death prompts the other-centred person to be care-

ful and caring for the other in the time of his living.

Self-protective fear

The person whose unhappy past episodes in the search for friendship have left her with self-protective fear as her characteristic disposition is still keenly other-conscious, for certain; but she tends to see the other as a 'threat' to personal fulfilment because of her many past let-downs. She is inclined, therefore, to mistrust the other's approaches of friendship because she fears for herself. Yet, paradoxically, she yearns for belonging all the more—for its ever seeming beyond her reach. In dramatic literature, Tennessee Williams' Blanche DuBois portrays the person laden with the characteristic disposition of self-protective fear of isolation. When the beau who was her final hope for marriage and belonging fails to appear for her birthday dinner, Blanche sighs the poignant prayer for her sister Stella's baby—'Oh, I hope that candles will glow in his life and that his eyes will be like candles'. The light of revelation leading to friendship symbolised in the candles on the birthday cake had long since ceased to be hers as the ravages of guilt and death and indifference from others had closed down her hopes of ever finding lasting friendship. We all, of course, suffer from shyness, as Macmurray observed, when, in becoming aware of another's attentions, we implicitly ask, 'Will he or she find me congenial?' It is when someone like Blanche falls into the grip of dominant self-protective fear that mistrust of the other pervades the person's characteristic outlook so that she cannot even distinguish the real potential friends from the real 'frauds' and, almost worse, hesitates ever to make the confident overtures of love for another—so fearful is she of being rejected and not appreciated in return.

Other-centred openness

Love as affirmation of the other, therefore, presumes and includes the characteristic disposition of 'love' in the other-centred openness and trust that free a person to take the risk of love while attending to the other's sensitivities in not imposing or intruding upon his or her personal 'space'. If, how ever, this other is burdened with the characteristic disposition of self-protective fear, it would block a person's overtures of friendship—making it impossible to come to know the other, as Macmurray indicates:

> All knowledge of persons is by revelation. My knowledge of you depends not merely on what I do, but upon what you do; and if you refuse to reveal yourself to me, I cannot know you, however much I may wish to do so. If in your relations with me, you consistently 'put on an act' or 'play a role,' you hide yourself from me, I can never know you as you really are.[23]

We have again come upon Macmurray's criterion of sincerity in personal relations. Here, he is not referring to persons we meet as they pursue their work in fulfilling their functions for a company. One of the key distinctions he consistently makes in his philosophy of personalism is that between society and community. Friendship is spontaneous and resides in a mutual loving choice. A favourite saying of his is that 'one can organise co-operation; one cannot organise love'.[24] But when someone 'hides' behind his 'role' and puts on an act—that is the insincerity which suggests a characteristic disposition of self-protective fear. Macmurray provides the profile of such a person:

> The person who is fear-determined is always on the defensive. You will recognise him when you meet him because either he hides himself from you behind a façade of pretence or formality, or else he tries to dominate you. He is either submissive or aggressive . . . What he cannot do is to trust you, so he must wear a mask. He can never be himself.[25]

John Macmurray is not speaking of the gentle serenity of a person who listens with his eyes and heart and does not boldly force himself upon people. He himself was that sort of person who, in his other-centred awareness, would not presume to interfere in the conversation of others. For him, the person who is blessed with a completely other-centred disposition looks upon every person with whom he or she comes into contact as a potential friend. He makes this point in his 1954 Gifford lectures at his undergraduate *alma mater*, the University of Glasgow:

> The self-realisation of any individual person is only fully achieved if he is positively motivated towards every other person with whom he is in relation.[26]

This disposition as characteristic of a person is the sign of his or her complete integrity, manifesting itself in the action that is affirmation of the other. On the front lines at Arras, John Macmurray had shown this to be his identifying attitude long before he put it into words. His wound incurred in rescuing his fellow Highlander remained his badge of honour—though he never spoke of it nor of his medal for bravery. Antoine de Saint Exupéry hymnned Macmurray's meaning at the conclusion of *Pilote de guerre*:

> I returned from my mission over Arras, having formed my bond with my farmer's niece. Her smile became the crystal in which I could see my village and beyond my village, my homeland and beyond France all other nations.[27]

Love overcoming self-protective fear

But if such a large-hearted person meets up with a girl laden with self-protective fear, his affirmation of her must first dislodge the roots of this negative disposition if she is ever to trust him enough to reveal herself to him as the prerequisite prelude to friendship. If her persistent fear of isolation is caused by her having been rejected by others because of her sullied past, his affirmation will bring soothing for-

giveness that restores her sense of self-worth. Or she may still be entrenched in the desolation suffered in the death of her young fiancé who suddenly succumbed to a rare disease. His care then becomes the uplifting 'Pietá-like' solace that reassures her of the enduring significance of her bond with her beloved that prevails over human mortality. Guilt can be absolved through forgiveness; the isolation caused by death, though numbing over a long period, is assuaged in the elemental hope of personal reunion beyond biological death. The most difficult root of self-protective fear to resolve, however, is that engendered by the indifference or distancing of those who, after tendering the gestures of friendship or even, perhaps, the commitment of marriage, have fallen away. With no sin in herself to point to as the reason for the split-up, a person is left to wonder whether she [he] is lovable just as she is?

We have touched the core of personal existence. We are meant for belonging. We were born into a loving relationship where the affection of our mum and dad was our primordial experience of belonging and being loved for ourselves. Ever since that initial moment on earth, 'home' for us has been 'Your welcoming shoulder' where Europeans still find it in their embrace of homecoming or goodbye, but which in the U.S. has become frost-bitten from the cultural residue of our puritanical forebears. No matter how bestowed, each of us needs affirmation of the significance of our uniqueness as a person. When, for instance, a young boy is deprived of that essential endorsement of his worth in the context of family or friendship, he may resort to harmful ways of finding it: The Los Angeles gangs are a case in point where wayward children seek acceptance from their peers through criminal acts of initiation. Albert Camus had long ago alluded to this fundamental quest for reassurance: 'I know that something in the world has meaning—man—because he is the only being who demands meaning for himself'.[28] But, in the realm of personal relationships, there remains only one solution for the self-protective fear of isolation because of your anticipated apathy or eventual disinterest—the love that is sincere affection.

This affirmation of You that is affection is really my unique spirit of interest and love expressing my appreciation for your unique worth—for which there can be no pre-set symbols, even in a Hallmark greeting-card shop, simply because You are You. Saint Exupéry considered this particular cherishing of another to be what Catholics do in praying the 'Ave Maria:'

> The hour will arrive when what you notice in your beloved is not any particular gesture, or facial expression, or favourite phrase, but simply Herself! The time comes when just her name, like prayer, is sufficient because you have nothing to add.29

Love as key to personal knowing

The very sincerity of our regard for another is what can make us tongue-tied in our not wanting to risk embarrassing the other or to use tender language that has been become hackneyed by dint of TV soap-operas. But caring intentions and attention toward another person will discover the appropriate way of showing appreciation for her just as she is—perhaps without a word being said—that in time will become the 'grace' that will pull her out of her self-protective attitude and have her begin to trust the other. And in that context of trust she will reveal herself as she really is because of the unwavering affirmation of the loving person who first invited her to friendship.

The comprehensive meaning of love for John Macmurray, then, is the total affirmation of You arising out of an other-centred disposition that can dispel the roots of self-protective fear in another in a way that creates the context of trust in which alone mutual revelation can transpire. The profound paradox here is that unless You reveal yourself as open to receiving my gift of love in letting me know who You are, I cannot know myself as person in expressing my unique spirit of interest and love, Nor would You know yourself as lovable as person and capable of the response of love in manifesting your own special spirit of love. This is why Saint Exupéry can say that the 'value of a gift depends upon who receives it'[30]—and why John Macmurray asserts that this mutual revelation lies at the heart of friendship:

> I know myself only as I reveal myself to you; and you know yourself only in revealing your self to me. Thus, self-revelation is at the same time self-discovery . . . One can only really know one's friends and oneself through one's friends in a mutuality of self-revelation. This self-revelation is, of course, primarily practical, and only secondarily, a matter of talk. We some times call it 'giving oneself away,' and contrast it with 'keeping oneself to oneself.[31]

3. The 'grace' of divine love for personal knowing

Search for a solution to self-protective fear

This 'giving oneself away' in the affirmation of You that is mutual creates the context of inter personal communication that is the core of true friendship. But this presumes that the initiator of the relationship is a fully integrated person who, in his or her other-centred outlook, is free of the inroads of self-protective fear of isolation. Yet, how can this come to be the characteristic disposition of the average man or woman—or are we talking 'saints' here? Who of us has not been laid low with the remorse of having violated a covenant with another or with God; who of us has not felt the sore bereavement of losing someone dear in the inevitable closure of death; who of us has not experienced the utter loneliness of being left aside by the beloved

someone in whom we had placed all our hopes for belonging? What is to be the effective antidote for this fear of isolation since none of us is ever totally immune from its unsettling impact as we go about our living? Early on, in his radio talks of 1932, John Macmurray honestly confronted this fundamental human quandary:

> How does one set about developing freedom of feeling and rid oneself of fear? I must confess that if there is an answer to that question, I do not know it?[32]

Macmurray, however, does furnish three counsels to guide our search for solution.

The first is a caveat: We cannot appeal to a logical programme because we are dealing with the fundamental motive structure in each person, that is to say, with our primordial emotions—

> If we start trying to set our feeling free we will just be making the dilemma worse; because we shall use our intellects to force ourselves to feel and to act from feeling and the whole action will be a sham. It would only express what we think we feel or what we think we ought to feel.[33]

Saint Exupéry has his own comment upon the futility of applying intellectual poultices to difficulties of the personal spirit: 'The pure logician founders in the crosscurrents of "problems" if no sun pulls him out of himself'.[34]

Macmurray's second guideline is that salvation from the negative disposition will be found in religion since it deals with the problem of death—the root of all personal fear—which ever casts it shadow upon the community every sect was founded to create and celebrate in symbol.

> All religion is an effort to create a normal, a complete human life; to achieve an integration of personality within itself and with the world in which it lives. For this reason it is concerned, primarily,, with the conquest of fear.[35]

Finally, John Macmurray considered Christianity to be the particular religion where the cure for this fundamental flaw in the human fabric would be found—

> There is only one way in which we can escape from this dilemma, and that is by destroying the fear that is at the root of it. And I know of no force in the world which is capable of doing that except Christianity.[36]

His optimism lay with the founder of Christianity and he continued sorting out for himself the radical solution for self-protective fear by reflecting upon Jesus' life and teachings because, as he remarks in his book *Reason and Emotion*,

> What distinguishes a religious understanding from a merely intellectual one is that the former is not merely an understanding of the teaching or its development by others, but an understanding of oneself and one's experience in the light of that.[37]

Divine love as the radical solution to self-protective fear

Three decades after his first radio broadcasts, John Macmurray returned to the BBC ready to present his solution in four Lenten talks. His thematic text was taken from the first letter of the 'beloved disciple': 'There is no fear in love; perfect love casts out fear' (1 John 4.18). This perfect love was the needed salvation from the self-protective fear that haunted humankind; consequently, he entitled the published version of his addresses 'To Save from Fear'. Divine love had penetrated the personal universe through Jesus who formed a community of Apostles who in proclamation and action would channel this love to the whole world. Yes, John Macmurray is talking 'saints' here, if, by that, one means ordinary fishermen, tax agents and household women dedicated to the personal endeavour of Jesus who, through his total compassion for the downtrodden, had convinced them of the inherent 'rightness' of his work. But, we must let the ageing philosopher, after so long a search, to speak for himself—first in settling upon Jesus' primary focus in bringing the 'good news of the kingdom' (Matthew 4.23):

> Jesus diagnosed the disorder of human life as fear. His mission, he believed, was to release men and women from fear and to replace it by trust and confidence, or, in the traditional language, by faith. To achieve this would be to save the world by making life abundant, spontaneous and free. 'Fear not,' he said, 'simply have faith'. and 'to the person of faith, all things are possible'. He proposed to overcome fear by love—by love exhibited in himself and mirroring the nature of the Father, as he called the personal ground of existence. The principle upon which he worked was that love tends to beget love and that mutual love creates mutual trust and conquers fear.[38]

But Jesus' love for those entrusted to his care would require the sacrifice of his life:

> When Jesus discovered that he was to be rejected and killed, his own faith in his mission was not altered. Instead, he realised that it was only through his death that his mission could be completed. Only by dying for his disciples could he completely manifest his love for them, fully overcome their fear and confirm their faith. 'Greater love hath no man than this,' he said, 'that a man lay down his life for his friends'. Only by being crucified could he unite the religious leadership with the secular power in his legal assassination; take the full tragedy of human life into his own experience and give his mission a universal meaning and effect. 'I, if I be lifted up,' he said, 'will draw all men unto me'[39].

In being crushed by the institutional power of his time, Jesus identified with every innocent human unjustly maltreated, jailed, tortured, and executed. And in the throes of his excruciating agony, he cried out, 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do. (Luke 23.46) This Son of the Father removes the weight of guilt from the most wretched sinner because Jesus is the Jewish man who could forgive a repentant Hitler—Divine mercy outreaches the nadir of human malice. But what validates the redemptive meaning of Calvary for the human condition—in releasing

it from the avalanche of guilt that is being precipitated to this day, for instance, in Bosnia and Rwanda, Haiti and Somalia—is the Resurrection event showing that Jesus' death was not the last word about his existence and that, therefore, he truly is the human revelation of God, the Father. John Macmurray calls attention to the tremendous impact Easter and Pentecost had upon Peter and the other disciples of Jesus:

> What had happened to transform these men? Their own account of the matter was that after his crucifixion and burial Jesus had appeared to them and talked to them, not once but several times, until one day when he had left the earth before them and disappeared from their sight. They had stayed together, in a room in Jerusalem, as he had told them to do, until Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost had come upon them like a rushing wind, and they had begun to speak with tongues. That was what they said; and that they firmly believed; there can be no doubt of this. Something had happened to them which transformed them; this also, it seems to me, cannot be doubted. What happened they could only describe in terms of the resurrection of Jesus and the coming of the Holy Spirit. And on what happened to them rests the history of the Christian Church from that day to this. I leave it there with you. I can find no other explanation[40].

John Macmurray as philosopher would not go beyond personal experience and historical record to verify his insights about the life and teaching of Jesus. Yet he had no hesitancy in declaring that Jesus had introduced divine love to our fear-wearied world and entrusted his Apostles to continue his mission:

> Jesus linked the love which he manifested, and which was to bind his disciples in a society of mutual affection, with the hidden reality of the world, with the creative centre of all things. 'As the Father has loved me,' he told his disciples, 'so have I loved you'. . . . The disciples are the small group of people who have been with him throughout the duration of his mission. By this personal relation to him, by the impact of his personality upon them, they have become convinced that his claim is valid; that his mission is a divine mission; that he is sent by God. Jesus has become for them the revelation of the Father. The love which he manifests, which bind them to him and to one another, is thus an expression of the power that created and that sustains the world. So they knew that in sharing his mission, they were not just following another religious leader, but entering into the final truth about themselves and about the human race and about the whole world. They were anchored in reality.[41]

Theological dimensions of love for personal knowing

Consequently, in Macmurray's view, mutual love as the way of personal knowing in the unreserved affirmation of You which is free of self-protective fear is empowered by divine love. This is corollary to his basic philosophical position that, in our relationship with one another in friendship, we are actually in relation with God as the 'infinite of the personal'— 'In any particular relationship of persons, if it is truly personal, God is known as that which is partially, but never completely realised in it.[42] This 'knowledge' is the experience of divine love inspiriting each person in a way that transcends individual self-interest in the mutual gift of themselves that creates and sustains the relation of true friendship.

Macmurray here has become theologian, which would not have surprised him since he considered the distinction between philosophy and theology to be 'accidental'. The two outstanding Jesuit *periti* of the Second Vatican Council, Henri de Lubac and Karl Rahner, concur with Macmurray in their shared conviction that the real 'existential' world of humankind is graced with divine love. Rahner fills out Macmurray's meaning from his own theological stance:

> When a person loves someone absolutely, unconditionally and freely, trusting completely in the unknowable risk of loving unconditionally as being the final hope of saving himself or herself, God is, at least, implicitly affirmed as the source of such love. And, through God's constant mercy which is conveyed by such love, God becomes part of the loving person, gracing the act and bringing him or her salvation.[43]

This total affirmation of You is a sharing in the divine love bestowed upon the personal universe as grace.

From Rahner's standpoint —and here we are delving into the profound theological dimensions of his confirmation of the Macmurray solution which in some respects go beyond explicit statements of the Scottish professor who as philosopher exempted himself from the faith vision of Catholic theologians—there is only one power of love in the personal universe: the love of the Son for the Father and of the Father for the Son that is the Holy Spirit. This divine love was communicated to humankind as grace when the divine Son became human in Jesus. In and through the central events of the Incarnate Son's life on earth, humanity experienced the radical solution to the roots of that self-protective fear which Macmurray considered to be our fundamental brokenness. On Christmas, the only-begotten Son was born human as one of us bringing each man and woman the constant sincere affection that removes anxiety about our personal worth and significance—'God so loved the world that he sent his only-begotten Son' (John 3.16). The Son knows what it's like to be human from his own first-hand experience; and in this sharing is his caring for each human. On Calvary, the Son endured the most horrible evil in the calendar of human suffering—the torture and execution of an innocent person—and he still forgave: The crucifixion of Jesus is the on-going ratification that no act of human malice is beyond the reach of divine mercy for personal restoration. Finally, the Christian hope for reunion with family and friends beyond biological mortality rests in this man from Nazareth who, in confirming his claim to be the 'resurrection and the life'—the

source of personal life and love—was reunited with his friends after death. The divine love manifested on Christmas is the unwavering concern God has for each one of us as antidote to the self-protective fear that 'no one cares'. The unconditional forgiveness of Calvary is radical response to the gnawing dread that some one's particular guilt excludes him or her forever from personal communion. The firm hope revealed in the Risen Jesus' celebration of belonging with his disciples on that first Easter is God's comforting embrace surrounding a grieving husband who buries his bride of forty years. In this divine love revealed in Jesus as the only son of the Father, each of us has been set free to love in a way that brings full knowledge of the other and of oneself.

This affirmation of You, as the love that leads to personal fulfilment in the mutual knowledge which for Macmurray is our experience of God in our world, corresponds with the world-view described by theologian Karl Rahner in his spun-out German style:

> Indeed, many a person has encountered Jesus Christ unawares, laid hold without knowing it on someone into whose life and death he plunged as into his blessed redeeming destiny. The grace of God and the grace of Christ are everywhere as the secret essence of all that is open to choice, so that it is difficult to grasp at anything without having to do with God and Jesus Christ in one way or another. Any person, therefore, however far he or she may be from the explicit verbal formulae of any revelation, who accepts his or her own existence—that is, his or her humanity—in mute patience (or rather in faith, hope and love, whatever one may call these) as the mystery that conceals within itself the mystery of eternal love and bears life in the bosom of death, says Yes to something which corresponds to his or her limitless surrender to it because God in fact has filled it with the limitless, that is, with his divine self when the Word became flesh. Though he may not know it, such a one says Yes to Jesus Christ. After all, the person who lets go and jumps, falls into the abyss that is there, not only as far as he or she has plumbed it. To accept and assume one's condition without reserve is to accept the Son of Man, because in him God has accepted and assumed humanity. If Scripture declares that he who loves his neighbour has fulfilled the law, this is the ultimate truth for the reason that God himself has become this neighbour, so that whenever we accept and love our neighbour, we are at the same time accepting and loving the one Neighbour who is nearest of all to us and farthest of all from us.[44]

The Munich Jesuit is speaking of the 'saints' in our midst who make life bearable for us all in their self-effacing gift, just as during the Nazi régime in occupied Europe, it was the little people like Carrie ten Boon in Holland and Abbé Derry in France who risked their lives in protecting their hunted neighbours from the Gestapo. In the film *Counterfeit Traitor*, the late Lilli Palmer portrayed the real-life story of the German Catholic girl Marianne who became an Allied espionage agent to save Jewish people from the horrors of the concentration camps. When asked by her Swedish-American colleague, 'the counterfeit traitor,' why she was putting her life on the line, she enlightened him:

> Someday you will see a tarpaulin-covered truck loaded with Jewish internees headed for the box-cars that will railroad them to the gas-chambers; you will glimpse the desperate eyes of one of those men and of a sudden you will realise that he is your brother.

Marianne had come to know many such persons as brother, sister, child in her fearless affirmation of each one of them as beloved of the Father and, like his only begotten-Son, was eventually arrested, tortured and executed. Though John Macmurray's concerns about the dire consequences of an unbridled application of the 'scientific' mind-set were horrendously verified at Auschwitz and Buchenwald, his hopes for selfless love prevailing in our time were also realised in the sacrifice of heroic persons like Albert Delp, Jean Moulin, Abbé Derry and Marianne. Antoine de Saint Exupéry gave his live also in full awareness that 'we belong only to those for whom we sacrifice'.[45] His epitaph, though he has no known grave, could be the last words in his classic of the space-age, *Terre des hommes:* 'Only the Spirit, in breathing upon the clay can create the person'.[46] St-Ex's final line certainly suits the life and work of John Macmurray whose theme he had declared at the outset:

> That capacity for communion . . . that makes us human . . . is evidenced . . . at the highest level in the recognition by the intuition of reason that God is Love.[47]

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Notes

1. John Macmurray, *Persons in Relation* (London: Faber and Faber, 1961), p.170.
2. Antoine de Saint Exupéry, *Pilote de guerre* (Paris: Gallimard, 1942), p.205. Translation by Philip Mooney.
3. *ibid.*, pp.240 & 179.
4. Antoine de Saint Exupéry, *Le Petit Prince* (Paris: Gallimard, 1959), p.474.
5. John Macmurray, *Reason and Emotion* (London: Faber and Faber, 1935), pp.151-152
6. John Macmurray, *Religion, Art and Science* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1961), pp.38-39.
7. *ibid.*, p.37.
8. Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*, p.32.
9. Macmurray, *Religion, Art and Science*, pp.24-25.
10. Macmurray, *Reason and Emotion*, p.43.
11. Macmurray, *Religion, Art and Science*, p.25.
12. Emmanuel Mounier, *Be Not Afraid*, trans. Cynthia Rowland, (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1962), p.59.
13. Saint Exupéry, *Pilote de guerre*, pp.238.
14. Macmurray, *Religion, Art and Science*, pp.25-26.

15. Saint Exupéry, *Petit Prince*, p.474.
16. Macmurray, *Reason and Emotion*, pp.42-43.
17. *ibid.*, pp.31-32.
18. Macmurray, *Religion, Art and Science*, pp.37-38.
19. Macmurray, *Reason and Emotion*, p.141.
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21. *ibid.*, p.137.
22. John Macmurray, *Conditions of Freedom* (London: Faber & Faber, 1950), p.82.
23. Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*, p.169.
24. Macmurray, *Religion, Art and Science*, p.68.
25. John Macmurray, *To Save From Fear* (Friends Home Service Committee: London, 1964), p.4.
26. Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*, p.159.
27. Saint Exupéry, *Pilote de guerre*, p.240.
28. Albert Camus, Resistance, *Rebellion and Death*, trans. Justin McCarthy (New York: Knopf, 1961), p.28.
29. Antoine de Saint Exupéry, *Citadelle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1948), p.562. Translation by Philip Mooney.
30. *ibid.*, p.54.
31. Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*, p.170.
32. Macmurray, *Freedom in the Modern World*, p.67.
33. *idem.*
34. Saint Exupéry, *Pilote de guerre*, p.206.
35. Macmurray, *Freedom in the Modern World*, pp.61-62.
36. *ibid.*, p.65.
37. Macmurray, *Reason and Emotion*, p.242.
38. Macmurray, *To Save from Fear*, p.10.
39. *ibid.*, p.7.
40. *ibid.*, pp.7-8.
41. *ibid.*, pp.6-7.
42. Macmurray, *Reason and Emotion*, p.210.
43. Karl Rahner and John Baptist Metz, *The Courage to Pray*, Sarah O'Brien Twohig, tr., (Crossroads Press: New York, 1981), p.54.
44. Karl Rahner, SJ., *Theological Investigations* I, Cornelius Ernst, tr. (Helicon: New York, 1961), p.120.
45. Saint Exupéry, *Pilote de guerre*, p.231.
46. Antoine de Saint Exupéry, *Terre des hommes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1939), p.218. Translation by Philip Mooney.
47. Macmurray, *Reason and Emotion*, p.63.

MACMURRAY'S PHILOSOPHY OF THE FAMILY[1]

D.A.S. Fergusson

Of the many topics upon which John Macmurray wrote so strikingly few are more relevant than that of marriage and the family. In his writings we encounter what now resembles a crossbench position. He is a defender of the ideals of marriage and family life, yet advocates their reform in such a way as to recognise many of the criticisms levelled against these institutions. In this respect, his philosophy may be a useful resource for religious, social and political agencies which seek to enhance family life while also acknowledging the integrity of alternative life-style choices[2].

The position of the family in western societies can be represented as either a liberation or a calamity. The statistics are familiar to us. In the UK three of out ten children are born out of marriage, one in five is brought up in a one-parent family, four in ten marriages end in divorce, less than one per cent are virgins on their wedding day, and seven in ten now opt to live with their future spouse before marrying. The three-fold rise in cohabitation before marriage since 1979 explains the decline in the number of first marriages to their lowest level for over a 100 years. We can expect these trends to continue into the next century.

1. Defenders of the family

Critics of these trends can be found in growing numbers although they are probably still in a minority. Jonathan Sacks, the Chief Rabbi, has argued in a series of publications that the family is the basic moral and social institution we inhabit, and that our society cannot easily survive its disintegration.

> The family is not one social institution amongst others, nor is it simply one life-style choice among many. It is the best means we have yet discovered for nurturing future generations, and for enabling children to grow in a matrix of stability and love. It is where we acquire the skills and languages of relationship. It is where we learn to handle the inevitable conflicts within any human group. It is where we first take the risk of giving and receiving love. Of all the influences upon us, the family is by far the most powerful. Its effects stay with us for a lifetime. It is where one generation passes on its values to the next and ensures the continuity of a civilisation. Nothing else—not teachers or schools, or politicians or the media—so shapes us and what we have a chance of becoming as our experience of early childhood. For any society, the family is the crucible of its future[3].

Sacks goes on to state that three functions of the family are vital to our subsequent progress as moral agents. In the family we learn about welfare through the care of dependants; we discover education through the transmission of wisdom to the next generation; and we encounter what he calls 'ecology', a concern with and investment in the future of the world beyond our own lifetime. All this leads to a negative verdict on contemporary trends. The temporary attachments and random encounters which increasingly substitute for marriage are, he claims, disastrous for the nurture of children[4].

Underpinning Sacks' description is the philosophical claim that a consumerist notion of the individual has now invaded discourse about personal relationships. The gratification of the individual's interests is the criterion by which marriage and the family are to be evaluated. In the absence of such gratification divorce and desertion can be justified. The rhetoric of the marketplace has now invaded the home despite Adam Smith's attempt to distinguish between these on moral grounds. The fundamental defect, therefore, in the moral chaos of our private lives is a faulty understanding of what it is to be a person. The person is not an individual with interests to be satisfied. He is a person whose identity and fulfilment are inextricably bound up with relations and communities. Other people are constitutive of rather than instrumental to my identity and well-being as a person.

This pessimistic analysis of contemporary trends is supported by some medical and sociological evidence. Divorced men are twice as likely to suffer heart disease, strokes, and depression, whereas single-parent mothers tend to suffer greater poverty and to carry greater burdens. The sociologists, Dennis and Erdos claim that, whenever the data make assessment possible, the lack of a father's commitment in each social class generally disadvantages a child[5]. They go on to point out that even where there is an extended family which provides support, this reposes upon the practice of long-term marriage. Grannies and grandpas, uncles and aunts, are likewise dependent upon the same institution.

> When marriage is weakened, the whole network of kin is weakened, and the present generation of one-parent families, where they are fortunate enough to be able to depend on kinsfolk, are depending upon a wasting asset[6].

These sociologists offer a similar philosophical analysis to that of the Chief Rabbi. The threat comes from a rampant individualism which permits the egregious injustice of men fathering children for whom the state alone must make subsequent provision. A.H. Halsey, known for his work on ethical socialism, argues that this may ironically be perceived as an effect of Thatcherism despite its incantation of traditional family values.

Paradoxically, Mrs Thatcher may well be seen by dispassionate future commentators as a major architect of the demolition of the traditional family. For, by an irony of history, while Mrs Thatcher forbore to extend the ethic of individualism into domestic life, and tacitly accepted that the family was the one institution that properly continued to embrace the sacred as distinct from the contractual conception of kinship, those who denounced her doctrines of market-controlled egoism with the greatest vehemence were also those who most rigorously insisted on modernising marriage and parenthood along her individualistic and contractual lines[7].

2. Critics of the family

It is easy enough to detect disturbing signs in current trends but critics of the family will quickly point out that here there is a good deal of misplaced nostalgia. There never was a golden age of family life, and evidence shows that couples were often locked into oppressive and loveless relationships through economic necessity or the threat of social disgrace[8]. Hang-ups about sex abound in English literature, and it is doubtful if the fear of detection, infection or conception did very much for the cause of sexual fulfilment. The family, moreover, has been the locus for physical violence and sexual abuse, the latter only coming to light in recent times.

Many commentators have noticed destructive forces at work within traditional family life, and have argued that there is no way back to the past. The economic unity of the family in pre-industrial times has now been destroyed. The members of a family have different employers, and go their own separate ways in terms of education and work. Attempts to enforce the unity of the family in this situation lead typically to division, oppression and anxiety[9]. Modern social life is inimical to traditional family values and, it is argued, we should recognise this.

More radically, Alice Miller in a series of publications has written of the way in which traditional child-rearing in families has involved violence and manipulation, and has generated discontent which is in turn transmitted to future generations. The sovereignty of parents over their children should be viewed with the deepest suspicion. She writes of the 'poisonous pedagogy' which is employed in conventional households to bring up children. The assumptions which underlie such child-rearing are that

1. adults are the masters of the child;
2. they determine what is right and wrong;
3. the child is held responsible for their anger;
4. the parents must always be shielded;
5. the child's life-affirming feelings pose a threat to the autocratic adult;
6. the child must be broken as soon as possible[10].

Miller goes on to argue that all pedagogy is of the poisonous variety.

> I am convinced of the harmful effects of training for the following reason: all advice that pertains to raising children betrays more or less clearly the numerous, variously clothed needs of the adult. Fulfilment of these needs not only discourages the child's development but actually prevents it. This also holds true when the adult is honestly convinced of acting in the child's best interest[11].

Miller rejects the notion that she is against all restraint, however. Children need to learn to respect their care givers, to show tolerance for their feelings, needs and grievances etc. The adult must provide the child with support by showing respect for the child and his rights, tolerance of his feelings, willingness to learn from the child about himself. The emphasis is thus placed upon mutuality as opposed to sovereignty.

We must note also in this context feminist concerns about the patriarchal and proprietorial nature of traditional patterns of marriage and family life. According to the sociologist Diana Gittins the 'family' is a historical creation which has embedded within it a particular ideology. Implicit in the western concept of family is a notion of male dominance based on paternal authority and power. She argues that the original meaning of the word 'family' refers to the authority of the *paterfamilias*[12]. In the words of another writer:

> Feminists have thus argued that the oppression of women is centrally constructed within the family, ideologically and materially[13].

There is plenty of evidence from anecdotes, women's magazines and social science to show that women are not living equally within families. They carry the major burden of housework and child-care, and this militates against equal career opportunities.

Finally, we might consider a significant theological objection to the ideology of the family. In the recent writings of a communitarian thinker, Stanley Hauerwas, we find the claim that the family is often idolised in Christian circles and turned into a ghetto. Hauerwas perceives a latent idolatry in rhetoric about the family as the supreme community. For the Christian one's highest loyalty belongs to the church and the kingdom of God.

> I fear appeals to community in the abstract, just as I fear appeals to 'family values' in the abstract. I was called by a reporter during the 1992 Republican national convention and asked what I thought about family values. I replied that since I am a Christian I have, of course, a deep distrust of the family, since for Christians the family is one of the great sources of idolatry. Christian believe our first loyalty is to the God who constitutes us first by making us part of the church rather than of the family. I soon discerned that the reporter was having trouble understanding these basic theological points, so I changed my tactics. I noted that people suggest that when fascism comes to America it will come with a friendly face. I then suggested that the form that face will take is, of course, family values. 'Family values', it turns out, is how Americans talk about 'blood and soil'[14].

So we have on the one side the defenders of the family who regard recent trends as ruinous, and ranged against them critics on the other who are suspicious of the repressive, insular and sexist nature of the rhetoric of family values. We cannot expect John Macmurray to address a situation with which he was not personally familiar but there are some resources within his work which may help us in the present situation.

3. Macmurray's Philosophy of Community

John Macmurray's philosophy is positioned in opposition to mainstream western individualism. Its resonance with more recent forms of communitarianism, and the disclosure of Tony Blair's early indebtedness to his writings, have generated fresh interest in his thought. The general shape of his philosophy can be discerned in his Gifford Lectures, delivered in Glasgow in 1953/54, and later published in two volumes, *The Self as Agent* and *Persons in Relation*. These lectures attempt to provide the necessary metaphysical underpinning for many of the moral, political, psychological and religious ideas advanced in Macmurray's earlier writings. His fundamental claim is that modern western philosophy has been ensnared by the adoption of a standpoint which is theoretical and egocentric. The self is treated as a pure, withdrawn subject looking out upon the world in relative detachment from other persons.

Descartes commenced his famous *Meditations* by engaging in a thought experiment in which he proposed to doubt every belief which was not absolutely certain. Yet, according to Macmurray, this concealed the controversial premise that one must have sound reasons for believing something but no good reasons for doubting it. A process of doubt, he argues, can only make sense against a background of positive belief. Moreover, to isolate mental activity as the distinctive feature of the self is immediately to exclude the possibility that action, the material world, and other persons are of definitive importance in understanding what it is to be human. Kant's unsuccessful attempt to begin with theoretical reason and then to introduce practical reason created a split in his conception of the self and the world. This convinced Macmurray that the practical standpoint had to be adopted as primary in philosophy. This is the philosophical programme that is sketched in the Gifford Lectures.

Macmurray proposes that we substitute the 'I do' for the 'I think', and reflect from the standpoint of action. His procedure throughout the first volume (*The Self As Agent*) is to present a phenomenological description of the main categorial features of action. Through an analysis of the necessary features and implications of action Macmurray attempts to show how the agent is rooted in a communal and public world in which human identity is determined relationally and holistically[17].

He begins by arguing that action requires something to be acted upon. This implies the necessity of matter. To act upon matter, moreover, the agent must herself be material and hence embodied. Thus the material world together with the embodiedness of the agent are necessary features of action. Agency, however, cannot be reduced to mechanical or organic activity. It involves intention and choice not as mental events which precede and cause action, but as necessary aspects of action. Knowledge informs action, and where it increases there is a subsequent increase in the range of possible activity[18]. The significance of Macmurray's subordination of knowledge to action is that all theoretical activity must be justified by reference to its practical implications. It is only in virtue of its reference to the practical that reflection can be capable of truth or falsity[19].

The interaction with other agents is also a necessary condition of agency. It is through encountering resistance to action and being acted upon that the self becomes an agent. Here Macmurray focuses upon the significance of tactual perception (as opposed to the more passive visual perception favoured by other philosophers) in which I encounter the other person as one who resists my will. To understand the other I must attribute to him or her the form of activity I attribute to myself. Knowledge of what is involved in action must include a knowledge of other persons. All knowledge arises out of personal participation in a social world.

When we come to the second volume of the Gifford Lectures, *Persons in Relation*, we find Macmurray developing this notion of what it means to be an agent. Here he moves from his metaphysics of the personal to its moral implications. The nature of the self is to be understood holistically. He argues that body and mind cannot be understood apart from one another, the self cannot be detached from the material world, and the individual exists only in dynamic relations with others. The human agent is therefore a person whose identity is bound up with the material and social world. I exist as an individual only in relation to other individuals, and rational action is action in which I treat the other as a person rather than an object at my disposal.

In the second and third chapters of *Persons in Relation* Macmurray analyses the relationship between mother and child, and the growth of the child's self-consciousness within the matrix of the family. The child is born into an social environment that is dominated by the intentions of the mother in establishing regular patterns of feeding and sleeping. The child's progress does not consist in a rapid adaptation to the environment (as is the case with animals); instead, progress takes the form of the acquirement of skills such as dis-

criminating colours and shapes, making sounds, and correlating sight and touch[20]. What we see emerging in the child is the development of a set of habitual skills which are consciously acquired and are not the result of sheer instinct. These skills, which are necessary conditions for action, enable the child to take his or her place as a member of a personal community. Moreover the development of skills requires the presence of a more mature person to provide direction and judgment in the learning process. The existence of two-way communication, particularly in the form of language, is thus crucial to the personal way of life. The role of communication is more constitutive of persons than it is of animals.

> For this reason the infant is born a person and not an animal. All his subsequent experience, all the habits he forms and the skills he acquires fall within this framework, and are fitted to it. Thus human experience is, in principle, shared experience; human life, even in its most individual elements, is a common life; and human behaviour carries always, in its inherent structure, a reference to the personal Other. All this may be summed up by saying that the unit of personal existence is not the individual, but two persons in personal relation; and that we are persons not by individual right, but in virtue of our relation to one another. The personal is constituted by personal relatedness. The unity of the personal is not the 'I', but the 'You and I'[21].

Macmurray goes on to distinguish three fundamental ways in which the other person can be determined through action. (These three 'forms of apperception' are analogues of Kant's categories of the theoretical understanding.) He identifies these as contemplative, pragmatic and communal. Corresponding to each is a moral code which will tend to be dominant in a social grouping. In other words, the fundamental possibilities of human interaction are determined by communal, contemplative and pragmatic ways of perceiving the world.

The contemplative mode is characterised typically by an egocentric ethic which is marked by a dualism between the self and the world. Here the real world is the spiritual world into which the agent retreats. The goal of life is knowledge and contemplation of the other world. In order for the individual to realise this private ideal it is of course necessary that the world around her be regulated in a particular way, and this will tend to take the form of a functional social morality. Macmurray finds the classical exposition of this moral code in Plato's *Republic*.

The pragmatic mode of apperception is manifested in a ethic which subordinates the desires of the individual to the progress of society as a whole. The emphasis upon technological achievement will tend to be paramount in this outlook. Its origins lie in Stoicism and Roman law, and it is expounded by Kant in his philosophy of obedience to the demands of the categorical imperative[23]. Here the goal of life is not contemplation but some organic purpose to which the individual must become subordinate. The prevailing moral code will be dominated by the rhetoric of obedience and sacrifice.

By contrast, the communal mode of apperception is marked by a heterocentric morality which gives a central place to the Golden Rule. ('Do to others what you would have them do to you'.) This mode of apperception is characteristic of the Hebraic tradition and is extended in the teaching of Jesus. Human society is a unity of persons, and the goals of personal life can be sought neither in retreat from society nor in subordinating the interests of the individual to the group. A community exists for the sake of friendship which is the final goal of all human action. The organisation of society must therefore be based upon the principle of love rather than upon the principle of fear as it is in much political theory.

> The model of the family is to be realised in society at large. A community . . . is a unity of persons as persons. It cannot be defined in functional terms, by relation to a common purpose. It is not organic in structure, and cannot be constituted or maintained by organisation, but only by the motives which sustain the personal relations of its members. It is constituted and maintained by a mutual affection. This can only mean that each member of the group is in positive personal relation to each of the others taken severally. The structure of a community is the nexus or network of the active relations of friendship between all possible pairs of its members[24].

Throughout the Gifford Lectures the models of the mother-child relation and the family are used to illustrate the nature of the personal. Yet it is clear from the closing chapters of *Persons in Relation* that Macmurray also has in mind the social, economic and cosmic dimensions of personhood. The maintenance of justice in the regulation of economic life is a necessary though insufficient condition for the creation of personal relations in a community. Justice is a necessary component of every personal relation. The task of politics is to maintain, improve and adjust the indirect or economic relations of persons[25]. The State is to be seen as 'a public utility' rather than some mystical, quasi-personal entity. It is a limited and fallible instrument of the personal and is not to be accorded a hallowed status[26].

For the communal mode of apperception, religion has a crucial role to play. Its function is to create, sustain and enrich the community of persons and to enable the bonds of friendship to transcend cultural, national and racial differences. It does this through the idea of a personal God who stands in the same relationship to each person, and who therefore treats human persons as if they belonged to a single community. Within this conception of religion, ritual is more important than doctrine in promoting fellowship and community amongst persons. In conceiving the world as one action we tend to conceive of God as the creator who establishes the conditions for the attainment of personal freedom.

Macmurray concludes his Gifford Lectures with the warning that this argument for the validity of religious belief does not promote any particular system of religious belief[27].

4. Macmurray's philosophy applied to marriage and family life

It is within the context of this philosophy of the personal that one can assess marriage and the family. All personal relationships involve the recognition of freedom and equality on the part of those involved. The mutuality and fellowship sought cannot be found in the presence of domination and subservience. Macmurray argues throughout his writings that the personal ends of human existence transcend the organic and the material. In the context of marriage this implies the subordination of our sexual drives to a relationship which is marked by distinctively personal values such as freedom, mutuality, and regard for the other.

> The reality of the marriage rests in the intention to live together for life in a complete friendship, which includes, with everything else, a sexual community[28].

Macmurray appears to put forward two claims at this juncture both of which are significant.

1. We cannot engineer happy marriages and family lives by social legislation. The imposition of rules cannot make people more moral. This is a Stoic error, and it was condemned by Jesus in his controversy with the Pharisees.

2. The attempt to do so has militated against personal relationships of freedom and equality between men and women. In particular, our society has hampered personal life through perpetuating the inequality of women and encouraging repressed attitudes toward sex. Here we find a commitment to marriage being combined with a recognition of much that has been oppressive in its historical representation.

> The nature of our economic and legal organisation makes it exceedingly difficult for men and women to meet on a basis of freedom and equality. Until these conditions are changed our sex problems will prove insoluble. Until we can make up our minds to reorganise our societies on the principle that men and women are persons, free and equal; until we give effect to that principle by producing the social conditions that would make it possible for us to behave freely as equals, all our social efforts to deal with the sex problem are mere palliatives, mere soothing ointments applied to the symptoms of the deep-seated disease[29].

Macmurray rails against gender stereotypes in a way that must have highly provocative in the mid-1930s.

> Women have increasingly insisted that they too are individuals, and must be permitted to stand upon their own achievement; to realise their own capacities as individuals; to exercise their own initiative in the development of civilisation. They have entered the world of literature and art, of politics, of the professions, of industry and commerce. And this is, I think, bound to continue and increase. We cannot do other than look upon it as a momentous advance in culture and civilisation; and to be afraid of it is surely to fail in faith and courage[30].

Macmurray calls for a more open and less furtive attitude towards sex. Again he inveighs against traditional hypocrisy.

> We kept young men and women in careful ignorance of the facts of sex. We instilled a sense of shame about them to this end and at the same time filled their minds with vague colourful ideas and emotions —romance. We kept a close guard over the meeting of boys and girls by a policy of segregation. When the time was ripe, we engineered a meeting of selected couples under conditions which would be likely to lead to a 'match', and made sure that nothing could come of it until they were safely married. Then with a sigh of relief we sent them off on a 'honeymoon' to discover the real facts for themselves. I do not believe that history can show an example of more barbarous duplicity and trickery than this. We are still too close to it to feel the grossness and vulgarity of deceit of which it is constituted. To talk of that sentimentality as a belief in love as the basis of morality is nonsense[31].

This is fascinating but it is now something of a period piece. Teenagers today would surely be incredulous were they to be told that their great grandmothers did not know the facts of life on their wedding day.

Perhaps more relevant in our context is Macmurray's criticism of the idolisation of sex in our culture. By detaching sex from its context in personal relations of freedom, equality and love, we have distorted it. Our society

> has produced in us a chronic condition of quite unnatural exasperation. There is a vast organisation in our civilisation for the stimulation of sex—clothes, pictures, plays, books, advertisements and so on. They keep us in a state of sexual hypersensitivity, as a result of which we greatly overestimate the strength and violence of natural sexuality. And the most powerful stimulant of sex is the effort to suppress it. There is only cure, to take it up, simply, frankly and naturally into the circle of our activities; and only chastity, the ordinary sincerity of the emotional life, can enable us to do so[32].

One might venture a further criticism of Macmurray at this point. There is an inconsistency or at least a tension between the claim that marriage cannot be facilitated by external rules and institutions, and the attack upon those social conditions that cripple the marriages and relationships of so many people. If institutional arrangements can so damage marriages, then do we not need to put in place an alternative set of arrangements which will act as enabling conditions? To put the point somewhat anachronistically, has the demise of Victorian prudery not simply led to

a greater commercialisation of sex in our society? Has the removal of sexual inhibition in TV, film, advertising and literature not simply generated even more of the chronic exasperation which Macmurray so deplored? His disjunction between internal values and external codes of conduct looks implausible, and is in any case inconsistent with his better insight that social organisation is a necessary though insufficient condition of community[33].

In his discussion of the virtue of chastity Macmurray defines chastity not in terms of observance of a code of conduct, but as emotional sincerity. It is the proper expression of love towards another persons when love is what is truly felt. Chastity is thus diametrically opposed to lust, which is a sham expression of a love that is not truly felt. Many films and novels are unchaste in this sense, according to Macmurray. They arouse feelings that are not truly felt, that are not appropriate when judged by the criteria of personal values. How well does the concept of chastity as emotional sincerity work? It reminds us of the purity of heart and integrity that are worth striving for in every relationship but can it be divorced from its public embodiment in recognised practices which are passed on from generation to generation. Are a teenage couple in the back of a car really going to discover chastity by being told only to engage in sex if they feel emotionally sincere?

The point can be illustrating by quoting a short poem of the Orcadian writer, George Mackay Brown, 'Wedding'.

> With a great working of elbows
> The fiddler ranted
> —Joy to Ingrid and Magnus!
>
> With much boasting and burning
> The whisky circled
> —Wealth to Ingrid and Magnus!
>
> With deep clearings of the throat
> The minister intoned
> —Thirdly, Ingrid and Magnus . .
>
> Ingrid and Magnus stared together
> When midnight struck
> At a white unbroken bed.

It is a poem about the mystery of chastity, sexual communion and procreation. Yet Ingrid and Magnus' wedding night could not have taken that form except in a culture which demanded through its laws, social customs, and religious teaching chastity before and fidelity within marriage. I suspect that Macmurray's response would be that this is a price too high to pay. We cannot enforce morality in this way. Young people must be given freedom in which to discover personal values through their sexual encounters. If in the short term this leads to greater sexual licence and experimentation then so be it. It will lead in the longer term to a deeper realisation of the worth of marriage. It is in marriage that the organic sexual drive is subordinated permanent friendship and selfless love. As persons this is the ideal to which we are called in the expression of our sexuality. To cultivate this ideal we require not repressive forms of social control but a a better way of educating the young[35].

If the discussion in *Reason and Emotion* concentrates on marriage, then we find greater attention devoted to the family in *Persons in Relation*. The family is the primary moral community, and for this reason our experience of family life as children will have an important bearing upon our subsequent moral development.

> The family is the original human community and the basis as well as the origin of all subsequent communities. It is therefore the norm of all community, so that any community is a brotherhood. So far, then as religion is a 'projection' of the family ideal upon the larger societies of adult life, or even upon human society as a whole, there is nothing illusory or fantastical about it[36].

What is significant in Macmurray's endorsement of the family is that it is an outward looking community. It does not live for itself alone, it has an external reference to the community of the human race as a whole. In this respect, there is an implicit criticism of the nuclear family in his writings. He suggests that with the greater involvement of women in the commercial and professional worlds, alternative household structures may need to be explored. This may involve 'families' living together and pooling resources in a more communal fashion.

> The fact is that the family is now too small a unit for the burdens it is expected, and properly expected, to carry; and the increase in juvenile delinquency is one of the results. I should expect a tendency to return to the large family which has been the norm in the past. And since such a large number of young families migrate to dwelling places removed from their parents and grandparents, uncles and aunts; listening to the siren call of the economist for greater mobility of labour, I should expect to the see the growth of experiments in the enlargement of the family by artificial means; by combination of families, for example, in the single home; or by the adoption, not of children but of adults, into the family group[37].

The nuclear family cannot be a self-sufficient community. At best it creates a moral platform from which wider forms of community can be developed. The family provides ties of natural affection, support and friendship which need in principle to be extended to every member of the human race. To this end religion makes a vital contribution for Macmurray. By relating all human beings to God in a single community, religion offers a vision of personal life which extends the fellowship of the family to all human beings. Macmurray is particularly indebted to the Hebraic tradition in which religion integrates the whole of personal, social and national life[37]. The significance of Jesus resides in his extension of this ideal to all persons. The family may be the first community to which we belong but it is not the

last, for our final end is to belong to the kingdom of God on earth.

What we have then in Macmurray is a positive vision of marriage and the family which places him in important respects alongside those counter-cultural voices who denounce the rampant individualism of modern trends. At the same time, by directing us towards the proper personal ends of these practices, Macmurray provides us with principles of reform which may meet some of the criticisms levelled at marriage and the family as oppressive, patriarchal and insular.

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Notes:

1. A revised version of a lecture delivered to the John Macmurray Fellowship, Cambridge, 24 June, 1995.
2. Cf. the recent Anglican report, *Something to Celebrate: Valuing Families in Church and Society* (London: Church House Publishing, 1995).
3. *Faith in the Future*, (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1995), p. 23.
4. *ibid.*, p. 27.
5. *Families Without Fatherhood* (London: IEA Health & Welfare Unit, 1992), 36.
6. *ibid.*, p. 70.
7. A.H. Halsey, *ibid.*, p. xii.
8. Cf. Lawrence Stone's study of marriage in England in the 18th century, *Broken Lives: Separation and Divorce in England 1660-1857* (Oxford University Press, 1993) 'The most striking feature of married life in eighteenth-century England was the theoretical, legal, and practical subordination of wives to their husbands, epitomised in the concept of patriarchy . . . Even worse than the condition of the unhappily married, however, was the lot of those women who were separated or divorced', p. 26.
9. Cf Juliet Mitchell, *Woman's Estate* (Penguin, 1971) p. 157. This is criticised from a feminist perspective on 162. 'What does our oppression within the family do to us women? It produces a tendency to small-mindedness, petty jealousy, irrational emotionality and random violence, dependency, competitive selfishness and possessiveness, passivity, a lack of vision and conservatism . . . These qualities are . . . the result of the woman's objective conditions within the family—itself embedded in a sexist society'.
10. *For Your Own Good* (London: Virago Press, 1987) p. 59.
11. *ibid.*, p. 97.
12. *The Family in Question:Changing Households and Familiar Ideologies* (London: Macmillan, 1985).
13. Tuula Gordon, *Feminist Mothers* (London: Macmillan, 1990). p. 29.
14. *Dispatches from the Front*, (Duke University Press, 1994), p. 158.
15. *The Self as Agent* (London: Faber, 1957); *Persons in Relation* (London: Faber, 1961). Both volumes have recently been reissued by Humanities Press, New York. In what follows I have drawn from my brief introduction to Macmurray's life and thought, *John Macmurray: The Idea of the Personal* (Edinburgh: Handsel Press, 1992)
16. *The Self as Agent*, p. 76.
17. The motto of the John Macmurray Society founded in Canada in 1971 is 'Ago Ergo Sum'.
18. *ibid.*, p. 179.
19. *ibid.*, p. 183.
20. *Persons in Relation*, p. 53.
21. *ibid.*, pp. 60-61.22. *ibid.*, pp. 123ff.
23. *ibid.*, pp. 125-6.
24. *ibid.*, pp. 157-8.
25. *ibid.*, p. 188.
26. *ibid.*, p. 200.
27. *ibid.*, p. 223.
28. 'Conditions of Marriage Today', *Marriage Guidance*, 9.12, 1965, ed. Charles F Davey, p. 385. (I am grateful to Jack Costello for drawing my attention to the published version of this lecture.) One would today look for further reflection from Macmurray on the question of whether marriage must always be monogamous, permanent and between persons of the opposite sex.
29. *ibid.*, p. 112.
30. *ibid.*, p. 120.
31. *ibid.*, p. 128.
32. *ibid.*, p.140.
33. E.g. *Conditions of Freedom* (London: Faber, 1950), p. 53.
34. Macmurray's optimistic view in the short-termism of this phenomenon is surely disconfirmed by current trends.
35. 'Conditions of Marriage', p. 384.
36. *Persons in Relation*, p. 155.
37. 'Conditions of Marriage Today', p. 379.
38. This proposal is also advanced much earlier by Macmurray in 'The Social Unit', *New Britain-Weekly*, July 12, 1933, p. 235. I am grateful to Michael Fielding for drawing my attention to this article. This is developed in *The Clue to History* (London: SCM, 1938).

LOVE AND POWER:

What Does Macmurray's Notion of Community Have to Say to the Politics of Devices in the Contemporary Political Order?

Frank G. Kirkpatrick

Political philosophers, politicians, and religious ethicists are currently debating the nature of political community and the nature of human relationships. In the centre of this debate among moral philosophers are two moral philosophies (liberalism and communitarianism) that are often set against each other. I would like to suggest:

- that the differences between them are not as great as often portrayed in the literature;
- that a way through the debate for the religious ethicist within a theistic tradition can be provided by a moral ontology grounded in the intention and actions of a divine agent;
- that John Macmurray's under- standing of both religious and political community provides a way of linking that moral ontology with the work of politics;
- that Macmurray's notion of community both goes beyond and incorporates key provisions in both the liberal and communitarian notions;
- that the moral ontology on which his notion of community rests has the potential for contributing to the resolution of many of the issues now facing the societies and governments of the United States and the United Kingdom, both of which are seriously considering what has been called 'devolution'.

1. John Rawls and the liberal position

The classic statement of the moral dimension of a liberal vision of society is that of John Rawls, the moral philosopher whose seminal work *A Theory of Justice* (1971) has spawned an entire industry of scholarly studies and scholars' careers. Rawls' argument that justice is fairness presumes a view of society as 'a system of co-operation designed to advance the good of those taking part in it. [It] is a co-operative venture for mutual advantage'[1]. Any society requires a set of principles of social justice that will

> provide a way of assigning rights and duties in the basic institutions of society and . . . define the appropriate distribution of the benefits and burdens of social co-operation[2].

To generate these principles of social justice to which all can give their consent, Rawls engages in a thought-experiment (the 'original position') that assumes that the parties to it are driven primarily by self-interest, that they have conflicting claims to the division of social advantages, that they may have no extensive ties of natural sentiment, and that they take no interest in one another's interests[3]. None of these assumptions may turn out to be true once they emerge from the original position, but the original position has to assume them in order to ground the most basic procedural principles for determining what everyone will ultimately agree is just once they 're-enter' society and 'discover' who they really are. No one in the original position knows what his or her advantages or disadvantages in the real world are. Nor does anyone know what vision of the good he or she will hold in real life. But, given the reality of self-interest, no one has a moral reason to 'acquiesce in an enduring loss for himself in order to bring about a greater net balance of satisfaction' for others[4].

In the 'original position' behind the 'veil of ignorance', Rawls argues, rational people would come to accept two fundamental principles of justice:

> First: each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others[5].

The second, or difference principle, holds that:

> social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged . . . and (b) attached to positions and offices open to all under conditions of fair equality and opportunity[6].

There is no presumption that there will be any agreement as to the good to be pursued by individuals, nor that there will be any harmony between individual life-plans. In fact, Rawls believes that liberalism assumes that 'there are bound to exist conflicting and incommensurable conceptions of the good'[7]. Rawls insists that contemporary liberal cultures are diverse and pluralistic with respect to comprehensive religious, philosophical, and moral doctrines. Therefore agreement as to social principles must be made solely on the basis of individual rights, not on the basis of a common notion of the good.

'Justice as fairness [is] the concept of right prior to that of the good'[8]. It is based on the idea that persons must first agree to the principles of organising their life together before they can begin to contemplate what is good for each of them individually.

> We should not attempt to give form to our life by first looking to the good independently defined. It is not our aims that primarily reveal our nature but rather the principles that we would acknowledge to govern the background conditions under which these aims are to be formed and the manner in which they are to be pursued. For the self is prior to the ends which are affirmed by it[9].

The most we can hope for in a liberal, morally diverse society, is an 'overlapping consensus' in the political realm as to what the rules of engagement are as individuals are given the greatest possible latitude to pursue their personal life-plans as they see fit.

This has the important implication that the political conception of justice 'does not pre- suppose accepting any particular comprehensive religious, philosophical, or moral doctrine'[10]. This kind of doctrine has no utility (and in fact is dangerous if applied coercively) for a liberal democratic political culture. Given the liberal post-Enlightenment assumption that people can never agree upon a single metaphysical or religious view of human beings in relation to some transcendent good, such a view cannot contribute to the principles of justice by which a society has to organise itself.

What liberalism does not consider, given its self-limitation of considering only principles of right, is the possibility that there is in fact (as construed by the Biblical, theistic tradition) an overarching intention for the fulfilment or flourishing of human beings, that that intention has been enacted and furthered in history by a divine agent whose intention it is, and that this intention can incorporate, without inconsistency, a wide variety of modes of expression without contradicting its underlying truth: namely, that persons are created in such a way that they can, ultimately, only achieve the fullest possible form of flourishing in certain kinds of community characterised essentially by mutual love. This possibility, however, is compatible with the creation of forms of impersonal association (societies) as providing the necessary means for and the conditions of the existence of smaller, more basic, more personally direct communities that alone can bring out in their members those qualities that lead to greater flourishing. In short, a community, in John Macmurray's sense, can rest on a societal base that meets the principles of justice as set forth by Rawls. But it can do so only if it can also sustain the fundamental insight of the communitarian critics of liberalism: namely, that persons are constituted by their communal, historical, and cultural traditions, including visions of the good and the true.

For the liberal the purpose of the state is simply to ensure that all citizens have equal opportunity to advance whatever conception of the good they might individually happen to hold provided only that they do so without violating the two principles of justice. The liberal state need not insist that its citizens share a common metaphysical view of the truth about what constitutes the best end for all persons or about the essential nature and destiny of persons.

Justice is a political, not a metaphysical, conception[11]. A liberal society must regard citizens as 'independent from and as not identified with any particular conception of the good, or scheme of final ends'[12]. The only conception of the person in the liberal society is a political one at the heart of which is the primacy of the individual's freedom to choose his or her own life-plan without unfair coercion by others. Liberalism

> accepts the plurality of incommensurable conceptions of the good as a fact of modern democratic culture, provided, of course, these conceptions respect the limits specified by the appropriate principles of justice[13].

This clearly means that a society cannot embrace one religion's view of the good for all persons and enforce its acceptance by all the members of that society. The implicit assumption underlying these claims is, however, that any religion's view of the good entails its coercive imposition on others and unfairly restricts the freedom of persons to pursue equally valid, but ultimately incommensurable, visions of the good.

What is left unexamined is the possibility that there is a religious (metaphysical) option that locates the good of all persons in a divine intention that, by its very nature, supports human freedom as essential to flourishing but believes that ultimately all visions of the good can find fulfilment only if persons live in certain forms of community characterised essentially, though not solely, by mutual love in addition to justice.

2. The communitarian critique

Now some critics of Rawls' liberalism have objected that it leaves the human self in a naked, isolated, and radically untenable individualistic posture, cut off from the very others whose relationships with the self enable it to flourish. Such a view of the self, they argue, is not true to the fact of the self's embeddedness in a particular culture's traditions and views of the good. Michael Sandel was one of the first to dissect Rawls' assumption of what Sandel called the 'unencumbered self'. For the liberal, my essential identity can be distinguished from the ends that I choose. I am, essentially, a chooser, but not a chooser who is constituted by his choices. There are no 'constitutive ends' that define the self prior to its choosing of any ends.

Sandel argues that this unencumbered self is capable of joining

a 'community' but what is denied to such a self

> is the possibility of membership in any community bound by moral ties antecedent to choice; he cannot belong to any community where the self itself could be at stake. Such a community—call it constitutive as against merely co-operative— would engage the identity as well as the interests of the participants, and so implicate its members in a citizenship more thorough-going than the unencumbered self can know[14].

While acknowledging that this is a liberating vision, Sandel denies that it is true. We cannot, he argues, view ourselves as 'independent selves, independent in the sense that our identity is never tied to our aims and attachments'. So to view ourselves would be to remove our fundamental identity as persons from those

> loyalties and convictions whose moral force consists partly in the fact that living by them is inseparable from understanding ourselves as the particular persons we are—as members of this family or community or nation or people, as bearers of that history, as citizens of this republic[15].

The self that is prior to its choice of 'constitutive attachments' is a self without character, without moral depth.

> For to have character is to know that I move in a history I neither summon nor command, which carries consequences none the less for my choices and conduct'.

Whatever distance I can get on my encumberedness is always

> precarious and provisional, [and] the point of reflection never finally secured outside [my contextual] history itself.

The liberal self, however, is

> beyond the reach of its experience, beyond deliberation and reflection. Denied the expansive self-understandings that could shape a common life, the liberal self is left to lurch between detachment on the one hand, and entanglement on the other[16].

The truth, however, according to Alasdair McIntyre and other communitarians, is that

> we all approach our own circumstances as bearers of a particular social identity. I am someone's son or daughter, someone else's cousin or uncle; I am a citizen of this or that city, a member of this or that guild or profession . . . The story of my life is always embedded in the story of those communities from which I derive my identity[17].

3. Macmurray and Rawls

Now on first reading, it would seem that the communitarian claims of Sandel and MacIntyre track much more closely to John Macmurray's view of community as the condition for and the constitutive substance of the fulfilment of persons whose essential nature is interpersonal. But a closer reading suggests that Macmurray actually has the ability to accommodate much in the Rawlsian liberal tradition as well as the basis for an 'internal' critique of some of communitarianism's claims. In the process, Macmurray's understanding of society in relation to community provides him with some clear criteria for determining what political and economic policies are more conducive to human flourishing (more in conformity with God's intention for all humankind) than others. And with this determination, Macmurray can give us a way through the political debates about how societies can best serve the needs of their members, especially the disadvantaged, without diminishing the genuine, authentic flourishing of all, including the most advantaged. In the process, Macmurray gives us a moral ontology in which the reality of God's intention can become a decisive factor in a social ethic that does not betray the principles of justice but goes beyond them to a common vision of the common good and thus reconciles the concerns of both the liberals and the communitarians.

4. The role and reality of God

But Macmurray's understanding of community rests on his understanding of God. And one of the most striking features of contemporary moral philosophy is the absence of God. Belief in God is assumed to be one of the metaphysical illusions of the Enlightenment or a non-explanatory cognitive epiphenomenon, simply tacked on to an otherwise completely self-sufficient naturalistic explanation of the world. One of the reasons for this assumption is the conviction among many postmodernists that to believe in God is to believe in an ahistorical reality that can only ground absolute, unchanging, historically invariant moral norms that necessarily ignore the differences between persons, communities, and historical situations and do nothing other than reify and legitimate the unjust power relations between a dominant and a subordinate group. The possibility of a divine ground that is intimately involved in history and whose intentions include historical change, development, and the flourishing of diverse and unique others in different and particular communities, is simply not considered. But Macmurray's understanding of God as the Personal Other whose intention unifies history provides, I believe, just such a possibility and, as such, can help us to find a middle ground between the liberal and communitarian understanding of the political life of human communities without reducing community to (but also without eliminating the need for) the devices of politics.

Macmurray's philosophy can be made consistent with the theological claim of Biblical theism that God is at work in the world, both through an original divine act establishing the conditions of freedom and community as the necessary means for the fulfilment of human nature and through specific historical divine actions bringing to completion an intention that all persons flourish and find fulfilment in direct personal relationships of love in community[18].

As Iris Murdoch has pointed out, modern thinkers who believe in no external reality, including the reality of God,

> are left with a denuded self whose

only virtues are freedom, or at best sincerity, or, in the case of the British philosophers, an everyday reasonableness[19].

Without a God whose purpose is a universal community we are left with the tragic shattering of the vision of

an ultimate community which will have transcended the distinction between the natural and the social, which will exhibit a solidarity that is not parochial because it is the expression of an ahistorical human nature[20].

Only an external reality capable of acting so as to bring about a community in which persons can be fully themselves can provide a reasonable alternative to this denuded self.

At the heart of Macmurray's retrieval of God is the conviction that history (as well as nature) does yield itself successfully to a construal[21] that there is a purpose being worked out in it. That purpose reaches fulfilment only in the full flourishing of persons living in mutuality within the context of a loving community (or what the Bible calls the kingdom of God). Community provides the fullest possible conditions for individual flourishing and individual flourishing provides the means for the flourishing of all the others who are the objects of the individual's love. Such flourishing presupposes direct personal relations between those who are bound together by mutual love. But it also presupposes that those direct relations have a material foundation that includes indirect relations between persons as well.

5. Society

Those co-operative indirect relations relative to the material foundation of community are what constitute a society. For Macmurray, like Rawls, the basis of any human society 'is the universal and necessary intention to maintain the personal relation which makes the individual a person, and his life a common life'[22]. But many societies are based on what Macmurray calls a negative motivation, namely fear for the self and therefore fear of the other, fear that the other is a threat to the material possessions and social status by which the self has come, falsely, to define itself. The unity of this kind of society is intended, for example, to advance the interests of 'aggressively egocentric individuals' (as in Hobbes' conception). Society is the necessary evil that permits these 'inherently isolated or unrelated' atomic units to live together.

They are united in a whole by an external force [the power of the State maintained through the sanctions of the Law] which counteracts the tendency of their individual energies to repel one another[23].

In such a society, because the self fears the other, its freedom to express itself fully is inhibited. It is afraid to open itself to others, to share its goods, to sacrifice some of its narrow interests for the sake of others because it fears that everything it gives away it will diminish it and will entail a loss of self-identity and meaning. It can only assume that the others are just as negatively motivated toward it as it is toward them. In this kind of society, basic trust has been eroded, and with it the necessary conditions for supporting other-regarding behaviour. The result can only be the further disintegration and alienation of the society and its members in relation to each other[24].

6. Community

A community is distinguished from a society by the positive apperception of its members toward each other. If a society is held together by a negative bond of unity, the unity of a community is a personal and positive one. A community in its fullest possible sense has overcome the fear for the self and its correlative fear of the other. And in so doing it has opened up the possibilities of freedom for the other.

A community is for the sake of friendship and presupposes love. But it is only in friendship that persons are free in relation; if the relation is based on fear we are constrained in it and not free. Society is maintained by a common constraint, that is to say by acting in obedience to law. This secures the appearance of freedom, for it secures me from the expression of the other's animosity. But it does so by suppression of the motive which constitutes the relation[25].

Now Macmurray does not believe that the negative (or egocentric) motive can, in societies of indirect personal relations, ever be entirely replaced by the positive (or 'heterocentric') motive of love for all the others. It is utopian fantasy to believe that a society, especially one of the enormous size and complexity as a modern nation-state, can be turned into a community by the devices of politics. Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that societies cannot provide in and of themselves the substance of mutuality that constitutes the heart of authentic communities. Built as they are on indirect relations between persons, societies are only 'potentially' communities. And because of this fact, the limitations of politics must be recognised as persons struggle to develop the conditions for full human flourishing, both for themselves and for others. But if we know what those conditions are, at least in a general kind of way (given our particular moral ontology in which the will of God plays a central role), then we have a fulcrum by which to criticise and reform the structures and institutions of society so as to best serve the purposes of community without replacing or becoming identified with them.

7. Social goods

The crucial function of a society is to provide the material foundations on which the flourishing of individuals within communities must be built. Macmurray is fully in accord with both liberals and communitarians in regarding what Rawls calls the primary social

goods as essential to a full, even spiritual life. These goods include rights and liberties, powers and opportunities, income and wealth, and self-respect[26]. The basic moral question for any society is whether these goods are fairly distributed in way that permits all persons to flourish in the most just way possible. And this is the question of justice[27], as Rawls has also argued.

8. Politics

Politics, for Macmurray, is the 'maintaining, improving and adjusting [of] the indirect or economic relations of persons'[28]. The institutional expression of politics is the state, 'and its central function is the maintaining of justice'. Justice, in this sense, is the minimum of reciprocity and interest in the other in the personal relation: it is a 'kind of zero or lower limit of moral behaviour'. Justice is the negative aspect of morality but it is necessary to the constitution of the positive, though subordinate within it.

This view of justice fits nicely into Rawls' notion that the original position does not require the parties to be positively motivated toward the others. But it does require enough mutual interest in them so that they can all agree on a set of principles that will bind them together in a society in various forms of association, transaction, and exchange. Nevertheless, justice must insist that the others remain differentiated from me and from each other. Justice keeps morality from becoming sentimental or lapsing into what Macmurray calls 'a minor mutuality which is hostile to the interests of the larger' society. The other must remain other, both in society and in community, and justice ensures that this will be the case in both. Locating justice within community keeps the latter from degenerating into a purely sentimental, or totalitarian whole in which the rights of the individual get swamped by the imperatives of group solidarity. Justice acts as a block on forms of social unity that privilege ethnic, gender, class, racial, or other types of identity to the exclusion of individual rights. In this sense justice will be necessary even when genuine fellowship has been attained. For even then

> the negative aspect would still be present, though completely subordinated to the positive, and functioning as a differentiating force within it . . . There must be no self-identification of the one with the other, or the reciprocity will be lost and the heterocentricity of the relation will be only apparent[29].

The equality of persons, with respect to their functioning within society, is necessary and it is one of the ends of justice. 'My care for you is only moral if it includes the intention to preserve your freedom as an agent, which is your independence of me'[30], in the sense of remaining an autonomous being whose decisions are his own, even if those decisions are ultimately fulfilled only in communal interdependence with me. Whether in community or in society, therefore,

> I can hope to secure justice in my dealings with [others] by limiting my activities for the sake of their interests, provided they will do the same in their dealings with me . . We can consult together and come to an agreement about what is fair to each of us, so far as our separate courses of action affect one another and impinge on one another. This can be achieved by a common consent to general principles by reference to which each of us can determine what would or would not be fair to the other person if we did it. Such agreement is a contract between us, which . . . determines reciprocal rights and obligations which we engage ourselves to respect. It is a pragmatic device to secure justice in co-operation and to eliminate injustice[31].

There is much in this lengthy statement that stands in close relation to (even echoes) Rawls' development of the principles of justice. It assumes society as a co-operative endeavour; that it is based on a contract; and that it protects the rights of individuals by limiting the activities of all for the sake of each. The parties to the contract must reach common consent (which is the purpose of the original position). Macmurray does not presume the veil of ignorance, but there is no reason to assume that he would be opposed to this hypothetical device (given an important qualification taken up below) because it does ensure that the common consent will not unfairly privilege some at the expense of others because they know their actual but contingent situation beforehand and will takes steps to ensure the security of their advantages.

9. Communicative ethics

Macmurray would, however, also agree with much of what has been called the communicative ethics position, in particular its criticism that Rawls' original position runs the risk of obscuring the uniqueness of the concrete other, the individual person who cannot be reduced to a general, purely rational self. Seyla Benhabib, drawing on the discourse ethics of Jurgen Habermas, calls this position 'interactive universalism'[32]. Like Macmurray, she holds out for some form of ontologically based universal moral principles. Her stance is pragmatic and based on the actual discourse of persons in interactive communication with each other in a particular form of human association. It includes a

> vision of an embodied and embedded human self whose identity is constituted narratively [the communitarian element], and the reformulation of the moral point of view as the contingent achievement of an interactive form of rationality [the liberal dimension] rather than as the timeless standpoint of a legislative reason [the Kantian factor][33].

This interactive discourse ethic asks:

> what principles of action can we all recognise or agree to as being valid if we engage in practical discourse or a mutual search for [moral] justification?[34]

This clearly tracks with both Rawls' and Macmurray's notion of consulting together to reach com-

mon consent about the principles of justice.

Consistent with her search for the universalisation of moral principles [which Macmurray grounds in the will of God], Benhabib rejects the extreme claims of the cultural relativists. She denies, for example, their conviction that there is only a 'radical incommensurability of conceptual frameworks'. There is no reason, she argues, why we cannot engage other frameworks in dialogue, provided one is truly prepared to hear a different voice from one's own and to reformulate one's view as a result if the arguments are persuasive. Cultural relativists are simply too quick to assume no kind of conversation at all is possible with people in different cultures. But this assumption rests on 'poor sociology and history'. There has been much more interaction (and not always of the imperialist kind) between cultures than the 'armchair philosophers of cultural relativism' have been willing to acknowledge. In the process they ignore the real, though incredibly complex, ways in which a common 'humanity ceases to be just a regulative ideal and becomes increasingly a reality'[35]. This last claim from a secular moral philosopher is hauntingly reminiscent of Macmurray's claim in *The Clue to History* that God's intention for the unity of humankind is increasingly becoming an historical reality.

Unlike the strict liberal proceduralists (those who insist that procedures determining the right are more basic and universal than any particular conceptions of the good), Benhabib insists that discourse ethics entails strong normative assumptions about the moral status of persons within the communicative community, among them most centrally the 'principle of universal moral respect' and the 'principle of egalitarian reciprocity'[36]. Both of these principles accord with Macmurray's notion of equality and the differentiation of the other as truly other in any genuine personal relationship.

> We ought to *respect* each other as beings whose standpoint is worthy of equal consideration
>
> and
>
> we ought to treat each other as concrete human beings whose capacity to express this standpoint we ought to enhance by creating, whenever possible, social practices embodying the discursive ideal (the principle of egalitarian reciprocity)[37].

10. The reversal of perspectives

The second principle requires us to engage in what Benhabib calls the reversal of perspectives. We should be able to think from the other person's point of view and see from within that view how he or she judges others. Only if we can do this can we avoid consigning others to a status of otherness that can be neglected or treated with indifference in the interactive communicative conversation.

Benhabib also insists that discourse requires the participants to make sure that they have heard the voices of those others who have traditionally been excluded from the conversation, namely women and minorities. Benhabib criticises Rawls on just this point. She argues that Rawls, by 'ignoring the standpoint of the concrete other leads to epistemic incoherence in universalistic moral theories'[38]. The problem with the veil of ignorance is that it tends to think from the point of view of 'the disembedded and disembodied generalised other'[39]. From this point of view 'the *other as different from the self* disappears'. The self is abstracted from her concrete and specific identity within the complex of human social relationships. And when this happens the 'voice' of the different and unique other is effectively silenced. What remains is the old Kantian noumenal self that is everyone in general and no one in particular. To create the conditions for real community in which real persons are real contributors, the concrete, embedded lives of different concrete others must be included[what Macmurray calls the heterocentric dimension of relationship]. And the inclusion of traditionally excluded 'others' undercuts or deconstructs the privileging of certain moral ideals, such as the 'economic' or the 'political man', both of which seem to predicate the superiority of the male autonomous morality free from the bonds of family and personal and communal interdependence. But she argues that there is no reason, once the voices of women are brought into the conversation, why morality should be understood primarily as the rational actions of impersonal agents in a field of indirect relations, such as economics and politics. Communicative ethics 'projects a utopian way of life in which mutuality, respect and reciprocity become the norm among humans as concrete selves and not just as juridical agents'[40]. Macmurray's insistence that a heterocentric ethics focuses on the uniqueness of the other, and not on his usefulness for the egocentric self, suggests a similar support for treating others as concrete, and not simply as generalisable others.

11. Conditions of empowerment

One important implication of this view is that a society has a special obligation to empower all persons with the necessary material means to engage in the reasoned conversation from which a mutual consensus will be reached about the principles by which all those participating in the conversation agree to be governed. These conditions of empowerment go far beyond the negative liberty that conservatives and libertarians are so interested in, a liberty simply to be left alone by others in order to pursue one's private life-plan. Positive liberty is the provision of whatever is necessary to help people become free, equal, and competent moral agents. As Alan Gewirth has argued, there are certain 'generic features and

necessary conditions of all action' that must be provided in a just society. Freedom and well-being are the two chief such features. Freedom consists in 'controlling one's behaviour by one's unforced choice while having knowledge of relevant circumstances'. And well-being is the

> substantive necessary condition of action; it consists in having the general abilities and conditions needed for achieving one's purposes . . . i.e., life, physical integrity, mental equilibrium . . . not being lied to, not being cheated, not being robbed . . . [and] additive well-being consists in having the abilities and conditions needed for increasing one's level of purpose-fulfilment and one's capabilities for action; it includes self-esteem, education, and opportunities for earning wealth and income.[41]

If this means the provision of medical care, meaningful employment, economic justice, remedial education for the historically marginalised, aggressive attacks on racial and gender discrimination, then such actions are morally obligatory on the part of the society itself for its members[42].

Macmurray would probably support wholeheartedly the recent *Pastoral Letter* of the Roman Catholic Bishops in the United States dealing with economic justice[43]. The Bishops tie the effectiveness of human institutions, including the economic ones, to how well they protect human dignity. 'We judge any economic system by what it does *for* and *to* people and by how it permits all to *participate* in it'[44]. This requires that the social and economic conditions of community be socially protected, that all persons have a right to participate in the economic life of society, that all members of the society have a special obligation to the poor and vulnerable, and that Christians are to make a fundamental 'option for the poor', to strength the whole community by assisting those who are most vulnerable. This means that human rights are the 'minimum conditions for life in community' and that these rights include not only civil and political rights but economic rights as well. The establishment and maintenance of these economic rights is perfectly consistent with Macmurray's understanding of the role of positive government and Alan Gewirth's commitment to human rights as the necessary conditions for moral agency. Positive government, in Macmurray's political philosophy, is one that exercises a 'positive control of the material life of its citizens, [and] determines what use shall be made of the material resources of the nation .'[45] While acknowledging that socialist theory is committed to a doctrine of positive government, Macmurray's basic point (one that survives the failures of many socialist governments in practice) is that we cannot separate the spiritual life (the life of love and mutuality) from its material base.

> Without material resources we cannot live. Without adequate material resources, the personal life must remain stunted and undeveloped . . . The means of life are also the means of a good life. Freedom is the life blood of all culture and the condition of the good life . . . [and] whoever controls wealth controls the means of cultural development and personal freedom[46].

Positive government sees its duty as providing the 'resources of the people for the welfare of the people'[47].

12. Spiritual space

At the same time, however, Macmurray also holds that no political society should ever trespass into areas of personal life that depend upon the free exercise of one's reason and spiritual conscience. This means that Macmurray would resist some of the more extreme communitarian emphases upon the complete or thoroughgoing embeddedness of persons in their tradition, culture, history, or community. It is vitally important, he would argue, that persons retain a degree of transcendence over even the most powerful of constraining and defining conditions in order to be able to critique and reform them. He locates this area of transcendence in the religious life and denies the government any right to interfere with it.

> There is a department of social life in which the political authority has no competence. It lies beyond the limits of the State's authority[48].

The State is 'a material power and works by law and the sanction of law'[49] and has no place in determining the personal freedom and spiritual life of individuals. By implication this freedom can and ought to be used to determine how the power of law can be employed to serve the higher ends of freedom and the spiritual life, or, in short, the conditions for positively motivated community. And this means the ability to stand apart from one's political, legal, and cultural traditions in order to reflect critically upon how they might be altered (or better defended) in the light of the overarching purposes of genuine community to which they are or ought to be the means. And for Macmurray this standing apart is possible, in part, because one can appeal to the will of God as that which transcends all particular and historically contingent cultural forms even while being enacted in and through them.

This standing apart is also based on the assumption that, as Will Kymlicka argues in defence of liberalism and against some its more extreme communitarian critics,

> we *can* be mistaken about even our most fundamental interests, and because some goals *are* more worthy than others. Liberty is needed precisely to find out what is valuable in life—to question, re-examine, and revise our beliefs about value[50].

Freedom of choice is not the ultimate liberal value, but it is the value that is necessary for pursuing those projects, or life plans, that *are* in fact worth pursuing and fulfilling.

> It is our projects and tasks that are the most important things in our lives, and it's because they are so important that we should be free to revise and reject them, should we come to believe that they are not

fulfilling or worthwhile . . . Freedom of choice [is] a precondition for pursuing those projects and tasks that are valued for their own sakē[51].

This is what I take to be the heart of Macmurray's defence of religious and spiritual freedom from interference by the political sphere. It is within our religious lives that we discover the truly worthwhile form of life that is brought to completion in mutual community. And that form of life, for most religious people, depends upon an ontology that has a place for the intentions and actions of a divine agent both in establishing the ontological conditions of community and in moving history toward its fullest realisation. Therefore, Macmurray, like Kymlicka, would reject the communitarian's claim that our identity is fully determined by our embeddedness in an historically contingent culture or tradition. There must be a sense in which the liberal is right that there is a self prior to its ends. It need not be a totally denuded self: it can be, as Benhabib has argued, a self in conversation and communion with others. It is impossible to view ourselves as totally without social embeddedness, but we can envisage ourselves without our *present form* of embeddedness. (If that were not possible, we would be nothing but the products of the forces that make us what we are.) Unless the communitarian can provide the self with the ability to re-examine its ends, he fails

> to justify communitarian politics, for he's failed to show why individuals shouldn't be given the conditions appropriate to that re- examining, as an indispensable part of leading the best possible life[52].

But as long as we have the possibility of interactive conversation, and the social bonds that make it possible, we can enter the process of ethical reflection and compare 'one "encumbered" potential self with another "encumbered" potential self'. We can continually expose ourselves to other views of the good, 'since we reserve the right to question and reappraise even our most deeply held convictions about the nature of the good life'[53]. There must be a vantage point from which even the most rock-hard of such cultures can be viewed from beyond themselves by a reasoned conversation that opens up the vision of a human community that goes beyond (while remaining dependent upon) both society and its devices of politics. Only within the context of that reasoned conversation can the religious philosopher hope to ground his conviction that belief in the overarching intention for universal community of a divine agent makes the best sense (gives what Charles Taylor calls the best account) out of life in comparison to other construals of the source and means of fulfilment. But until that vision can be fully effected, law and the devices of politics remain necessary instruments for life in a just society.

In this delimited context, then, the law is to be judged by its 'efficiency': it is the

> minimum of interference with the practical freedom of the individual which is necessary to keep the peace . . . [and] . . . the means to justice in the indirect relations of the members of an association of persons co-operating for the production and distribution of the means of personal life[54].

These means include the material resources without which we cannot live:

> Without adequate material resources, the personal life must remain stunted and undeveloped. The economic activities of a community are the indispensable basis for its cultural life. The means of life are also the means of a good life[55].

Now one of these means is freedom, which is the 'life blood of all culture and the conditions of the good life'. This is certainly in line with the liberal claim that freedom is among the highest priorities of any democratic culture and must not be unnecessarily starved by inadequate material conditions. And this means, for Macmurray, that the economic life of a society must come under the control of a democratic government (in what he calls positive democracy). Without that control,

> there is no way by which the community can secure for all its members the means of realising the cultural freedom which it is the purpose of democracy to make possible. The means of exercising the freedoms that democracy assures to its members are distributed by the chances of economic success or failure in free competition. This means, in effect, that the realisation of the good life depends upon relative wealth. Whoever controls wealth controls the means of cultural development and personal freedom[56].

And this is precisely where Rawls' two principles of justice have their significance. They ensure that each person has an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others, and, in accord with the difference principle, that

> social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged. and (b) attached to positions and offices open to all under conditions of fair equality and opportunity.

13. Evaluating the State

And for Macmurray, a state, or society, is ultimately to be judged by how far it succeeds in

> achieving and maintaining justice in the indirect or economic relations of men . . . The appeal must be to a sense of justice of all those affected, and the pragmatic evidence of this is a common consent[57].

And a common consent is best reached in a democratic society by an inclusive conversation among all the members, including those who have been historically disenfranchised by the unjust exercise of disproportionate power on behalf of economic, gender, and political elites. Thus Macmurray's commitment to justice is congruent both with Rawls' principles of justice and Benhabib's discourse ethics of communicative interaction.

And yet none of this denies the primacy of community as the context in which persons truly achieve

their flourishing. The society that is maintained by common consent to the principles of justice is still, ultimately, in service to the community that is maintained by common consent to and ongoing practice of the principles of love and mutuality.

14. Rawls' communitarianism

It is extremely significant that at the end of the day even Rawls, the arch-liberal, has room for such communities within his society of mutual co-operation. Critics and defenders have so focused on the liberal priority of the right in Rawls in theory that they have overlooked the importance he places on the virtue of life in community in practice. Roberto Alejandro has pointed out that Rawls has a strong sense of an encumbered self (quite at odds with the communitarian critique of him) that actually lives fully only in one form of community or another. Rawls admits that

> there should be for each person at least one community of shared interests to which he belongs and where he finds his endeavours confirmed by his associates[58].

This notion of communal confirmation suggests that selves, ontologically and empirically, do not fully flourish until and unless they are affirmed and appreciated by others. This has parallels to Macmurray's claim that because it is

> natural for human beings to share their experience, to understand one another, to find joy and satisfaction in living together;

and in expressing and revealing themselves to one another, it is necessary to enter a social union, or community[59]. Thus for both Macmurray and Rawls a goal of radical self-sufficiency is neither possible nor desirable. One depends upon others 'to confirm his sense of his own worth[60]'. In addition, the Rawlsian self, in Alejandro's words, 'develops sentiments and attachments, *not out of itself*, but out of the influence it experiences in its dealing with other selves'[61]. Rawls goes on to say that some form of social union is necessary for the individual's powers to reach fruition. 'Only in social union is the individual complete'[62]. This notion of personal completeness in and through 'social union' is clearly not too distant from Macmurray's notion of community. It also suggests that Rawls understands that society (the co-operative association) is not sufficient for the completion of the aspirations of human beings. They require a tighter, more direct and personal form of community and this fact opens Rawls up to a consideration of communal relationships that go beyond, without replacing, societal principles of justice. And if this is true, Alejandro is right in claiming that 'for a Rawlsian community is far from being a mere attribute . . . it is constitutive of the individual's identity,' just as the communitarians claim[63]. What Rawls does not do is argue that any one particular kind of community or social union is better than another. But Macmurray and the Biblical theist would make such an argument, drawing on their construal of God's intention for the fulfilment of human persons in and through mutual love. In this respect, Macmurray keeps alive the importance of a moral ontology as the basis for a full understanding of the relationship between society and its devices of politics, and community with its mutuality of love.

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Notes:

1. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), p.4.
2. Rawls, *A Theory Of Justice*, p.4.
3. Rawls, *A Theory Of Justice*, pp.127-9.
4. Rawls, *A Theory Of Justice*, p.14. In this respect Rawls qualifies traditional utilitarian theory.
5. Rawls, *A Theory Of Justice*, pp.60-61.
6. Rawls, *A Theory Of Justice*, p.302.
7. John Rawls, 'Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical,' *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 14 (1985), p.245.
8. Rawls, *A Theory Of Justice*, p.31.
9. Rawls, *A Theory Of Justice*, p.560.
10. John Rawls, 'The Priority of Rights and Ideas of the Good,' *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 17 (1988), p.252.
11. John Rawls, 'Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical,' p.223.
12. John Rawls, 'Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical,' p.241.
13. John Rawls, 'Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical,' p.249.
14. Sandel, 'The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self,' in Avineri and De-Shalit, p.19.
15. Sandel, 'The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self,' p.23.
16. Sandel, 'The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self,' p.24.
17. Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), p.205.
18. I would admit that Macmurray's own treatment of the actions of God, and the nature of God as Personal Agent, is less than clear and sometimes downright ambiguous. I do believe, however, that taken in its entirely, his philosophy supports the belief in God as an historical Agent. See especially my recent book *Together Bound: God, History, and the Religious Community* (Oxford: 1994).
19. Iris Murdoch, 'On "God" and "Good",' in Stanley Hauerwas and Alasdair MacIntyre, eds., *Revisions* (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), p. 69.
20. Rorty, 'Solidarity or objectivity?' in Richard Rorty, *Objectiv-*

ity, Relativism, and Truth: Philosophical Papers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p.22.
Rorty's reference to an 'ahistorical' human nature is not consistent with a view of human agents in relation to a divine Agent working for the completion of a common intention in history, but clearly a vision of a universal community is consistent with it.

21. The notion of a 'construal' is intended to suggest that any reading of history is something less than certain. Historical interpretation is always a provisional construal of what seems to be the best account of a series of events or actions given the available evidence at the time. There are enormous problems in any construal that the events of the past are in some sense God's. But without some such construal the Christian faith in God as an Agent who works in history for good would not be possible at all.
22. John Macmurray, *Persons in Relation* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961), p.128.
23. John Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*, p.137.
24. This is the thrust of recent work being done by the African-American philosopher, Laurence Thomas. See especially his *Living Morally* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989).
25. John Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*, p.151.
26. Macmurray does not question whether these goods carry over into non-democratic, non-liberal societies. Like Rawls, he seems to be working within the given framework of western liberal society and assuming that its basic goods are those that, for the most part, constitute the foundation, if not the full meaning, of human flourishing.
27. Rawls, *A Theory Of Justice*, p.62.
28. John Macmurray, *Persons In Relation*, p.188.
29. John Macmurray, *Persons In Relation*, p.189.
30. John Macmurray, *Persons In Relation*, p.190.
31. John Macmurray, *Persons In Relation*, p.191.
32. Seyla Benhabib, *Situating the Self* (New York: Routledge, 1992), *passim.*
33. Benhabib, p.6. The bracketed words are my addition to her quotation.
34. Benhabib, p.28.
35. Benhabib, pp.62-3 n.48
36. Benhabib, p.29.
37. Benhabib, p.31.
38. Benhabib, p.161.
39. Benhabib, p.160.
40. Benhabib, p.60 n.34.
41. Alan Gewirth, 'Common Morality and the Community of Rights,' in Gene Outka and John Reeder, Jr., *Prospects for a Common Morality* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p.36.
42. For a fuller exploration of positive freedom, see Carol Gould, *Rethinking Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 'What Are the Human Rights?'.
Gould argues that an adequate human rights theory must include 'not only the minimal conditions for survival and civility that make human activity possible at all, but also the fuller conditions that are required for the free and self-developing activity that marks human life as distinctively human', p.201.
43. See *Economic Justice for All: Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy* (National Conference of Catholic Bishops: Washington, D.C., 1986), *passim.*
44. *Economic Justice for All*, p.ix.
45. John Macmurray, *Constructive Democracy* (London: Faber and Faber, 1943), p.18.
46. John Macmurray, *Constructive Democracy*, pp.21-22.
47. John Macmurray, *Constructive Democracy*, p.28.
While Macmurray goes on to argue that the government 'would plan and administer the economic life of the community' (29), I do not believe that he would necessarily subscribe to the all the details of a communist or socialist command economy. In fact, his whole argument on behalf of positive government is couched in the context of a defence of political democracy and the prohibition on government from entering into the spiritual and personal lives of its subjects.
48. John Macmurray, *Constructive Democracy*, p.11.
49. John Macmurray, *Constructive Democracy*, p.17.
50. Will Kymlicka, 'Liberalism and Communitarianism,' *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 18, Number 2, June 1988, p.185.
51. Will Kymlicka, 'Liberalism and Communitarianism,' *Canadian Journal Of Philosophy*, 18 (June 1988), p.187.
52. Will Xymlicka, 'Liberalism and Communitarianism,' p.192.
53. Will Kymlicka, 'Liberalism and Communitarianism,' p.189.
54. John Macmurray, *Persons In Relation*, p.194.
55. John Macmurray, *Constructive Democracy*, p.21.
56. John Macmurray, *Constructive Democracy*, pp.21-22.
57. John Macmurray, *Persons In Relation*, p.203.
58. John Rawls, *A Theory Of Justice*, p.442.
59. John Macmurray, *Reason and Emotion* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1962) p.98.
60. John Rawls, *A Theory Of Justice*, p.445.
61. Roberto Alejandro, 'Rawls's communitarianism', *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 23, Number 1, March 1993, pp.82-83.
62. John Rawls, *A Theory Of Justice*, p.525.
63. Roberto Alejandro, 'Rawls's communitarianism', pp.82-83.

BEYOND BUBER

A reassessment of Buber's contribution to psycho-therapeutic thinking and an introduction to the thought of John Macmurray

Paul Gee

1 Introduction

I-Thou philosophy is so much associated with Buber that one would be forgiven for thinking that Buber invented the term. Buber however acknowledges his debt to earlier thinkers, notably Feuerbach—a contemporary of Marx—from whom Buber received a 'decisive impetus'[1] in his youth. What is less well known is that other thinkers also influenced by Feuerbach developed their own philosophies of I and Thou quite independently of Buber. Maurace Friedman, a foremost interpreter of Buber, cites Ferdinand Ebner, Gabriel Marcel and John Macmurray as theorists whose ideas 'significantly parallel Buber's without either influencing or being influenced by him'[2].

In this paper I am interested in exploring the place Buber's thought has had in psychotherapeutic thinking. My argument is that Buber's philosophy, though profound in its understanding of the central place of relationship, was also conceptually ambiguous and inconsistent. I contend that this conceptual inadequacy has led to confusion and fuzziness when his ideas are applied to the practice of psychotherapy. I look to the highly original and almost entirely neglected work of John Macmurray—a British contemporary of Buber's who developed his own I-You philosophy independently of him—to help clarify some of these issues.

2 Background

Feuerbach's profound insight was to conceive of existence as rooted in relationship—in the 'unity of man with man' rather than in the solitary ego. He writes: 'Man's being is contained only in community . . . on the reality of the distinctness of I and Thou'[3]. According to Feuerbach's understanding, the primary experience which distinguishes us as human beings has less to do with the solitary thinker, but rather is founded in the 'dialogue between I and Thou'[4]. Feuerbach's work represents a profound shift in emphasis in philosophical thinking—heralded by some as no less than a 'Copernican revolution'[5].

In Feuerbach's work then, we find the crucial themes which Buber takes up and elaborates. For Buber, existence is rooted in the true meeting of persons—on the 'between'. 'All real living is meeting', he asserts. 'The primary word *I-Thou* establishes the world of relation' and it is in the mutuality and immediacy of relation that we fully exist as persons.[6] This *I-Thou* is contrasted by Buber with what he calls an *I-It* relation in which the other is perceived on a par with an object associated with functionality and utility. The bulk of ordinary social relationships come into this category of relationship.

Buber's language is rich in metaphor and poetry. He inherits from Feuerbach the term 'dialogue' which he uses not simply to represent a verbal exchange, but also to express the essentially reciprocal nature of an *I-Thou* interaction. The term 'narrow ridge' is another favourite metaphor for the dialogic way of life. Buber conceives of our experience as persons in relation as one of constant flow between the 'primary word *I-Thou* which can only be spoken with the whole being' and the primary word *'I-It*, which can never be spoken with the whole being'[7]. In his later writings he starts to talk paradoxically of distance being a condition for true meeting. 'One can enter into relation only with being which has been set at a distance', he writes[8].

3 Buber and Psychotherapy

The notions of I-It, I-Thou, dialogic meeting and the paradox of distance and relation are all concepts which have readily been adopted by the broad spectrum of existentialist, humanistic and psychodynamic schools of psychotherapy. Boss and Binswanger, commonly regarded as pioneers in existentialist psychotherapy, were among the first psychotherapeutic thinkers to take note of Buber's thought. Partly through Binswanger's influence and partly through Clara Perl's inspirational meeting with Buber, the notion of *I-Thou* has been a stream of influence in Gestalt therapy which in recent years has increasingly taken centre stage. In other approaches to psychotherapy Rogers, Sullivan and Hobson—to name but a few—are therapists who have gained inspiration from Buber's thought. But how comfortably can Buber's ideas be transposed into psychotherapeutic models?

compatible philosophical approaches: those of Buber and Heidegger. Now Buber was quite emphatic that he conceived of his ontology as radically opposed to that of his fellow countryman. Whereas for Buber existence is rooted in the profound mutuality of meeting, Heidegger attempts to understand human togetherness —*Mitsein*—from the standpoint of solitary individual existence. Compared to his own dialogical approach Buber declares that 'Heidegger's existence is monological . . he knows of life only in communication with himself'[9]. Even Heideggers concept of care (*Sorge*), Buber condemns as 'not taking man beyond his radically isolated self-relationship'[10].

Freidman's criticism of Binswanger is uncompromising. He argues that Binswanger achieves this apparent synthesis of Buber's and Heideggers incompatible existential systems by effectively watering down the *I-Thou*, by presenting the *I-Thou* relationship as one further existential category to a self whose 'existence is seen as an ontological entity prior to interhuman relations'[11]. In other words the *I-Thou* is seen as a convenient addition to an essentially isolated self. This clearly changes the whole emphasis of Buber's thought. Friedman asserts categorically, 'In Binswanger's work nowhere is the issue between Heidegger and Buber fully faced'. He goes on to state Until it is [faced] the very ground upon which this form of therapy rests is open to question'[12].

According to Friedman, Binswanger is not alone in misreading Buber; indeed he implies that this failure fully to appreciate the mutuality of being, crucial to Buber's philosophy, is a common theme in psychotherapeutic thinking. He argues, for example, that Sullivan makes a similar shift of emphasis in his rather simplistic identification of interpersonal relations with the *I-Thou*, and likewise that Boss in speaking of togetherness (*Mitsein*), confuses the profound mutuality of *I-Thou* with the indirect togetherness of ordinary social relations[13]. In so doing Boss and Sullivan, like Binswanger are hanging on to an essentially individualistic notion of personal reality. If Friedman is right in this analysis, and I think to a large extent he is, the question arises: are these simply misinterpretations of Buber, or are there anomalies in Buber's work which not only leave him open to, but even suggest this kind of misinterpretation?

Though I would not wholly excuse Binswanger and others for their interpretations of Buber's ontology, I believe that there are number of profound anomalies in Buber's work which lead to conceptual confusion when his work is applied in other fields. Perhaps the most striking anomaly, and the one most commented on, is his assertion that the *I-Thou* relationship is possible with inanimate objects such as trees[14]. If *I-Thou* is to do with the mutuality of persons in community, as Buber maintains, then it is difficult to conceive of non-personal relationships as *I-Thou* without shifting the whole significance of mutuality. Perhaps even more fundamental than this, is Buber's apparent ambivalence as to whether the concept of *I-Thou* is appropriate at all in the field of Psychotherapy.

I intend to examine these and other critical issues by making reference to the thought of John Macmurray, Buber's little known British contemporary. I would like first to consider the issue of *I-Thou* relations with the non-personal world and then go on to examine the questions around the appropriateness of *I-Thou* concept being used to describe a quality of psycho-therapeutic relationships.

4 I-Thou and the non-personal world

According to Buber, when he addresses a tree with his whole being, when he grasps the full beingness of the tree which stands there at the moment, he becomes 'seized by the power of exclusiveness' and 'bound up in relation to it' [the tree][15]; in that moment the tree is no longer *it*, but rather *Thou*. Buber contrasts this immediate apprehension of the tree with an *I-It* relation in which the tree is known only partially in terms of its qualities or in terms of its utility. In the one case Buber has a sense of truly meeting the tree, in the other he is distanced from it. Clearly he is describing two distinctly different qualities of relationships to the tree—polar opposites even; but is it right to describe them respectively as *I-Thou* and *I-It* ? I would argue not.

If we examine Buber's thought, we find that he is distinguishing two modes of knowing: on the one hand a view of the object characterised by concept, abstraction and the notion of utility, and the other by the direct and immediate awareness of the object as it is: not as a class of objects but in its uniqueness and wholeness.. Now the distinction here, in Macmurray's terminology is not one of *I-Thou* and *I-It*—indeed he would argue that both are *I-It* in nature—but rather we are concerned here with the distinction between the intellectual and emotional modes of reflection, or to put it differently between the scientific and artistic attitudes to the world[16].

Macmurray admits that an artist has a more intimate relationship with the object than a scientist—the latter aims at pure impersonality by universalising the first person, whereas an artist in his sensitive awareness of the object's particularity, by necessity includes the I as perceiver, but still excludes the second person. Granted, the expression of an artist's contemplation—a work of art—is for others, but not for a particular other—the You is universalised; the artist creates a work of art for a You plural. An artist does not enter into a fully mutual *I-Thou* relation with either the object of contemplation or, for that matter, the audience for whom his work of creation is an object of

mutual *I-Thou* relation with either the object of contemplation or, for that matter, the audience for whom his work of creation is an object of appreciation. An artistic or emotional relationship retains a fundamentally *I-It* quality, because it lacks the full mutuality which characterises I-You[17].

5 Togetherness and separateness

So from Macmurray's perspective, Buber is guilty of contrasting the intimate togetherness of an artistic attitude with the separateness of a scientific one, and then referring to the former as *I-Thou* and the other as *I-It*. This is a mischievous confusion as it paves the way to substitute a artistic awareness for genuine community. It is quite possible for two people to have a reciprocal appreciation for one another, even to have an intense admiration for one another; without truly meeting as I and Thou. In other words it is possible for us to have an artistic appreciation for another's uniqueness without truly revealing ourselves. It is both knowing and being known which characterises an *I-Thou* relationship[18].

We see then that Buber, by allowing the term *I-Thou* to be used to describe a relationship with a non-personal object, leaves himself vulnerable to the kinds of interpretations of *I-Thou* by psychotherapeutic thinkers of which Friedman is so critical. Macmurray, in contrast, by distinguishing the intellectual and emotional modes of reflection avoids this conceptual confusion. Macmurray goes on to assert the primacy of the practical. It is through action, he asserts—through the meeting of the resistance of the Other—that the material world is met and known as existent; it is in action, not reflection, that our existence as persons is rooted.

The notion that reality is known primarily through practice, rather than reflectively, is crucial to Macmurray's philosophical stance. Macmurray, in distinguishing action as a major axis of experience, presents the *I-It* of reflection as the negative pole on a continuum set against the practical meeting of *I and Other*—not against the mutuality of *I and Thou* as Buber sometimes does. We shall examine the implications of this understanding later in this paper. First let us turn to the question, which was raised earlier, as to whether an *I-Thou* relationship is possible in the psychotherapeutic setting.

6 I-Thou and the therapeutic telationship

The question, In what way, if at all, is an *I-Thou* relationship possible in a therapeutic relationship? has exercised considerable debate amongst psychotherapeutic thinkers. In this area, like other areas of his philosophy, Buber is ambiguous. In his famous conversations with Rogers, he appears to take the position that it is inappropriate to use the term *I-Thou* in the therapeutic context as the interaction between client and therapist is fundamentally not between equals[19]. He argues that the therapist's role sets limits on the relationship and thus does not permit the full mutuality of true dialogue. Yet later in the same conversation he appears also to recognise the therapeutic value of *I-Thou* meeting. Buber's stance is nothing if not ambivalent.

It needs but a dip into recent psychotherapeutic journals to reveal that the confusion over the meaning of Buber's legacy of thought in this arena is still a live issue[20]. One such example of evident confusion is to be found in the recent debate between dialogic gestalt practitioners, Beaumont and Yontef (*British Gestalt Journal*). Beaumont argues that *I-Thou* 'does sometimes occur between therapist and client' and in the same article that 'the *I-Thou* is not possible' because 'the situation of the therapist and client are different'[22]. After being taken to task over this by Yontef, Beaumont explains that what he really means is that when an I-Thou moment occurs 'the meeting is between two humans, not the meeting of therapist and client'[23].

In this debate Yontef appears to take a more pragmatic view. Following, Hycner he sees the *I-It* and *I-Thou* as moments in an ongoing dialogue between therapist and client, and does not share Beaumont's rather purist notion that the *I-Thou* cannot be the basis for therapy. To this debate Staemmler adds yet another perspective[24], asserting that it is in fact rare for the full mutuality of an *I-Thou* relation to be established in a therapeutic relation—except perhaps towards the end of therapy, and what really matters is the *I-Thou* orientation of the therapist. He calls it offering *I-Thou* contact[25].

We see then that we have a conceptual minefield. At the crux of the confusion would seem to be the more general question: 'How, if at all can an individual be immediately and spontaneously available in a relationship which is also limited by a socially defined role?' I believe that at the heart of this problem is a fundamental philosophical issue which Buber does not adequately address, namely the nature of the relationship between *I-Thou* and *I-It* , that is between personal and social relationships. Allied to this, Buber's lack of a clear distinction between an *I-Thou* relationship and an *I-Thou* attitude, has added another layer of confusion over this issue Let us first, however, consider the more fundamental question of the formal connection between the two primary words Thou and It. Once again we shall contrast Buber's ideas with those of Macmurray.

7 I-Thou and I-It

On examining Buber's work we find that his understanding on this issue varies over time. Initially he is content to distinguish the *I-It* and

In his later works, Buber begins to talk paradoxically of 'a primal setting at a distance'[26] being the 'presupposition' of entering into relationship; that in order truly to meet, the other must also have been 'set at a distance . . [and] . . become an independent opposite'[27]: in other words, he begins to see distance as a precondition for meeting.

This shift of emphasis, or 'second thought' as Rotenstreich prefers to call it[28], brings into question the primacy of relationship apparently so crucial to Buber. The philosophical question as Rotenstreich sees it is this: if distance is the precondition for relation then which is primary—*I-Thou* or *I-It*, or are we presented with an irreconcilable dualism? Buber does not answer this question, but rather is guilty, according to Rotenstreich of 'oscillating between the primacy of relationship and the primacy of I'[29]. Rotenstreich sees Buber's understanding of *I-It* to be a reflective one.. To set at a distance is to maintain a reflective attitude he argues. Buber thus creates for himself the philosophical problem of explaining the relationship between *I-It* and *I-Thou* in terms of the transition from reflection to mutuality; a problem described by Rotenstreich as the most important critical point in Buber's philosophy.

From Macmurray's standpoint, Buber's difficulty arises because he fails to recognise the primary significance of action[32], and so is biased to a reflective understanding of relationship. For Macmurray, the problem is wrongly formulated: the mutuality of *I-Thou* more properly has as its opposite correlate, not a reflective *I-It*, but rather the *I-It* of *practical* relations between persons characterised by lack of mutuality and impersonality. Buber is seen as culpable of the error of confusing *I-It* as a matter of reflection—the self distanced from the world-as-object—and *I-It* as a quality of relationship where persons are distanced from one another by a social context. If we adopt Macmurray's understanding then, the question we have to ask is, How can we understand the connection between, on the one hand a spontaneous and immediate *I-Thou* and on the other, an *I-It* which is stereotypical, functionally defined and/or bounded my shared norms?

8 The form of the personal

Macmurray, like Buber sees our existence as persons, to be located in the mutuality of *I* and *Thou*. For Macmurray, purely social *I-It* relations are arrived at by withdrawal from the fullness of meeting, by a withdrawal into a negative mode of relating[33]. In a fully personal relationship, however—what Buber calls dialogic encounter—the *I-It* does not simply disappear: the paradox which Macmurray encounters is that an *I-Thou* relationship always *includes* the social *I-It* relation which logically opposes it. Macmurray's profound insight is to understand that this apparent contradiction—the necessity for *I-Thou* to include *I-It*—is not so much a strange enigma, but rather as an expression of a fundamental formal pattern which is not only inherent in personal relationships, but underpins all personal experience: he calls it the Form of the Personal.

From Macmurray's perspective, the issue of whether an *I-Thou* relationship is possible in therapy, dissolves. An *I-Thou* relation always takes place in a social world: we always relate with one another in a shared world of social defined meanings, in other words in an *I-It* world. Whether I am a shop keeper, spouse, friend or therapist—there is a social context which structures our meeting which may be functional or normative. This is the necessary structured and predictable ground which allows the figure of our meeting. Indeed it may be argued, and I think rightly, that it is the very clarity of boundaries in a therapeutic relationship which paradoxically enables the possibility of a deep intimacy between therapist and client.

Macmurray's argument is that inherent in the structure of personal relationship is a curiously paradoxical logical pattern which can not be expressed adequately by traditional forms of thought. In purely formal terms it may be represented by the statement: The positive includes and is constituted by its own negative. By positive, Macmurray is referring to those aspects of experience which allow the fullness of reality to be encountered, whereas the negative refers to the fields of experience which deny that fullness of meeting, i.e. they negate it. We see that in this formulation, Macmurray is seeking to generalise in logical terms, the understanding—to use Buber's terminology—that distance is a precondition for meeting, that the *I-Thou* includes and is constituted by the *I-It*.

9 Action and relationship

Crucial to Macmurray's thinking is the notion that our existence as persons is rooted in action as well as in personal relationship; these are, if you like, the main axes of personal experience. According to Macmurray, the Form of the Personal allows us not only to conceive the structure of relationship, but also to represent in reflection the fundamental unity of experience which is given to us as self evident in ordinary practical living. He argues that in the field of action, the seeming contradiction that the meeting of *I and Other* necessarily depends on the distance implied by the reflective, *I-It* knowledge of the world as object, is simply another expression of this distinctive unity pattern.

But Macmurray does not stop there: he goes on to propose that in both these key fields of experience—action and relationship—there is not one, but two *modes of distancing:* in other words the negative pole of the Form of the Personal is in fact

both these key fields of experience—action and relationship—there is not one, but two *modes of distancing:* in other words the negative pole of the Form of the Personal is in fact bi-polar in nature. This bifurcation of the negative pole arise, according to Macmurray, from the need to represent in consciousness the distinction of *means* and *ends*, and appears, as I have sought to express it, as the distinction of *separateness* and *togetherness*[35].

We have already met this distinction in the contrast of intellectual and emotional modes of reflection, the one being founded on a stance of disinterested enquiry aimed at knowing the object as *fact* (the world as means), and the other by an intimacy with the object of reflection and a striving to discover its *value* by focusing on that which allows the thing to be known in its particularity. Whereas intellect provides knowledge of the world as *means to and end*, emotion provide knowledge of the world as *an end in itself.* We need both of these kinds knowledge in order to act effectively (we need to know what to do as well as how to do it).

This bipolar negative of the Form of the Personal—the distinction of separateness and togetherness—manifests itself in our interaction with others in the social world, as the distinction between functional and normative *I-It* relationships. Whereas the functional mode establishes order by defining the difference between self and others on utilitarian grounds (separateness), the normative seeks to maintain social cohesion by suppressing differences and focusing on commonality (togetherness). Neither of these I-It modes of relationship involves the true meeting I and You in community, for only where fellowship is based on mutual trust rather than rules or norms, can the full reality of other persons be met.

10 I-Thou orientation

We have argued that from Macmurray's perspective, purely on philosophical grounds there is no inconsistency in a therapist and client also being persons in *I-Thou* relation. I would agree with Staemmler, however, that the full mutuality of an *I-Thou* relation is not likely to be the main character of a therapeutic relationship—especially in the early stages[36]. The level of intimacy and mutuality which is achieved must depend both on the attitude of the therapist and also indeed the openness of the client to the relationship which is offered. So the question arises, does it make sense, as Staemmler and others do, to talk about inviting an *I-Thou* relationship by offering an *I-Thou* orientation to others.

Macmurray identifies what he call a communal disposition[37]: a fundamental orientation to the world which intends the community of *I-Thou* and is motivated by love. This is roughly parallel to Buber's notion of an I-Thou attitude which has recently been adopted by dialogic Gestalt thinkers as a way of understanding the therapists stance in a therapeutic relationship. Macmurray contrasts his communal disposition with the bipolar negative dispositions which he labels, in their ideal forms as, submissive and aggressive. Again we find the structure of the Form of the Personal. These negative orientations are, according to Macmurray, motivated by fear of the other—they represent attempts to resolve the problem of the conflict of wills without truly meeting; they are *I-It* orientations.

Here we find the influence of psychodynamic thinking on Macmurray's perspective. Macmurray particularly acknowledges the work of Ian Suttie. The submissive and aggressive dispositions have clear parallels to Freud's contrast of masochistic and sadistic orientation, expressed more simply in the tradition of transactional analysis as the distinction of *I'm not OK— You're OK* versus *I'm OK—You're not OK*. Macmurray differs somewhat however from traditional psychodynamic approaches: he insists that these negative orientations—the submissive and aggressive—though destructive to the integrity of the person when isolated in the negative phase, are also paradoxically essential elements of the whole person[38].

Macmurray argues that a communal disposition, or *I-Thou* orientation, requires—indeed is constituted by—both the separateness and the togetherness implied respectively by the aggressive and submissive dispositions[39]. The difference is that when love—rather than fear of the other—is the primary motivation of an individual, the two negative dispositions become integrated and transformed in the service of true meeting. They remain negative because their contribution the meeting is to provide the distance which is the necessary condition for meeting.

11 The core conditions

There is a striking similarity between Macmurray's understanding of relational dispositions and Roger's notion of congruence, empathy and unconditional positive regard which he considers to be the core conditions in a therapeutic relationship[40]. Congruence may be viewed as the therapists assertion of herself as a unique and distinct being (separateness), whereas empathy is concerned with the capacity to enter into anothers frame of reference and to think and feel as they do (togetherness). Without unconditional positive regard, these could be stances of aggressive self assertion and submissive confluence. From Macmurray's perspective, what balances and integrates the two opposed orientations is the third condition, the requirement for unconditional positive regard, the ability to accept completely—indeed to love—the client as they are.

Now it is not only in the person-centred therapy that we find this tripartite approach to relationship. Gestalt therapists are

increasingly using Buber's terms confirming, presence and inclusion as essential components of dialogic relationship[41]. The correspondence between Buber's notion of confirming and Roger's unconditional positive regard (or acceptance) was noted and discussed in the Rogers/Buber dialogue. Presence and inclusion do not have a simple correspondence to congruence and empathy; however, I would argue that the concepts do illustrate the polarity of separateness and togetherness as the conditions for meeting (which is neither separateness nor togetherness).

We see then that Roger's and Buber's understanding of relationship are somewhat parallel to Macmurray's. What Macmurray adds, as well as conceptual coherence, is his understanding that relationship is practical rather than merely reflective, thus allowing the primary motives of love and fear to emerge as the elements of experience which distinguish and *I-Thou* from and *I-It* relationship. From this perspective, the therapeutic task can be understood as one of providing the conditions which allow a client to replace a fear oriented disposition to the world by one based on love and trust.

12 Spirituality

We are led to an important field of Buber's thought about which we have skirted in our discussion of his work so far: namely spirituality. For Buber, God—the Eternal Thou—was not an optional extra, but rather an integral part of his philosophy. Crucial to Buber's thinking is his understanding that a true dialogic encounter happens by grace: the encounter is also a meeting with God. To miss religion from a discussion of Buber is a serious omission. Buber's ideas, however, in being transposed into the field of psychotherapy, have largely lost their spiritual foundation.

Macmurray, like Buber, constructed his philosophy from a deeply religious perspective. He argues that in the profound intimacy of relationship there is a universal quality: in knowing another, we also know God as a Universal You. For Macmurray, however, it is not necessary to have a *concept* of God to be religious; a religious life is primarily one which expresses the *practical* intention to live in fellowship with others. For Macmurray our full human nature—our wholeness—is expressed when we live our lives with a faith rooted in the practical reality of personal relationships.

We see then that for both Buber and Macmurray, psychological growth is also, in a sense, spiritual growth. The *I-Thou* attitude is fundamentally a religious attitude; to live in community with other is to live in community with God. This clearly raises interesting issues for the practice of psychotherapy, not least of all why main stream schools of psychotherapy have, until recently, maintained such a compelling taboo on the subject of spirituality. Unfortunately, much as I am tempted, there is not space here to consider these issues in more detail.

14 Beyond Buber

The context for the philosophical discussion—my critique of Buber from the standpoint of Macmurray—has been the arena of psychotherapy. Now therapists are at the sharp end of personal experience, knowing relationship often at its most intense and desperate: for the therapist, the nature of personal relationship is not a matter of abstract philosophical speculation, but rather is a very real and lived reality. Buber's work has clearly inspired psychotherapeutic thinkers. Although in this paper I have been focusing on critical aspects, I would argue that many of Buber's insights have been applied sensitively and intuitively in a therapeutic context *in spite of* the inconsistencies and anomalies. My argument is that the deficiencies in Buber's thought should be identified and faced, and a more adequate understanding sought.

I believe that Macmurray's thinking—and particularly his profound understanding of the structure of personal experience, offers a way forward—beyond Buber—to a deeper understanding of not only of the therapeutic relationship but also of the relationships which are the nexus of everyday practical life. Macmurray's logical structure—a positive which contains and is constituted by its own negative—may sound impossibly abstruse on first acquaintance; I would maintain that this is a problem of novelty rather than of inherent obscurity.

It could be argued that Macmurray's philosophy is really no more than a formalisation of an understanding which many thinkers, including Buber, Marcel—even Marx in his notion of alienation—have moved towards intuitively. I would agree with this up to a point. However, there is a radical character in Macmurray's philosophy which should not be underestimated: he profoundly rocks the philosophical boat. Perhaps partly for this reason—his radicalism—Macmurray was almost completely ignored by the academic community in his life time: certainly his insistence on the primacy of the practical did not win him friends amongst his academic peers.

Now, exactly 20 years after his death there is a gradual—almost grudging it seems to me—beginnings of an appreciation of Macmurray's stature as a philosopher. It is my hunch that it will primarily be through the effort to apply his thought in practical areas of life, such as psychotherapy, that the deeper significance of his insights will be discovered.

Hale,
Cheshire.

Notes:

1. Buber, *Between Man and Man*, p.182.
2. Friedman, *Martin Buber*, p.268.
3. Feuerbach, *Basic Principles of the Philosophy of the Future*, p.344.
4. ibid. p.345.
5. Quoted from Karl Heim (1931) in Buber, *Between Man and Man*, p.182.
6. Buber, *I and Thou*, p.3.
7. ibid. p.3.
8. Buber, *Distance and Relation*, p.71.
9. Buber, *Between Man and Man*, p. 204.
10. ibid. p.205.
11. Friedman, *Worlds of Existentialism*, p.513.
12. ibid. p.156.
13. ibid. p.367.
14. Buber, *I and Thou*, p.7. In defence of Buber it could be argued that he is referring to theEternal Thou in the tree—a spiritual dimension, 'in each Thou we address the eternal Thou', p.6.
15. *I and Thou*, p.7.
16. Macmurray, *Reason and Emotion*, p. 105.
17. Macmurray uses the term I-You rather than I-Thou as Buber is usually translated.
18. Macmurray, *Reason and Emotion*, Chap. 1.
19. Rogers, *Dialogue with Martin Buber*, p.41.
20. Cissna and Anderson (1994), Freidman (1994), Beaumont (1993), Yontef (1994).
21. Beaumont (1993).
22. ibid.
23. Beaumont (1994).
24. F. Staemmler (1994).
25. ibid.
26. Buber, *Distance and Relation*, p. 36.
27. ibid. p. 71.
28. Rotenstreich, *Immediacy and Its Limits*, p.35.
29. ibid. p.43.
30. ibid. p.37.
31. ibid. p.38.
32. Macmurray, *The Self as Agent*, p. 84.
33. Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*, Chap. 1.
34. Macmurray, *The Self as Agent*, p. 100.
35. ibid. Chapter 1.
36. Staemmler (1994).
37. Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*, Chap. 5.
38. ibid. pp.104-12.
39. Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*, p. 112.
40. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person*, p.61.
41. Hycner (1985).

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TOWARDS A NEW METAPHYSICS (2)

G. G. Constandache

3. LUCIAN BLAGA ABYSSAL NOOLOGY AND SUPPES PROBABILISTIC EMPIRICISM

Probabilism has been known ever since Antiquity and it covers the intermediary position between philosophical dogmatism and Academic Scepticism. Formulated by Arcesilaos (316-240BC) and Carneades (219-129BC), the doctrine of probabilism denies the existence of any more or less possible truths. In other words, probablilistic scepticism takes nothing for granted, but uses only problematic judgments: 'it may be as follows . . . , it may not be as follows . . . ' In contrast to negative dogmatism (actual scepticism) which entirely rejects the possibility of any cognition and forwards many-staged proofs to this end, probabilism avoids categorical assertions. Such terms as 'it may . . .' 'it is possible . . . .', 'it is probable . . . ' are always in probabilists' judgments, who consider them to be beyond truth and error.

> Thus, avoiding false opinions, we approach things without any illusions, free of any passion and of any errors which they can cause. Released from illusions, we can more unerringly attain the final goal suggested by the sage: ataraxia [1].

namely tranquillity of soul, otherwise called that indifference which leads to happiness.

Hegel stressed that, in contrast to ancient scepticism which questioned the reality of everything, modern scepticism accepts only the reality of the material world. That applies to some contemporary doctrines as well. For example, Patrick Suppes proposes a probabilistic metaphysics as an attempt to organise the most general, and at the same time, the most significant aspects of existence. Convinced that the old dogmatic, theologically orientated philosophy has been replaced by a philosophical and metaphysical dogmatics in the name of science, Suppes suggests that we use probabilistic concepts in metaphysics and epistemology and replace logical empiricism with probabilistic empiricism [2]. His criticism is aimed at both determinism and the demand for certainty, for completeness and the unity of scientific knowledge and common sense.

Lucian Blaga found in the calculus of probabilities the 'most natural and resilient means' that Galilean and Newtonian science had been offered for assimilating 'empirical regularities'. Blaga pointed out that, in fact, science had noticed ever since ancient times certain empirical regularities. However, because the calculus of probabilities had not been discovered, there was hardly any possibility of statistically expressing them. Nevertheless, 'no consideration prevents us nowadays from admitting that, in the future, physics will show an alternation, unlimited in principle, of stages of precision and of statistical probability'[3]. In other words, the threshold, where experiment allows the deduction of precise laws, becomes inoperative for a certain period of time, which fact implies its replacement with experiments that prompt the use of statistical laws.

Blaga's assertion that 'in philosophy we encounter the pretext-experience while in science the instance-experiment'[4], may be considered as a less sophisticated expression of a previously expressed idea: 'paradisaic cognition[5] has a general significance, circumscribed by its destiny of reducing the latent mysteries of existence through abstraction; Luciferian cognition[6] has an irreducible meaning, being circumscribed by its destiny of imposing qualitative variations on open mysteries'[7]. As in the case of alternating scientific experiments which permit the deduction of precise laws with ones which yield statistical laws, Blaga has in view the fact that 'prior to reaching the minus revelation of an open mystery[8], i.e. its radicalisation, a precautionary measure stands out, that of exhausting all the ways of plus-cognition'[9].

Luciferian Cognition was first published in 1932 and Suppes' *Probabilistic Metaphysics* in 1984. Yet there are certain similarities between them. Without arguing that Blaga anticipated Suppes, it is worth discussing those similarities. Consequently we shall dare to suggest a debate aiming at interpreting certain parallels between Suppes' metaphysical propositions and Blaga's aphorisms.

If we admit that the metaphysician's perpetual fate is to denounce all those fraudulent substitutes that are incessantly put forth to mankind as genuine truths, then we must acknowledge that the main benefit of any metaphysics resides in its negative or protesting aspect. In

this respect, we can retain the following sentence as a thorough expression of the Empiricist creed: 'The theory of rationalism has an instrinsically probabilistic character'[10]. In contrast Blaga's 'abyssal noology' (the study of our deepest categories, presuppositions or intellectual frameworks) is focused upon the double function of categories:

> throughout paradisaic cognition, intuition is subject to categorical concepts . . . There is even in Luciferian cognition a striving for agreement between ideas and the visible facts of the problem that has been raised. Yet this agreement is indirectly attained by the sinuous and eccentric course of theory'[11].

As a matter of fact, in the metaphysician-poet's last aphorisms we come across a more direct answer, somewhat complementary to empirical probabilism. 'In man, instinct and reason deviate from each other with adversity. Yet by repudiating each other, they lure each other, with the aim of a reciprocal correction'[12]. For the empirical metaphysician, 'The collection of past, present and future scientific theories does not converge upon a pre-set goal, capable of offering, at its limit a comprehensive cognition of the universe'. Thus science offers us nothing more than an incomplete, and, we may say, disappointing, image for anyone who still hopes for a coherent scientific vision of the universe. The vital knot of metaphysical theory resides in the assertion that the idea of mystery is located in the inner joint of individualised knowledge. This is because the idea of mystery is the only one that breaks through or, rather, 'traverses the the fron t line of transcendental censorship'[13] Blaga seems to suggest to us the beginning of an explanation: 'Any theory challenges reality'[14]. Indeed, we always keep away from a global scientific conception, capable of integrating the multitude of aspects in the physical and organic universe, to say nothing of psychological and social phenomena.

Suppes insists that 'sciences are characterised—as far as their languages, objects and methods are concerned—more by pluralism than by unity'[15]. This explains why man necessarily strives for the level of metaphysical reflection, of superhypotheses in his attempt to fill in the numberless gaps in the images of the world suggested by scientists. As Blaga noted: 'As long as we are not the holders of the Absolute Truth, every individual is rightly entitled to the creative liberty of searching for it, each in his own way'[16].

Man needs immediate certainties on which to organise his life and, consequently his deeds, since time is permanently pressing us and we have no possibility of expecting the completion of a complete, scientific image of the universe. Thus Blaga was right to conclude that 'Men should be systematically educated to live in the problematical. They live too persistently inside the illusion of solutions'[17]. A similar conclusion can also be found in Suppes: 'The certainty of cognition—in the sense of the psychological, direct character of logical truth or of the overall accuracy of measurements—is unattainable'[18]. Further on Blaga justifies his assertion as follows: 'Intelligence is relativistic by its own nature. Both superintelligence and stupidity tend to speak out categorically or absolutely'[19]. In other words, objectivity or decentring of the self requires an education orientated to the past. For Blaga this is an imperative of research: 'When training oneself in a particular science, one must needs learn its history as well. This cures one of any dogmatism'[20].

On the other hand, any genuine thinker engaged in science, when trying to go into details, is spurred, sooner or later, by some inevitable urge to approach his problems on the level of metaphysics. This is because, as Blaga explains, 'The solutions given by philosophy are never true ones; they are, however, elements that lead to the gradual deepening of problems'[21]. If we adopt Suppes' position, then neither for the scientist are the results of his efforts so certain: 'Causality has a probabilistic character, not a deterministic one. So, there is no incompatibility between the contingent in nature and the existence of valid causal laws'. We need a general concept of man, of his role according to his place in the universe (a metaphysical problem), if only to select from among diverse technical projects or among various political programmes. In order to classify and systematise, we always have to possess at least one basic criterion. In Blaga's opinion: 'The advice given by various philosophers is reduced to a single one. Live your life on a level full of causes, not on one full of occasions!'[22]. We, however, should not cherish such high illusions, because, Blaga stresses, as if in opposition to Suppes, 'Man's cognition is always anthropomorphic; even the most abstract phrasing of the idea of causality contains a bit of anthropomorphism'[23].

Maybe, without being aware of it, every man is a metaphysician to some extent. Men, in contrast to animals which are attached to current realities, live by a series of programmes that ceaselessly succeed each other just like the stages of a vital project, and this situation obliges them to surpass experience and the limited results of science. The extension of rules or laws means nothing more than the outlining of some very elementary metaphysical systems'. Technique tackles a series of possibilities of nature which the latter can hardly achieve by itself. To achieve such possibilities of its own, nature seems to be waiting for man's creation'[24]. For Suppes, who, just like Aristotle, considers matter as a 'pure potentiality', the conclusion is, 'Our concentration on matter must contain an intrinsically probabilistic element'[25]. Blaga invites us to resort to the archaeology of cognition: 'The term MATTER is full of mythological resonances; it comes from an age where matter

was considered to be the maternal principle of the world or even a maternal divinity'[26].

Finally, I am going to quote the first metaphysical proposition in Suppes' list: 'The fundamental laws of natural phenomena are essentially of a probabilistic character, and only then of a deterministic one'[26]. We find here what Blaga asserts aphoristically: 'The real is in possibility, which for an indeterminate time, changes all the other possibilities into impossibilities'[28].

If metaphysics represents a peculiar modality of philosophical reflection, exceeding in value and finality the conclusions of science, we should not think that metaphysical reflection claims to replace the scientist's efforts in his own field of activity. Even when the metaphysician, pushed by the urgency of suggesting some norm of behaviour, does nothing except to extend the results of the science of his day. On the other hand, we shall try, without any chance, to find some genuine philosophy, some metaphysics respectively, where the intention of suggesting an image of the universe does not bring any benefit, not only because of the advance of scientific knowledge, but also because of spiritual and religious inspiration. As Blaga himself wrote: 'Common experience is the result of the contact with the given world via the power of the mind. Philosophical experience results from contact with those philosophies which were conceived and contrived on the ocean shore of MYSTERY'[29].

The empirical metaphysician admits that 'the mastering of language and linguistic performance, from their phonetic, grammatical, semantic and prosodic points of view, are inwardly probabilistic'[30]. In a briefer yet more comprehensive phrasing, the metaphysician poet confides to us, 'There is an implicit metaphysics in every language. Linguists are obliged to find out this metaphysics, more than was done in the past and with more accurate equipment' [31].

To come to a conclusion, we must say that, in contrast to absolutist naturalism which pleads for a truth that is independent of human nature, probabilistic empiricism belongs to relativism, which accepts a merely human truth, dependent on the features of the human spirit. Blaga himself belongs to relativism for he insists on that aspect of free creation which is evident in human cognition. 'Man brings the cosmos closer to him and manages to live in it as in a familiar environment only because of anthropomorphism'. It stands to reason that any science which is human, is relative. Neither are our sensory perceptions mere copies of the real but they are conditioned by our psycho-physiological organisation.

If we consider that any theory bears a purely human impress, standing only for a creation that is meant for humanity, then can we talk about a criterion of truth, or at least of orientation, that corresponds to a theory? The answer of the metaphysician would probably be that we should relate ourselves to the higher or lower impact that results from the general development which may guide humanity to an ever better handling of the material world, to the benefit of achieving spiritual ideals. The difficulty in this, however, stems from the fact that, according to Blaga, 'Our age has succeeded in altering matter-of-course things into problematic ones' [32].

As long as metaphysical creation can be considered as only in part an extension of data provided by experience, it means that it resorts to another, better defined, perspective than that of science. Just as Suppes recognises, metaphysics has a methodology meant for a specific study: 'the multitude of absolute presuppositions of a given group of thinkers in a certain historical period'[33]. In keeping with his empirical probabilism, he declares, however, that 'there is no clear division of the class of metaphysical assertions'. The reason for this may be because the dividing line between metaphysics and science does not run along the gap between the inside and the outside of man but within the cognising subject. 'Philosophy throughout its history, from the very beginning up to now, is a recurrent revival of anthropomorphism in its ever more ethereal and complicated forms. Besides, philosophy is also a criticism of anthropomorphism, steadily repeated in ever sharper and more lucid forms. Philosophy as a whole and all its historical development, is positioned between an unconscious and a conscious anthropomorphism. Philosophy must not grow satisfied with the hope of ever being released from this circuit'[34].

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1. C. Tsatsos, *Filosofia sociala a vechilor greci/ The Social Philosophy of the Ancient Greeks*, (Bucharest, Univers, 1979, p.288).
2. *Probabilistic Metaphysics* (Oxford and New York, Blackwell, 1984).
3. *Experimentul si spiritul matematic/ Experiment and the Mathematical Spirit* (Bucharest, Ed. St., 1969), p.235.
4. *Despre constiinta filosofica/On philosophical consciousness* (Bucharest, Ed. Facla, 1974, p.57).
5. By this Blaga means the self-confident exercise of our everyday powers of knowing, in,as it were, a cognitive Eden before the Fall.
6. This is Blaga's term for the introduction of doubts and uncertainties into our formerly confident knowing, which then yields a higher level of cognition.
7. *Cunoastera Luciferica/Luciferian Cognition*, Vol. II. of the *Trilogia cunoasterii/Trilogy of Cognition* (Bucharest, Humanitas, 1993) p.216.

Continued on p. 104

SOME NOTES ON POLANYI'S ECONOMICS

R.T. Allen

While collecting, for the selection about to be published[1], those of Michael Polanyi's numerous articles on non-scientific subjects which were not published in his books, I was struck both by the large number on economics and related subjects and the fact that, among the many subsequent publications dealing with his work, only Prof. Paul Craig Roberts, now at the Cato Institute in Washington, has taken up Polanyi's writings upon economics. As it turned out, some half-dozen of Polanyi's articles on economics passed the tests for inclusion in the volume and make up at least a quarter of it. In this paper I propose briefly to put on record the scope and significance of those papers, plus *Full Employment and Free Trade*.

In the collection of his papers in the Library of the University of Chicago, there is little, before about 1935, to show that Polanyi had any continuing interests in political and social affairs. Yet when, at that date, he made two or three visits to the Soviet Union[2], he collected facts and figures about the Soviet economy and published his findings and estimates[3]. I think that this achievement, given all the difficulties involved, shows that Polanyi had an existing interest in such matters and a firm grasp of economic principles. Certainly he had the support of such notable economists as John Jewkes, Colin Clark (later Sir Colin) and Lionel (later Lord) Robbins. Because the details are obviously dated, that study did not appear in my selection, neither did another technical paper, 'The settling down of capital and the trade cycle'[4].

His next venture was the production of a diagrammatic film and then a second[5] in order in order to explain Keynes' theory of how the money-cycle operates within and upon the economy, causing expansions and contractions, as investments pump money in and savings take it out. Polanyi was concerned that Soviet propaganda, promoting the idea of a planned economy and showing films of factories and farms producing goods and crops, implied that production was a purely technical matter and unrelated to prevailing economic conditions. His diagrammatic films were meant to counter that propaganda and to defend a free economy and a free society by explaining to the general public by graphical means the fundamental facts about the circulation of money, its growth and contraction, and the consequent effects upon economic activity. Here we see, what seems to me to be something of an independent interest in economic matters, joining with his long-standing, though apparently dormant, political ones[6]. For the great threat to free economics and politics in the 1930's, and during the War itself, came from the experience of the Great Depression and the claims of Socialism and Communism to be able to overcome it by economic planning. Likewise in Germany, Hitler offered a way out of mass unemployment.

Polanyi later elaborated and published his version of Keynes' theories in *Free Trade and Full Employment*. The significance of that work is that, as Prof. Roberts has remarked, it showed that a Keynesian policy towards unemployment did not require any *dirigiste* or collectivist policies, such as public works and subsidies to particular industries[7], as in fact practised by governments claiming to be inspired by Keynes. Polanyi explicitly argued against any such policies and for the 'principle of neutrality' (pp. 29, 132). In times of depression, when savings exceed investment and so create an excess demand for money, the government should supply that demand by a budget deficit, not by 'loans' to be repaid, but by lowering taxes, and, conversely, when there is an inflationary boom, the government should reduce the supply of money by increasing taxation, the level of expenditure remaining broadly the same throughout. (Today's monetarists argue for the same policy but to be implemented via changes in the rate of interest.) In fact, whatever Keynes himself proposed, his ideas were taken to require additional government spending, and thus on objects of the government's choice, and that, affirms Prof. Roberts, is why Polanyi's book was ignored, though favourably reviewed by Roy (later Sir Roy) Harrod.

In that book Polanyi also showed how the Soviet government eliminated mass unemployment by monetary expansion, and *not* by central planning, and so had the Nazi régime in Germany and not by public works and rearmament. He also gave clear warnings about undue expansion and consequent inflation, and the futility of attempting to suppress the results by control of prices, warnings which were ignored by governments for the next thirty years or more.

Polanyi's other concern in matters of economics was to demonstrate that there cannot be any such thing as a centrally planned economy, because of the limited 'span of control' that any one mind can have over what is to be determined. All industrial economies are 'polycentric', with decisions necessarily distributed over many individual centres (consumers and managers) who mutually and spontaneously adjust their own to others'. What in fact happened in allegedly planned economies, after

Lenin's disastrous attempt to banish money and markets (later called 'War Communism' as if it were an emergency measure and not the real thing), was that the 'planners' set targets (increases of *x* % based on the previous period's figures) and allocated capital (the one commodity in which there was no market), while the managers of the various enterprises determined each for himself how he might fulfil his own and bargained, bartered and contracted with others and with the labour force to obtain what was needed. Underproduction of one item could be compensated by overproduction of another, which would not be the case if production were genuinely planned from the centre. The result was inevitably goods poor in quality and short and intermittent in supply[8]. Even in 1971, the Penguin *Dictionary of Economics* implied that the Soviet and Chinese economies were in fact centrally planned, apart from certain sectors such as agriculture.

Finally, in 'The determinants of social action' (1969, but written in 1950), Polanyi demonstrated that any rational economic order must include the definition and allocation of polycentric powers, tasks, tests, rewards and accession (to powers), and thus must have a body of civil and commercial law. The Soviet economy differed only in its clumsy centralisation of investment, though individual enterprises also invested their own funds.

Loughborough, Leics.

Notes:

1. *Society, Economics, Philosophy: Selected articles by Michael Polanyi*, Transaction Publishers, Rutgers, New Brunswick (NJ), 1996. The book contains a full bibliography and short summaries of items not included in it or in Polanyi's books.
2. To give lectures to the Ministry of Heavy Industries, I believe. I do not know how many visits he made or what he spoke about.
3. 'USSR economics—fundamental data, system and spirit', *Manchester School of Economic and Social Studies*, VI, Nov. 1935, pp. 67-89; republished as *USSR Economics* (Manchester, Manchester UP, 1936) and in *CF*.
4. *Manchester School of Economic and Social Studies*, IX, No. 2, Nov. 1938, pp. 153-69.
5. *Money*, 1938, and *Unemployment and Money*, 1940. See items 8, 13 and 14 in the Bibliography in *Society, Economics, Philosophy*.
6. In Hungary Polanyi published 'A békeszerzökhöz' ('To the peacemakers', 1917) and 'Uj szkepticizmus' ('New scepticism', 1919), but nothing from then until 1935. Translations, by Dr Endre Nagy, of those two articles are included in *Society, Economics, Philosophy*.
7. 'Idealism in public choice theory' (*J. of Monetary Economics*, 4, 1978, pp.603-15. I am grateful to Prof. Roberts for this reference and details of some of his other writings.
8. See *LL*, Chaps. 8-10, and, in *Society, Economics, Philosophy*, 'Collectivist planning' (in *CF*), 'Profits and private enterprise', and 'Towards a theory of conspicuous production'.

   In their *Marx's Theory of Exchange, Alienation and Crisis* (Stanford, Hoover Institution Press, 1973), Prof. Roberts and Matthew A. Stephenson demonstrate that by 'alienation' Marx meant nothing more or less than 'commodity production', production, not for immediate use within the same household, manor or industrial concern, but for sale on the market, and that the economic policy of the Soviet Union was the result of trying to suppress, by means of the State monopoly of capital and its allocation, the unpalatable truth that the Soviet economy was one of 'commodity production'.

   In *Meltdown: Inside the Soviet Economy* (Washington (DC), The Cato Institute, 1990) he and Karen LaFollette used the information, at last publicly available under *glasnost*, to give chapter and verse to what Polanyi had argued earlier about the actual results of 'the plan', the 'gross output indicator', which specifies, in terms of volume, surface area, weight or number, what each unit of production was to produce, and so ignored totally what consumers wanted.

   In their final chapter, with reference to Polanyi's account of moral inversion, they comment on the failure, with few exceptions, of Western visitors and commentators to see and understand what was happening. Whereas all Western achievements and those who acknowledged them, had to be denounced in the name of 'objectivity' motivated by indignation, the Soviet régime and its apologists went uncriticised for to do so would be to affirm one's own country and thus incur suspicions of dishonesty and lack of sophistication. They conclude by asking why, if material interests determine history, is the Communist Party giving up its own power, and by hoping that Western scholarship may now improve by riding itself of Marxist modes of explanation, which have worsened our characters by making us more of what we think ourselves to be.

   See also P.C. Roberts, 'The polycentric Soviet Economy', *J. of Law and Economics*, XII, April 1969.

CRITICAL NOTICE

COMPREHENDING CHRISTIAN TRUTH

by Julian W. Ward

R.T. Allen: *Transcendence and Immanence in the Philosophy of Michael Polanyi and Christian Theism*
Rutherford Studies in Contemporary Theology, Vol. 5, Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1992.

This study is based on the author's doctoral dissertation, which was submitted to the University of London in 1982. It has two eminent characteristics. It expounds Polanyi's epistemology, ontology, philosophy of language and his religious views in such a clear manner that it makes this book an excellent introduction to Polanyi's subtle and complex masterpiece *Personal Knowledge*. Allen has also written a brief introduction entitled *Polanyi* (*Thinkers of Our Time*, The Claridge Press, 1990) but this larger book has more extended expositions and gives a clearer understanding of the significance of Polany's thought. Secondly, Allen explains how Polanyi's philosophy can be used to explicate the central doctrines of the Christian faith and thereby to throw new light on them. This is no mean achievement and it shows the fruitfulness of Polanyi's thought in being applied to theology in a way that Polanyi did not anticipate. In this capacity of imparting unexpected new understanding it conforms to Polanyi's own definition of reality as that which discloses itself in unexpected ways, which he applied to scientific theories and philosophical doctrines to show that these are realities of the noosphere. It is a major thesis of the book that, at first sight, Polanyi's ontology would imply that God must be A a pantheistic World-Soul or a panentheistic finite being. But Allen shows that this is not a necessary implication of Polanyi's thought, and, indeed, in the light of his view that persons are irreducible realities that cannot be submerged into a higher reality, such concepts of God necessarily run counter to his thought.

Allen argues that Polanyi's doctrines are commensurate with classical theism, can provide a valid natural theology, and can give deepened insight into the doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation and grace. Allen has an excellent grasp of Christian orthodoxy such that the mysteries of its central doctrines are not to be dismissed as blatant contradictions. The influence of the High Anglican theologian E.L. Mascall seems evident in Allen's expositions. Many prominent Anglican theologians of recent times have been ready to reduce the doctrine of the Trinity to a description of a threefold human experience of God and to interpret the deity of Christ as divine love or grace or spirit perfectly manifest in the human Jesus. But then Christ is not ontologically divine and worship of him is idolatry. Mascall rightly call such theologians, who have held prominent university posts, Anglican Unitarians. It is refreshing to read a sound exposition of Christian doctrine in the aftermath of a stream of books from British theologians that are dismissive of the classical doctrines of the Christian faith, which were formulated by the early Church Fathers in response to the final revelation of God in the Person of Jesus Christ.

In Ch. 1 Allen outlines Polanyi's epistemology of tacit knowing and expounds his ontology of a stratified universe, which is concomitant with it by virtue the fact that all we know is by indwelling subsidiaries in order to grasp the focal object of our knowledge. We can be aware of a hierarchy of the inanimate, the mechanical, the organic, the psychological, the cultural and the personal because we ourselves embody that hierarchy within our own being. This is the restablishment of a meaningful metaphyics that accords with the practice and findings of science, and is a powerful counter to the veto laid on such an endeavour by Kant, Wittgenstein and Ayer. Its strength lies in Polanyi's identification of the two levels of human knowledge, the subsidiary and the focal such that the subsidiary is transformed by grasping the focal. This is confirmed by our common experience and by psychological experiments, and although recognized by philosophers of the past, it is amazing that its epistemological and ontological significance was not recognized long before this century. Our indwelling of what we know is the key. Allen comments, 'Polanyi has thus shown us how metaphysics can escape the Positivist charge that it brings "news from nowhere".... Polanyi has thus given us a genuine metaphysics, as Kant did not and as Lonergan's approach appears to prevent° (p. 28f).

In Ch. 2 Allen explains Polanyi's understanding of religion and how the apprehension of God involves breaking out of our existing frameworks of comprehension in a way analogous to the conversion needed for the acceptance of a radically new scientific theory. Polanyi himself was appreciative of the *via negativa* of the mysticism of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, who sought to express Christian doctrine in Neo-Platonic terms and yet there is a Kierkegaardian element in

Polanyi's awareness that religious faith involves uncertainty, anguish, surrender and hope. But Allen finds Polanyi's account of mysticism defective and thinks that Polanyi misrepresents the Christian life as one of pilgrimage with no final destination (p. 34f). Whether Polanyi believed in the objective reality of God has been debated, for he seems to liken God to an ideal value that is only a reality for us if we commit ourselves to it. This leads Allen on to a discussion of Polanyi's hotly disputed assimilation of '*P* is true° to 'I believe *p*°. This can only be made meaningful in terms of Polanyi's fallibilistic fiduciary epistemology, and a major defence of it in terms of modern Anglo-American analytic philosophy has been advanced by Andy F. Sanders in his treatise *Michael Polanyi's Post-Critical Epistemology: A Reconstruction of Some Aspects of Tacit Knowing* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1988). Polanyi thought that attempts to prove the existence of God absurd but likened Christian doctrines to axiomatization in mathematics. He held to an Augustinian and Anselmian view of theology as faith seeking understanding. This leads Allen to discuss whether Polanyi should be regarded as a Wittgensteinian fideist or whether his thought does lead to a natural theology. Polanyi was influenced by Paul Tillich in his thinking about religion but he seems to allow a place for the historical basis of the Christian faith in the events of the New Testament in a way that Tillich did not.

Allen further discussesPolanyi's Augustinian view on the relation between belief and understanding in Chapter 3 by enlarging on what he had to say about disputes in scientific controversies in which theories are visions of reality whose apprehension means crossing logical gaps. From this Allen makes the important distinction, which Polanyi did not, between theories which can be changed and more fundamental frameworks that are essential to rational human existence. Despite Polanyi's apparent repudiation of all natural theology Allen argues that it is meaningful in terms of his own thought in which the tacit components in our heuristic visions enable us to cross logical gaps and, *contra* Barth, it is essential to any theologian who participates in his subject matter by personal appropriation of it. Allen notes that Polanyi hints at two ways of constructing a valid natural theology. One would be based on man's natural propensity for a religious interpretation of reality and the other would invite men to comprehend the articulation of religious belief by sharing in worship, just as men can inhabit the worlds of mathematics and art and find realities in them by the practice of them. So Allen maintains that Polanyi's thought can be used in two ways in the service of constructing natural theology: (a) by developing his presuppositional approach for the exploration of ultimate beliefs; and (b) by using his doctrine of an ontological hierarchy and its degrees of being to reconstruct the arguments for the existence of God. So Allen proceeds to discuss the presuppositional approaches of R.G. Collingwood, Peter Berger and the moral approach of A.E. Taylor. It would have been helpful if the presuppositional apologetics of Cornelius Van Til and Alvin Plantinga had also been discussed because of their great influence amongst Reformed Christians, particularly in America. There is a presuppositional approach very akin to the Polanyian one, but apparently without any reliance on him, in *Our Natural Knowledge of God: A Prospect for Natural Theology after Kant and Barth* by Ned Wisnefske (New York: Peter Lang, 1990), which appeals to the significance of the common values of civilised life and thereby seeks to bypass the ban imposed by the two great thinkers named in the subtitle. In undertaking the second Polanyian approach Allen seeks to reconstruct the cosmological argument and Thomas Aquinas's Fourth Way in terms of contingency and degrees of reality respectively. Illuminating though this is one would have liked to have seen how the reconstructions overcome the standard objections to these arguments. The success of the movement from the finite to the infinite seems to be dependent on Allen's argument in Ch. 7 that God is the complete integration of levels. Allen goes on to enlarge on Polanyi's views on transnatural meaning and its validation in religious myths, rites and ceremonies, in contrast to the verification that occurs in the sciences. This leads to a discussion of the debate between Harry Prosch, who co-authored Polanyi's last book *Meaning*, and Richard Gelwick over the question whether Polany did affirm the objective reality of God and the realm of the supernatural. Allen concludes that in *Meaning* Polanyi prescinded from ontological questions but did believe in the actuality of God's existence, although he doubted whether there were any special divine interventions in answer to prayer.

In the next chapter Allen expounds Polanyi's theory of language in which denotation is an art because the ineffable is intrinsic to the tacit in our exercise of language. It is our latent knowledge imbibed from our culture that allows us to use language in radically new ways. Because of the tacit domain Allen believes that both the *via negativa* and the *via eminentiae* are valid ways of referring to God and he proceeds to construct, with assistance from E.L. Mascall, a Polanyian justification for the theological use of analogy, in itself a significant contribution. Polanyi discussed the use of indication, symbol and metaphor in language but strangely overlooked the justification of analogy. Allen starts off with the role of metaphor and its transformation into analogy. Allen boldly concludes that classical the-

ism requires a Polanyianepistemology and its associated account of language. This highlights the tremendously important claims that are made in Allen's book.

Likewise in the following chapter Allen claims that every theistic theology needs a Polanyian ontology and epistemology. Having shown the validity of our language about the infinite being of God Allen proceeds to explicate our capacity for the knowledge of a transcendent God. At first it seems that Polanyi cannot help because his epistemology applied to our knowledge of other persons would produce a kind of pantheism or Neo-Platonism if applied to the universe as a whole. But this dilemma can be resolved by recognizing in the Gospel of John that the Son is the full manifestation of the Father. Knowledge of God can arise by attending from the Son to the Father, an integration that is enabled by the Holy Spirit. But this could then make the Son inferior to the Father. This leads Allen on to a consideration of the Trinity as Speaker, Word and Meaning, an analogy that is based in Polanyi's philosophy of language, which I found more illuminating than Augustine's attempt to use a psychological analogy based on memory, understanding and will. It would have been very interesting to have seen a comparison with Barth's doctrine of the Trinity in which the root of the doctrine is based on the fact that God reveals himself as the Lord in the act of revelation such that the revelation can be no less than God and man's apprehension of God can again be no less than the capacity of the divine. Thus the one God is at once the Revealer, the Revelation as the Word that is no less than God, and the Revealedness in man's response, namely, the Holy Spirit, so that man is taken up into God's knowledge of himself. Like those of Augustine and Barth Allen's exposition of the significance of his linguistic analogy has the danger of leading to a modalistic deity in which the personhood of the Three is lost. But his exposition of the traditional doctrine later in the book in terms of the complete mutual indwelling of the three Persons (the *perichoresis*), that was central to the classic doctrine of the Trinity that was formulated by the Cappadocian Fathers in the fourth century, shows that Allen is aware of that danger. In any case, any analogy must be partially inadequate. For Allen the equality of the Father and the Word can be maintained by the fact that in language both words and their meaning, as Polanyi recognized, can both be focal when used with emphasis or in poetry. Thus the Father gives significance to the Son as the full manifestation of the Father while the Son is also the means by which the Father is known. What is surprising is that Allen does not enlarge on the subsidiary role of the human and historical Jesus as the means whereby we know the deity of the Father.

In Ch. 6 Allen deals further with the apparent threat that Polanyi's ontology can only lead to some kind of pantheism, such as the absolute idealism of Bradley or Bosanquet, or to a panentheism, a threat to theism that is also discussed by Robert P. Doede in his doctoral thesis entitled *Embodiment and Transcendence: Polanyi's Post-Critical Philosophy of Mind* (Ph.D., London University, 1992). Doede found that Polanyi's ontology leads naturally to a panentheism in which the universe could be regarded as the body of God, a concept of a changing and limited deity that has been expounded by Grace Jantzen, Charles Hartshorne and Gordon Kaufmann. Doede believes that Polanyi held this concept of God and concludes that the attempt to use the mind-body ontology of Polanyi to explicate God's relationship to the world would imply that one would have to give up the Judaeo-Christian concept of God. But Allen argues that we should not do this as Polanyi's ontology affirms the irreducible autonomy of persons so that they cannot be part of a higher reality.

This leads Allen to explicate Polanyi's doctrine of emergence within the framework of the evolution of the species and he shares Polanyi's criticisms of the standard neo-Darwinian explanation because of its intrinsic reductionism. Polanyi tried to be 'the Newton of a blade of grass° which Kant had claimed to be an impossibility because teleology is intrinsic to our comprehension of living creatures but we could never know that teleology is a truth of nature. Polanyi likewise believed that our knowledge of organisms is intrinsically teleological and his critical realism, as opposed to Kant's transcendental idealism, allowed one to say that teleology is a truth of nature. Polanyi tries to develop a metaphysics of evolutionary emergence that does not appeal to a foreordained divine plan nor to special acts of creation by drawing an analogy between ontogenetic maturation and phylogeny, a process that, due to random mutations, released the activation of operational principles on which new organs are based. But Allen notes that the latent existence of such operational principles within the structure of the universe can only be explained in terms of the plan of a Creator God and he does not find the ontogeny-phylogeny analogy adequate. Polanyi's supposition of a cosmic field underlying evolutionary emergence is similar to the grandiose metaphyical schemes of Hegel, Samuel Alexander and Max Scheler and Allen finds Polanyi's evolutionary explanation dissatisfactory.

So Allen considers in Ch. 7 different ways in which God's transcendence of the world could be considered as an activity of tacit integration, again considering the notion of God as the World-Soul and as a finite panentheistic being. The in-

trinsic difficulties of such views are explained, inasmuch that God needs the world for his self-knowledge. This leads Allen to seek to formulate a radically new conception of divine knowing in order to justify a classical theism consonant with Polanyi's epistemology and ontology which are further explicated in service of this task. The doctrine of tacit integration in the knowledge of comprehensive entities can as such only refer to finite beings. Allen realises that this creates a problem for understanding the divine omniscience of which previous theologians were unaware. The divine simplicity requires us to suppose that all of God's knowledge is entirely focal and his knowledge of finite beings is concomitant with his creative generation of their existence. In the triune God there are no differing levels of existence and it would seem that tacit integration cannot characterise his knowing. God is thus free of all forms of dual control that arise from the interaction of a higher level in a comprehensive entity with a lower level of it. The key step in Allen's argument is that persons, being an ultimate, are not subject to boundary conditions from a higher level of being. We can then imagine persons, such as angels, free from all dependence upon the physical conditions of bodies, and then we could think of an absolute freedom, transcending all dual control., which can be none other than God. God can thus be thought of as a limit of a series in which perfect integration is achieved. To put it another way, in God essence and existence are identical and so God does not have a set of mental powers through which he operates and knows, but he is the super-integration of personhood and mind in which all possible forms of divine being are actualised in his unlimited perfection.

This leaves Allen grappling in Ch. 8 with the question as to how indwelling is to be understood as applied to God. Allen expounds Polanyi's explanation of our knowledge of other minds by indwelling their bodily actions, which is certainly superior to rival theories, but such explanation is clearly inappropriate to God. But Allen has shown that the divine simplicity can be construed positively, and not just negatively as a denial of any composition, for God can be thought of as the exemplar of the integration of spirit and mind which is to apprehended from contemplation of a scale of increasing integration in a hierarchy of finite beings. We could add that the more honest, sincere and selfless people are, the more integrated, loving and creative their personalities seem to be. So Allen concludes that God preeminently contains within himself such perfect integration that there are no distinguishable levels in him. He is perfect holy love that may appear to us as distinguishable attributes, but in God they are in actuality all one. In this line of argumentation Allen aims to show that Polanyi's philosophy is consistent with and indeed required by belief in the Christian concept of God. It remains for him to enlarge on and carefully qualify his illuminating analogy of the Trinity as Speaker, Word and Meaning with special reference to the mutual indwelling of the three Persons. One would like to know whether there can be a defence of the social analogy of the Trinity of Richard of St. Victor and some modern British theologians such as Leonard Hodgson or whether their use of the mutual knowledge and communion of persons inevitably implies that tacit integration that is applicable to finite being alone.

The remainder of the book is taken up with an explication of the Christian doctrines of man, grace, the sacraments and the Incarnation in the light of Polanyi's thought. There is a fine exposition of Polanyi's anthropology and its opposition to Cartesian dualism and an effective demolition of W. Maclagan's arguments against the Pauline concept of grace in which all the good in a Christian's life is ascribed by him to the goodnes of God and not to his own endeavour. Allen's exposition of the doctrine of grace is akin to that found in D.M. Baillie's classic treatise *God Was in Christ* (Faber, 1947), which Baillie then uses as a model for the union of God and man in Christ and for a correlation between Jesus, the Trinity and the believer who follows Jesus's example. By referring to illocutionary and perlocutionary speech acts Allen seeks to maintain the Real Presence of Christ in the eucharistic bread and wine, but in the end has to say that it is due to an act of the will of God. I found this the least convincing part of the book. Much more impressive is his exposition of the doctrine of the Incarnation by a reinterpretation of the doctrine of enhypostasia of Leontius of Byzantium (c. 485-543) who sought to defend the two-natured doctrine of the Council of Chalcedon (451) against the attacks of the Monophyites that it is necessarily Nestorian, i.e., must imply that there two persons in Christ. The doctrine of enhypostasia has been embraced by nearly all orthodox theologians since and has been given further justification in our own day by Karl Barth, E.L. Mascall, T.F. Torrance and the Roman Catholic theologian Jean Galot, who show that it does not reduce to Apollinarianism (denial of a full humanity to Christ including a human soul) as is often supposed. One wishes to add that Baillie's model of grace is also needed for an adequate Christology, as Jesus was a man of faith and prayer. Allen's expositions of revelation and the Incarnation could perhaps be reinforced by a Polanyian version of this model. But it is Allen's major achievement in this work to show that Polanyian thought is consistent with Christian theology, which can be the better expounded with the aid of it. I would also endorse his tremendous claim that theism requires Polanyi's

epistemology and ontology for we live in a universe of significance and value. If we deny that life has a meaning that transcends us, as is repeatedly done in secular studies such as biology, then, as Polanyi shows, human life is in danger of becoming demonic, as the manifestations of fascism and Marxism have shown. If that seems too extreme to be applicable to us then consider the wastelands of our inner cities. In any case, consider the value of your own life and the value of those you love. Polanyi and Allen can help you here.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Aurel Kolnai
The Utopian Mind and Other Papers, ed. F.N. Dunlop
Athlone Press, 1995, £42
ISBN 0 485 11232 9

Aurel Kolnai (1900-1973) was a Hungarian Jew who proclaimed himself an atheist at the age of 12; joined the Galilei Circle (founded by Karl and Michael Polanyi); went to Czechoslovakia with his parents in 1919 and then to Vienna; studied Max Scheler; read Chesterton and became a Roman Catholic in 1923-4; opposed Corporatist tendencies in Austrian politics and Roman Catholic social thought; wrote *The War against the West*, fled to Paris (1938) and then America (1940); taught at Laval University in Quebec; and came to Bedford College, London in 1959.

Kolnai never completed what became his principal task, a study of the Utopian mentality. Francis Dunlop, who helped to edit a previous collection of Kolnai's essays (*Value, Ethics, Reality*, Athlone Press, 1977), has now edited what was written, along with related pieces. In these papers Kolnai aims to analyse the essential structures of the Utopian frame of mind and the ways in which it departs from 'commonsensical' modes of thought, rather than to study its historical genesis and diverse types. Taking his cue from the word itself, Kolnai sees utopia ('no place') as a realm in which man would escape from finitude and given reality and would live in a world, not to which he must adapt, but which is, by the design of the utopian engineer, entirely adapted to him, a realm, moreover, in which men would be Man pure and simple, free from the particularities of time and place, custom and tradition, and individual dispositions. The distinctions among persons, and between the individual and society, would disappear, as would all those others central to human life: God and Man, mind and body, order and contingency, man and environment, and Value and Reality. What would exist would be good purely and simply, without defects, drawbacks or tensions between one good and another. The realisation of some one value, the utopian assumes, will guarantee the simultaneous realisation of all others. As a result there would be no scope for personal choice among competing values. The inhabitants of utopia will be entirely satisfied with everything in it and everything in it will be entirely satisfactory. Is and Ought will totally co-incide.

Yet while men in that condition soar above what we experience as the human condition, they also descend far below it. For they become good and virtuous automatically and without the direction of conscience. Perfection must lie beyond the contingency of men willing it and thus the possibility of them not willing it. Yet this state of perfection is to be brought about by imperfect men in the present, simultaneously the raw material to be shaped to suit it and the makers of it. Real and finite and often imperfect values and goods are thus to be sacrificed to the idol of an abstract and absolute 'perfection'. Hence in such as Rousseau, Babeuf and Marx, what is regarded as evil is to be pushed to the extreme so that, dialectically, out of it will arise a perfect society.

Kolnai next analyses the utopian idol of perfection, in contrast to the everyday pursuit of the good. Here we meet a feature of his work that defies summary, his painstaking care in making distinctions and distinguishing meanings. Perfection is both linked to the notion of value, and yet distinct from it, for it can become, in 'perfectionism', a value itself at odds with other values, especially when it, or specific 'perfection-models', are taken as the key to resolving the difference between Is and Ought and as guaranteeing all other realisations of value. Perfectionism of a 'departmental' and circumscribed sort, can exist without being utopian. What else is needed to convert perfectionism into utopia, is the notion of utopia as 'nowhere' but yet the full realisation of Man. In practical terms, that results in abandonment of the primacy of not doing harm and of attending to present tasks of reform and relief, in favour of unscrupulousness now in order to achieve perfection later.

Kolnai argues that utopianism is a permanent and original temptation. He traces the routes in which ordinary and legitimate principles and aspirations slide into the supreme contradictions of utopianism, such as that from wanting something determinate to wanting to be able to get what one wants via our familiar employment of multi-purpose goods, which is a desire to be free from the gap between wanting and having, from making choices

and balancing of means and ends, from rules, and from finitude itself.

> Utopianism rejects the common-sense *submission* to the human condition and 'pursuit of the Good' *on its terms*, erecting in its place the idol of a perfect human condition which would not be a human condition and which demands the *self-surrender* of man to an alien, unreal and (as to its actual features) inconceivable construct of his abstractive mind. Linked therewith is a mirage of the all-comprehensive perfect Good, discontinuous and out of tune with man's actual pursuit of value-achievements in the framework of a reality which is not identical with the Good but logically inseparable from any meaning man may attribute to it (p.101).

Utopianism, confusing imperfection (absence of good which should fitly be present) with evil (the presence of something which should strictly be absent), necessarily begins with a rebellion against reality. It interferes too much with the former and too little with the latter: indeed, it deliberately incurs more of them.

In addition to these characterisations of the utopian mentality, Kolnai provides careful descriptions of the normal pursuit of the good and of the ways in which imperfections differ from evils, all of which are variations of the difference between the *'merely' human stature of man* and *the threat of annihilation*. Similar to Polanyi's analysis of 'moral inversion', Kolnai shows how utopianism in action must use (*mis*use) moral terminology and appeals in its essentially immoral assault upon imperfection instead of genuine moral evil. Moreover, moral restraints and scruples now appear as part of the evil world of petty interests, prejudices and inertia, which is to be replaced.

Kolnai also carefully distinguishes between Practice, in which we are sovereign as choosing what to do, and Morality, in which we are subject and accountable. The former is the sphere of 'the good of man', the latter of 'the goodness of man'. The latter makes thematic the 'splitness' of man and his submission to it, as evidenced by its taboos, obligations and self-critical conscience. The utopian desire is to abolish that distinction, so that right Practice will entail moral perfection.

> This constitutes pre-eminently what is intolerable to the utopian consciousness, attached to the mirage of the godlike indivision of Man and all the more specifically opposed to man's acceptance of the scission as the right and sober mode of tempering its painfulness and controlling its possible disruptive effects: in other words, to his recognition of the Moral Laws (p.123).

This and other specific features of utopianism are further analysed in 'Alienation and Utopia' and 'The Utopian Neglect of Fundamental Distinctions'. These demonstrate Kolnai's ability both to seize upon and articulate fundamental identities—the 'essence' of utopianism behind the many utopian constructions—and also to clarify in detail fundamental differences and distinctions, a combinations of powers which brings out the best in the 'Continental' (mostly Schelerian) and 'Anglo-Saxon' traditions of philosophy which he mentions, in the 'Autobiographical Note', as having influenced him. Altogether this is a book, which like its predecessor, repays careful reading. We look forward to Dr Dunlop's edition (with another publisher) of Kolnai's memoirs.

R.T. Allen

We hope, with Dr Dunlop's assistance, to publish a Reappraisal of Aurel Kolnai in a later issue.

John Gray:
Enlightenment's Wake
Routledge, 1995
ISBN 0 415 12475 1

This volume of articles, previously published between 1992 and 1995 (save for the last and title essay), concludes the series begun with *Liberalisms* (1989) and continued with *Post-liberalism* (1993) and *Beyond the New Right* (1993).

Gray's argument can be summarised thus:

1. Contemporary political philosophy (Rawls, Dworkin, *et al.*) pays no attention to real politics except as it articulates American individualist and legalistic liberalism, which, however, presents itself as a universal truth, ideal and goal, and is the last fling of the Enlightenment project of emancipating men from local traditions, cultures and allegiances and incorporating them into a new rational, liberal and cosmopolitan civilisation. Even 'communitarian' protests against individualism are as abstract' as what they criticise.
2. The collapse of the Soviet Union is a world-historical event which marks, not the triumph, but the end of Western hegemony and the Enlightenment project. For it has opened up a wave of fundamentalist, particularist and nationalist movements against Westernisation. The future lies with the East where modernisation (industrialisation and market economy) is not accompanied by individualism and political liberalism. In any case, free markets will undercut their social foundations. The West is doomed even in the hour of its seeming triumph.
3. So too is liberty as a universal value. From Sir Isaiah Berlin, Gray takes the notion of a radical value-pluralism which holds that there are incommensurable values, such that some can be achieved only at the expense of others, none has an overriding claim, and incompatible ways of life can be equally valuable. This, he rightly insists, presupposes value-realism not relativism. Liberalism and liberal societies can claim no special place, and the conservatism (of a sort) defended in the previous volume is either too tied to the doomed Enlightenment or seeks an impossible return to pre-Enlightenment ways of thought and traditions. Liberalism can stake a claim only as providing a *modus*

vivendi, usually like that of Hobbes, for divergent yet contiguous communities. This Gray terms an 'agonistic liberalism'.

4. Following Nietzsche, Gray claims that we stand at the end of the modern era, and that the whole tradition of Western thought has run its course, along with its will to power, instrumental conception of reason and aim of dominating nature. In its place, he points us towards Heidegger's *Glassenheit*, 'releasement' or 'letting-be', but applied to the things of the earth, including culture, rather than Being. Indeed, beyond that he appears ready to endorse the inverted Gnosticism of some proponents of the 'Gaia-hypothesis' who speculate that the Earth may eventually throw off the excresence that is humanity.

On the more political level one could quarrel with several of Gray's contentions, such as his attacks on market economics and free trade without any suggestions of an alternative (but then, there is none, as witness the economic sclerosis of the EEC *except for* Britain, and the end of jobs for life in the big corporations of Japan: as Vaclav Klaus has said, 'The third way leads to the third world'), and his attribution of the rise in crime in Britain to the economic reforms of Lady Thatcher's administration, a process that had begun long before that and has been powerfully reinforced by the relativism and distain for authority with which trainee teachers and thence their pupils in turn have been 'indoctrinated' for the last thirty years.

The latter is connected, on the more philosophical level, with a discrepancy between Gray's value-pluralism, which presupposes a value-realism, and his invocation of Nietzsche for whom all values are arbitrary human creations. Moreover, the rejection of any simple monism or calculus of values, and recognition of the real sacrifices of one value or valuable object to another, do not entail the radical pluralism that Gray adopts. In his example of the Platonic unity of virtue, courage is a real virtue, though it can be misused, and tragically so in evil causes. It requires right direction to be truly and fully good. Yet that does mean (*pace* Kant) that only the good will is good and that some simple logical formula (such as the Categorical Imperative) can yield the whole duty of man. Rather it means that we have a tacit and developing appreciation of the Good that underlies the many goods (see Chap. 3 of A.E. Taylor's *The Faith of a Moralist*). It follows, contrary to Gray's Hegelian (though despairing) historical determinism, that there may yet be life in some of the older ways of thought, for they have been discarded without being shown to be false. Let us hope that there is and that Gray will return to them.

R.T. Allen

Philosophy, History and Civilization: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on R.G. Collingwood
ed. D. Boucher, J. Connelly, T. Modood.
University of Wales Press, 1995; pp. xviii + 388; ISBN 0-7083-1308-6.

The great tragedy of British philosophy in this century was the illnesses and early death (in 1943 at the age of 53) of R.G. Collingwood. For some years his work, outside the philosophy of history, was eclipsed by the linguistic successors of the Oxford 'Realists' whom Collingwood 'the minute philosophers'. But first in North America and now at last in Britain, all aspects of his thought, in archaeology and history as well as all branches of philosophy, are receiving the attention that they merit, as this volume of sixteen essays (all, save one, never published before) demonstrates. Both those comparatively new to Collingwood and those familiar with his work will profit from this collection.

As well as an Introduction, Dr Boucher supplies a paper on 'The Life, Legacy and Times of R.G. Collingwood'. Most of the articles which follow primarily aim at explaining what Collingwood had to say about a particular topic or group of topics, and they do this well, along with, in some cases, clearing away misconceptions of Collingwood's philosophy. The topics treated in this manner are Collingwood's idea of philosophy (T. Modood), his aesthetics and philosophical method with a defence of Collingwood against Wittgensteinian charges of 'essentialism' (T.J. Diffey), his accounts of faith and reason (the late D.M. MacKinnon), and of education and civilisation (Boucher). A.J. Milne compares his account and defence of civilisation with Popper on the Open Society, while four papers explore his relations with Italian philosopers–Vico, Croce, Gentile, de Ruggiero–his debts to them, his uses of them and his divergences from them (Connelly, Harris, Haddock, Peters).

Some of the most interesting papers deal with his treatments of history and metaphysics

L. Pompa, 'Collingwood's Theory of Historical Knowledge', argues against Collingwood that historians do need 'fixed points' but that they are not uncritically accepted statements by previous historians, rather that body of historical knowledge which comes from the historian's own immersion in history and the historical heritage into which he was born.

A. Oldfield, 'Metaphysics and History in Collingwood's Thought', shows that re-enactment is not a method but what, via inferential argument from the evidence, the historian seeks to achieve, and that absolute presuppositions are overlapping stages in the development of intellectual traditions.

R. Martin, 'Collingwood's Claim that Metaphysics is a Historical Discipline', claims that re-enactment applies to actions and not to pre-suppositions, the study of which is a matter of logical construction (or reconstruction) of

objective structures and patterns in our ways of knowing, of the ways in which one set grows out of a previous one, and of which is the best or most adequate of competing formulations of the absolute presuppositions present in current practice.

J. van der Dussen, 'Collingwood on the Ideas of Process, Progress and Civilization', thinks that there is a difference between the detached view of the historian and the engaged view of the scientist who has to understand an older theory and carry forward, in his new one, what was true in it. But though he refers to relevant passages, he fails to see that Collingwood repudiated in *The Idea of History* (pp.216, 334) the alleged detachment of the historian which he had stated in 'The Nature and Aims of a Philosophy of History' (PAS 1924-5), and that the former is what Collingwood's theory and practice require.

Altogether this is a stimulating and wide-ranging collection, thoroughly grounded in Collingwood's philosophical and historical works (there are two articles on his archaeological theory and practice), which should encourage further study of them.

R.T. Allen

David E. Cooper:
Heidegger
Claridge Press, 1996
ISBN 1-870626-12-5 £5.95 pbk.
Philip Vander Elst:
C. S. Lewis
Claridge Press, 1996
ISBN 1-870626-98-2 £5.95 pbk.

These two latest volumes in the series *Thinkers of Our Time* both expertly and clearly present the principal concerns of their respective and very different subjects. As the author of a previous volume in the series, I know how hard it is to compress what one would like to say into the 25,00 words which is all that one is allowed. That must have seemed impossible to Prof. Cooper. Yet, not only has he been able to expound the central theses of Heidegger's vast output, but has done so in an English which is as clear as the German is opaque, so much so that one is tempted to conclude that somewhere he must have got Heidegger wrong! Can an Heidegger made transparent be the authentic Heidegger? Yet that is what Prof. Cooper has accomplished.

Given the intentions of the series, there is proportionally more on the social and political side of Heidegger's thought than there might otherwise be. Heidegger's relation to Nazism is fairly presented, and equal attention is given to the later works as to *Being and Time*. Those new to Heidegger, or those who have tried to read him but find themselves utterly baffled by him, will find light and guidance from this short volume.

The works of C.S. Lewis are, in contrast, models of a modern English style, and combine the massive common sense of Dr Johnson with the wit of G.K. Chesterton. Philip Vander Elst has an altogether easier task in presenting Lewis' arguments for Christian theism and traditional morality as presented both in his discursive works and in his fiction. Again, given the intentions of the series, there is a full chapter on Lewis' political and cultural conservatism, despite the fact that Lewis was reluctant to speak and write about politics lest his Christianity be dismissed as merely 'political'. The world today stands in great need of the clarity, solidity and sanity of C. S. Lewis who reminds us of age-old truths that we would rather forget and cuts through the cant of modish progressivism, in theology, ethics, education, and everything he touches upon. Mr Vander Elst will have done a great service if his book can bring more to read and learn from one of the soundest thinkers of our time.

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Continued from p. 94

8. That is, the realisation that we cannot exhaustively know a given object. 'Minus cognition' is Blaga's term for such recognition, for subtracting, as it were, from what we previous believed that we could completely comprehend, in contrast to 'plus cognition', which adds to the store of what we know (on the same level, that is).
9. *Cunoastera Luciferica,*, p.157
10. op. cit...
11. *Cunoastera Luciferica*, pp.63, 71.
12. *Elanul insulei/The Élan of the Island* (Cluj, Dacia, 1977), p.105.
13. *Cenzura Transcendenta/Transcent Censorship*, Vol. III of *The Trilogy of Knowledge* (Bucharest, Humanitas, 1993, p.95)
14. ibid. p.245.
15. op.cit.
16. *Elanul insulei*, p.180.
17. ibid. p.185.
18. op. cit.
19. *Elanul insulei*, p.232.
20. ibid, p.208.
21. ibid. p.217.
22. ibid. p.175.
23. ibid. p.233
24. ibid. p.247
25. op. cit.
26. *Elanul insulei*, p.231.
27. op. cit.
28. *Elanul insulei*, p.102.
29. ibid. p.242.
30. op. cit.
31. *Elanul insulei*, p.180.
32. ibid. p.176.
33. op. cit. p.72: a reference to Collingwood.
34. *Elanul insulei*. p.230.