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THE ANALOGY OF BEING

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Executive Editor
The Princeton Theological Review
Princeton Theological Seminary
P.O. Box 821
Princeton, NJ 08542

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PROLEGOMENA

Benjamin Heidgerken

Since the Patristic period, many Christian theologians, particularly Catholic ones, have worked on the premise that Christians *qua* Christian can use the methodology and language of philosophy to answer theological questions. For St. Augustine, this premise brought together Platonism and Christian doctrine; St. Gregory of Nyssa called it “plundering Egypt”; St. Thomas Aquinas presupposes it in his appropriation of Aristotelian philosophy. Lying behind this premise is the deeper conviction that there is no fundamental discontinuity or contradiction between nature and grace, because only if nature and grace cohere can philosophy’s answers be relevant to Christian faith. This conviction is not without Scriptural support. One can argue that the continuity between the natural and the supernatural is presupposed in Paul’s speech in Acts 17 concerning the altar to the unknown god and in his argument in Romans 1 in which he blames Gentiles for failing to recognize the Creator in and through the creation.

However well founded this conviction may be, the Reformed theologian Karl Barth argues that any continuity between the natural and the supernatural is unthinkable for the Christian theologian. Because of the infinite qualitative difference between what is time-bound and finite on the one hand, and what is eternal and infinite on the other, there can be no proven path from the creation to the Creator. God is God; we are not. Barth strongly opposes every human attempt to grasp or control the Divine, for in doing so one automatically slips into idolatry, worshipping what one believes God to be rather than the absolutely free and gracious Creator of the world. For Barth, when the created is considered analogous to the divine, when philosophy is thought to be continuous with theology, when Athens has anything to do with Jerusalem, “God” can be nothing more than a Feuerbachian projection of idealized humanity. Even in God’s definitive self-revelation in Christ, God cannot be revealed to us in such a way that we are able to possess God. If this were so, God would cease to be the *Deus abscondus*, the One whose thoughts are not like our thoughts, whose ways are not like our ways.

Whether it is correct to posit any continuity or analogy between the Creator and the creation is the subject of the modern debate over the *analogia entis*. The various essays in this issue of the *Princeton Theological Review* are unified by reflection on this fundamental question of Christian theology. The authors come from different theological backgrounds, both Protestant and Catholic. Their approaches draw on a wide range of sources, from theological ethics and historical analysis to the history of philosophy and recent developments in Barthian scholarship. It is our hope that the essays published here will continue the discussion concerning analogy in a way faithful to Christ and fruitful for His church.

The first essay, by Keith L. Johnson, reaches back to the beginning of the modern conversation in an effort to understand what led the Jesuit Erich Przywara to formulate the doctrine of analogy that he did. Johnson argues that Przywara’s

early position on analogy must ultimately be understood in its ecclesiological context. Reacting against certain isolationist tendencies in post-World War I German Catholicism, Przywara's early *analogia entis* is an attempt to convince the Catholic Church of his day to recommit herself to her mission of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ. At the end of the essay, Johnson offers a clear and compact summary of what the early Przywara means by the phrase *analogia entis*.

The next essay by Joshua Davis puts Przywara in conversation with Barth. Davis argues that both Barth and Przywara share a basic ontological premise, that the coincidence of identity and difference is required for human knowledge of God. However, from this one premise, the two theologians draw vastly different conclusions concerning how this coincidence is properly achieved. Davis concludes with an illustration from Galatians. In the same way that Paul opposed those who wished to make the Jewish Law mandatory for Christians with his proclamation of rectification by faith, Barth opposes Przywara's religious "law" with the message that God alone makes human knowledge of God possible.

Moving from Przywara to Barth, the third article, by Emily Dumler, offers a defense of Barth's post-World War II position on analogy and theological ethics. Dumler accuses Barth's critics of failing to recognize a fundamental distinction in Barth's use of the word "analogy." For Barth, the term has two functions. The first, the analogy of faith, refers to Barth's ontology and is methodologically prior, in Barth's thought, to the second. The second is the ethical use, which draws on parables in the world to make concrete, Christian, ethical decisions. Based on this distinction, Dumler concludes that Barth's critics have failed to raise a substantive argument against him, since they fail to understand his use of analogy correctly.

Through an analysis of the cosmology and spiritual theology of St. Maximus the Confessor, my article attempts to persuade a Catholic audience that Maximus constitutes an element in Catholic Tradition that supports the sort of Christocentric ontology important to Karl Barth. After an exposition of the Confessor's doctrine of the *logoi* and the *Logos*, I spell out the ramifications of Maximus' cosmology for human knowledge of the divine and offer suggestions for how these ramifications bear on the different theological positions on analogy today.

Finally, Ry Siggelkow's essay addresses an article by John Betz, one of the translators of Przywara's book on the analogy of being. Siggelkow suggests that Betz's argument in that article would have benefited significantly from a treatment of the work of Eberhard Jüngel. Jüngel, though critical of the Catholic doctrine, does not reject analogy outright. Rather, by placing it in the context of the later Barth's *analogia fidei*, Jüngel grounds analogy in the self-revelation of God in Jesus Christ. Because Jüngel offers a mediating position in the debate, Siggelkow concludes that Jüngel's position on analogy cannot be ignored in the future.

When Przywara and Barth formulated their different positions on analogy, they both had a single goal in mind: the encouragement of the mission of the Christian church in its faithful proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is in this same spirit that we offer the Spring 2009 issue of the *Princeton Theological Review* on the analogy of being.

ERICH PRZYWARA'S EARLY VERSION OF THE *ANALOGIA ENTIS*

Keith L. Johnson

While the *analogia entis* has a long history in Christian theology, the person responsible for bringing it to prominence in modern thought is Erich Przywara. He is *the* pivotal figure in the contemporary debate about the *analogia entis*.¹ To understand the *analogia entis* and the debate about it, therefore, it is necessary to have clear picture of how and why Przywara formulated the principle. Obtaining this picture is no easy task, unfortunately, both because of the complex nature of Przywara's theology and a lack of clarity about his theological development.² This essay begins to address this problem by offering an account of Przywara's early theological development as well as his first prominent presentation of the *analogia entis*. The examination will show that Przywara's early formulation of the *analogia entis* can be rightly understood only when it is viewed within its ecclesiological context. Specifically, I argue that Przywara developed the *analogia entis* with the hope that it would prompt the Roman Catholic Church to engage the secular world with the truth of the Gospel in a new way, and that this engagement would, in turn, transform and renew the Catholic Church itself.³

1 It was Przywara's early formulation of the *analogia entis*, after all, that Karl Barth famously labeled the "invention of the Antichrist," and the debate sparked by Barth's comment set the agenda for the dialogue that occurred between Roman Catholics and Protestants about this issue in the decades that followed. For Barth's remark, see *Church Dogmatics* I/1, rev. ed. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975), xiii.

2 An important fact that often is overlooked is that Przywara changed and refined his version of the *analogia entis* gradually over the course of his career. For example, the version he presents in his 1926 book *Religionsphilosophie katholischer Theologie*—which is the one that Barth was most familiar with and the one he initially rejected—is similar to but not identical with the one he presents in his famous 1932 volume *Analogia Entis*. In the years after 1932, Przywara continued to refine his principle by fleshing out more explicitly some of the most important theological distinctions that were left implicit in his early versions. These revisions show up most clearly in the second part of the revised version of Przywara's *Analogia Entis*, published in 1962. When one considers Przywara's *analogia entis*, therefore, it is important to know *which* version one is talking about. This is especially true when one brings Przywara into conversation with Karl Barth, as many interpreters criticize Barth for rejecting a version Przywara's *analogia entis* that had not yet been formulated when Barth rejected it.

3 For an in-depth treatment of Przywara's theological development, the gradual changes in his theology, and the question of Barth's interpretation of his thought, see my book, *Karl Barth and the Analogia Entis* (London: T & T Clark, forthcoming).

THE MOTIVATION BEHIND PRZYWARA'S *ANALOGIA ENTIS*

Przywara's theological education began when he entered the Society of Jesus as a young man in 1908. Although he lived in Germany at the time, Przywara was educated in Holland because Jesuits were outlawed in Germany during this period.⁴ The fact that Przywara volunteered to join an ostracized group speaks to his personality as an "outsider" not only with respect to German culture, but also within the Roman Catholic Church itself. Unlike many Catholic theologians of his time, Przywara did not align himself with a distinct interpretative school, such as those of the Augustinian, Thomist, Scotist, or Molinist variety. His interests instead ranged over the entire spectrum of Catholic theology and the Western philosophical tradition. Rather than immersing himself in one interpretative tradition, Przywara sought to pull together diverse strands within philosophy and the Catholic tradition in order to create something new that would stand over and above the individual elements that comprised it. This approach meant that Przywara tended to work outside of the Catholic theological mainstream, but it also meant that he had a unique perspective that enabled him to see the failures and promise of Roman Catholic theology in a way that those working within the mainstream could not.⁵

This distinct perspective helps explain why Przywara began to turn to the concepts that would later take mature form as the *analogia entis*. As he looked at the world around him in the years after World War I, Przywara believed that the primary problem facing modern European culture was the fact that every philosophy of religion had been unable to determine the nature of God's relationship to the world. Specifically, religious philosophy had failed to formulate a picture of God that maintained both God's active presence *in* the world and his distinction *from* the world. Without such a picture, Przywara believed, the world was left in directionless despair, and he thought that this despair would lead again and again to the kind of cultural chaos that had fostered the War. The answer to this problem, obviously, was to provide the world with the true picture of God's relationship with it. Przywara was convinced that this picture could be found in the Roman Catholic Church's view of God as both "in" and "above" creation. If the Church could give the world this picture of God's relationship with it, then perhaps the Church could meet the world on its own terms and address its problems with the truth of the Gospel.

4 For more details about Przywara's early years and his education, see Thomas F. O'Meara, *Erich Przywara, S. J.: His Theology and His World* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 2002).

5 Bernhard Gertz explains why this is the case: "[Przywara's] basic openness to the mystery of the 'ever greater God' excludes in advance any limitation to a given school theology. Przywara does not let himself to be classified in a given school; he also does not form 'a school' . . . in any similarities of particular theologies . . . the greater dissimilarity must be recognized theoretically and practically." See Gertz, *Glaubenswelt als Analogie: Die Theologische Analogielehre Erich Przywaras und ihr Ort in der Auseinandersetzung um die Analogie Fidei* (Düsseldorf: Patmos-Verlag, 1969), 417.

The problem, however—at least in Przywara’s view—was that the Catholic Church did not have the theological or intellectual motivation to engage in this type of outwardly-focused activity. In fact, in the years after the War, the Catholic Church in Germany was marked by growing internal tensions between conservative factions who wanted the Church to posture itself against the world and progressive forces which sought to change the Church so that it could reach out to the world more effectively. Przywara identified with the progressive side, arguing that Catholics should “remain loyal to their incarnational principles and redeem the times” rather than take a protective or reactionary stance.⁶ How could the Catholic Church as a whole arrive at such a perspective? Przywara thought that the answer was to develop a comprehensive philosophical-theological system that combined the metaphysical foundation of the Scholastics with the scientific and psychological elements of modern thought. Such a system, he believed, would provide Catholics the theological foundation they needed to prompt them to meet the intellectual and cultural challenges they were facing with confidence instead of fear. It also could provide a way to “translate,” so to speak, the best insights of Catholic theology into the idiom of modern religious philosophy, so that the secular world could recognize that the Catholic tradition offered the answer it had been looking for about God and the world’s relationship to God. Such a system, in other words, would both free the Catholic Church to reach out to the world with the resources of its own tradition and show the world that, in fact, God remained an active force in it and was working to redeem it.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN’S INFLUENCE

The *analogia entis* stands as the culmination of Przywara’s early attempts to provide this theological and philosophical system. As we will see, not only does it answer the world’s question of how God can relate to the world while remaining distinct from it, it also provides a theological and historical account of the Catholic Church’s life and history that motivates it to reach out to the world around it. How did Przywara arrive at the principle? There were many influences that led him to develop it throughout the early 1920’s, but one of the most important was the influence of Cardinal John Henry Newman.⁷ After editing a German-edition of Newman’s writings, Przywara became convinced that Newman was one of the few thinkers who recognized what it meant to be Catholic in the modern world.⁸ Przywara referred to him as an “*Augustinus redivivus* of modern times”—a figure who stood “amidst the torrent which bears all things to their doom” with a gaze “calmly fixed upon the God of the end.”⁹ Przywara found this image appealing

6 Collins, “Przywara’s ‘Analogia Entis,’” *Thought* 65 (1990): 269.

7 I focus on Newman alone here for the sake of brevity. For an account of the other influences and how they also shaped Przywara’s development of the *analogia entis*, see my *Karl Barth and the Analogia Entis*, chapters 2 and 3.

8 See Erich Przywara, *A Newman Synthesis* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1945).

9 Erich Przywara, “St. Augustine and the Modern World,” in *A Monument to Saint Augustine* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1930), 286. Przywara develops these themes

as he considered the “torrent” that the post-War years had brought the Catholic Church in Germany. The Church could relate properly to the secular world, Przywara believed, only when Catholics recognized that God was already at work in the world. For this reason, he argued that modern Catholics must recognize both the “towering distinctiveness of God” and “the self-communication of God reaching from creation to the human person where . . . as Thomas Aquinas says, there is a ‘movement of God’ in that which here emerges from God but is essentially ‘other than God.’”¹⁰ In other words, for Przywara, the unsettling cultural events that were shaking the foundations of the Catholic Church after the War were, in fact, signs of the presence and work of the transcendent God within human history. Catholics would respond appropriately, in his view, only when they recognized this divine activity in the world and joined with it.

Przywara believed that Newman points Catholics toward precisely this kind of response. In the face of a modern world torn between the “comprehended Hegelian God, Who is therefore not God” and “the unattainable God of Kierkegaard, of Whom therefore man must despair,” Newman points to a “God Who is at once without and within.”¹¹ Przywara saw Newman’s idea as a modern reformulation of Augustine’s “one God exterior and interior”—a notion he believed was central not only to Catholic theology, but to the entire history of philosophy.¹² Newman, Przywara argues, follows in the footsteps of Augustine by turning to the concepts of the conscience, to implicit reasoning, and in his defense of “the validity of the ordinary man’s unreflective response to the moral and physical universe.”¹³ Przywara sees these “modern” psychological reflections on the human self as wholly consistent with traditional Catholic thought because, he argues, they function simply as a subjective, concrete, and personal expression of traditional Catholic theological principles. Newman, in other words, has taken the best of the Catholic tradition and made it relevant by translating it into a conceptual framework familiar to the modern world. Indeed, Przywara believes that Newman’s more

more deeply in a series of major essays on Newman, many of which are collected in *Ringens der Gegenwart*, vol. II (Augsburg: Filser, 1929), 802–79. In these essays, Przywara defends Newman against charges that he is guilty of “modernism” by demonstrating the potential benefits of Newman’s living and experiential emphasis on faith. Among Newman’s many works, *The Grammar of Ascent* and *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* were particularly important for Przywara.

10 Erich Przywara, “Die religiöse Krisis in der Gegenwart und der Katholizismus,” in *Katholische Krisis* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1967), 47; originally cited in O’Meara, *Erich Przywara*, 39.

11 Przywara, “St. Augustine and the Modern World,” 279. This dichotomy between two sides with a mediating Catholic position in the middle was a pattern that would be repeated in Przywara’s thought throughout his career.

12 Przywara, “St. Augustine and the Modern World,” 279. “It should be obvious,” Przywara says, “where alone in this modern age [Augustine’s] spirit finds its perfect reincarnation.” This helps explain why Przywara chose to translate Newman’s works into German; he was, in effect, supplying German Catholics a role model of how to live as a Catholic in the modern world.

13 Collins, “Przywara’s ‘Analogia Entis,’” 268.

subjective approach—when combined with the rationality of Catholic thought in the mold of Thomas Aquinas—points the way forward for modern Catholics because it shows them how Catholic thought can contribute to and ultimately resolve the problems which have shaped not only the history of philosophy, but the contemporary world as well. Newman thus provides an example that could lead the Catholic Church to directly confront the cultural and philosophical problems that led to modern tragedies such as the War.

In short, for Przywara, Newman's synthesis points Catholics toward a vision for a Church that embraces rather than simply stands over against the modern world. This vision is compelling for him because it demonstrates that reflection upon the subjective and individual elements of the Christian life can be used to combine contemporary insights—especially those related to human subjectivity and experience—with the basic commitments of the Catholic tradition.¹⁴ This is why Przywara saw Newman as the new Augustine: just as Augustine developed his “most sublime vision” in “the presence of the fall of the old world,” Newman was able to see “man, the world, and history from the already almost prophetic perspective revealed to him by that final struggle between Christ and Antichrist legible on the countenance of the modern world.”¹⁵ Newman himself summarizes his approach to the world in a phrase often quoted by Przywara: “My unchangeableness here below is perseverance in changing.”¹⁶ Przywara interpreted this phrase as representing a vertical, God-centered approach that concurrently embraces the realities of a horizontal world, and this vertical-horizontal pattern became a model for him as he began to develop his own version of the same insight, the *analogia entis*.

TOWARD THE *ANALOGIA ENTIS*

Newman's influence upon Przywara's thought can be seen in an important series of lectures Przywara delivered before the Catholic Student's Union at Ulm in 1923 entitled “God as the Mystery of the World.”¹⁷ Przywara was in his element when speaking to Catholic youth, as many of them shared his own perspective about the need for reform in the Catholic Church. He wanted to provide a theological and philosophical foundation for the reforms they were seeking by helping the students see more clearly the movement of God in their lives as well as in the wider patterns of history. To this end, he tells the students that the most positive vision for the Catholic future is not to simply be a part of the German cultural life, but to embrace it wholeheartedly. For a Jesuit who had only recently been allowed

14 See Collins, “Przywara's ‘Analogia Entis,’” 267.

15 Przywara, “St. Augustine and the Modern World,” 286.

16 See John Henry Newman, *Meditations and Devotions of the Late Cardinal Newman* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1893), 508–9. See also Erich Przywara, “Gottgeheimnis Der Welt: Drei Vorträge über die Geistige Krisis der Gegenwart,” in *Schriften*, vol. 1 (Eisiedeln: Johannes-Verlag, 1962), 241.

17 For a description of the circumstances of these lectures, see O'Meara, *Erich Przywara*, 41–45.

to return to Germany, this statement was a bold one. A Catholic can act in this way, Przywara argues, by following the pattern of Thomas Aquinas, who always demonstrated “the inner rhythm” of a “Catholic balance” in his life and work.¹⁸ In the modern Catholic Church, this rhythm and balance finds expression in the liturgy, which both manifests the Church’s inner life and propels it to venture out into the world.¹⁹ It also finds expression, he tells his young audience, in the German Catholic youth movement, as this movement has reawakened ideas about the value of the individual and his role in society.²⁰

The influence of Newman’s emphasis upon the role of the human consciousness and experience can be seen in Przywara’s argument at this point. Przywara insists that each individual realizes his own inner nature as he moves toward God, and that this movement is “not a program of one individual or of a limited community. It is the philosophy of humanity, one for all the various kinds of human beings; all peoples will have their own contributions to bring forward as gift.”²¹ His vision for the Catholic Church is a cosmic one: the Church should go out into the world in which God already is moving, and, through the rhythm of its own inner life, lead the world to find its own true life of rhythm and movement with God. Przywara is not simply offering a vision for *Catholics* to live in the world, therefore; he is offering a Catholic vision for the *world* to realize its true self as a result of the insights that the Catholic tradition offers to it.

This vision turns upon the concept of “polarity”—an idea Przywara derived from his analysis of the history of philosophy. Through a lengthy examination of philosophical history, Przywara argues that the relationship between the immanence and transcendence of God has never been resolved in the history of human reflection upon the existence of God. From Plato and Aristotle to Descartes, Kant and Hegel, the greatest minds in history emphasized one extreme or the other, and the result of either extreme has been the collapsing of God into the life of the world. The alternative, Przywara believes, is to maintain God’s distinction from the world while situating the human being so that God stands as her final end and goal; such a view, he argues, maintains precisely the type of balance and rhythm modern Catholics need. He captures this vision by employing a theme that Newman himself had adopted from Augustine: the notion that “fear and love must go together.”²² He explains that fear corresponds to the exteriority of God while love corresponds to God’s interiority. Fear and love both are necessary since each tempers the extremes of the other in the human subject. Since a denial of either pole would remove the distinction between God and creature, fear and love must be kept together in the proper tension. If this occurs, he says, then the “transcendence and immanence of God no longer dissolve into one another, but they are bound

18 Przywara, “Gottgeheimnis Der Welt,” 156.

19 Przywara, “Gottgeheimnis Der Welt,” 141–44.

20 Przywara, “Gottgeheimnis Der Welt,” 145–56.

21 Przywara, “Gottgeheimnis Der Welt,” 151; also cited in O’Meara, *Erich Przywara*, 44.

22 See Augustine, *The Confessions*, trans. O. S. B. Maria Boulding, Vintage Spiritual Classics (New York: Vintage Books, 1997), 201–16 (Book 10.6–19).

to one another as two poles in living unity in tension. This wonderful reflection of loving nearness and reverential distance, of fearing love and loving fear, as Augustine formulates it in a genial antithesis, this deepest ethos of Christianity, is now anchored in a decisive source—in God himself.”²³ This “unity-in-tension” between nearness to and distance from God summarizes Przywara’s vision for Catholic life. It also stands, in his view, as the unique Catholic contribution to the history of philosophy, one that builds upon the insights of Aquinas and Newman, both of whom stood on the shoulders of Augustine.²⁴

Indeed, in a remark that foreshadows emphases he would develop more thoroughly later on, he explicitly echoes Augustine in his description of the believer’s disposition before God:

To be sure, such is the fundamental disposition of the one who knows God: God nearer to me than all the world. God nearer to me than I am to myself; God more real than all the world, God more real than myself: God all in all, *Deus meus et omnia!* But precisely out of the givenness of this knowledge of God, out of this, shall we say, psychological immediacy to God, grows that disposition of awe-inspired longing, that inextinguishable *Inquietum*, that infinite restlessness toward God, which is never satisfied but blessed in its very restlessness: *quaeritur inveniendus et invenitur quarendus . . .*²⁵

The vision Przywara is casting for his student audience is clear: they should live as awestruck believers who not only find their meaning in their direct immediacy to God, but who also exist in a restless movement *toward* God who remains, at every moment, utterly other and beyond their grasp. This vision, when applied to the Catholic Church as a whole, provides a compelling picture of a Church that does not retreat from the world but *embraces* it as the context of God’s redemptive activity. The Church is compelled to teach the world about the shape of the Church’s life and existence because this lesson will, in turn, help the world discern the shape of its own life in relationship to God.

Przywara expanded upon these ideas soon afterward in a shorter lecture on the same topic entitled “God in us or God above us?”²⁶ There are two important

23 Przywara, “Gottgeheimnis Der Welt,” 193.

24 He ends his lectures this way: “Must we choose Thomas *or* Newman in this unhealthy epoch, struggling as it is between integralism and modernism . . . No, the choice of this hour as we stand at the central point of the spiritual crisis of our time is not Thomas or Newman, but, true to the spirit of Catholic polarity, Thomas *and* Newman.” See “Gottgeheimnis Der Welt,” 242.

25 See Przywara, “Gottgeheimnis Der Welt,” 230; originally cited in John R. Betz, “Beyond the Sublime: The Aesthetics of the Analogy of Being (Part Two),” *Modern Theology* 22, no. 1 (2006): 44, fn. 58. See also Augustine, *Confessions*, III.6.

26 See Przywara, “Gott in uns oder über uns? (Immanenz und Transzendenz in heutigen Geistesleben),” in *Stimmen der Zeit*, 105 (1923): 343–62. This essay was later reprinted—without the first paragraph of the original manuscript—under the title, “Gott in uns und Gott über uns,” in *Ringel der Gegenwart: Gesammelte Aufsätze 1922–1927*

advances in Przywara's argument in this lecture as compared to "God as the Mystery of the World." First, Przywara frames his understanding of the proper form of the Catholic life more directly in the doctrine of God than he had done previously; it is this focus on God that prompts him to turn to the *analogia entis* as the central principle of Catholic life and activity more specifically. Second, this essay marks a shift because Przywara intends not only to enrich Catholic theology and life, but also to show that Catholic theology stands as a better way to meet the challenges of the modern world than Protestant theology.

Indeed, if any theology leads the church to "shrink back" from the challenges of the modern world, Przywara thinks, it is that which is found in the Protestant tradition. And when it comes to Protestant theology, Przywara clearly has one figure in mind: Karl Barth. He notes, in fact, that Barth and the other "dialectical" theologians are ushering in a "genuine rebirth of Protestantism," saying that "of any group in present-day Protestantism, Luther belongs to them and is their father."²⁷ What he means is that he believes that Barth and his colleagues have recaptured the basic theological principles and insights that prompted the Reformation. What are these basic insights? Przywara interprets the divisions between Protestants from Catholics less in terms of ecclesiology than in terms of fundamentally different understandings of the nature of God. The Reformers, in his view, sought a transcendent God to correct the errors they saw in the Catholicism, while the Catholic Church—especially after the recovery of the tradition at the Council of Trent—saw God in terms of the balance between his transcendence and immanence. In Barth, he sees a Protestant who both understands the nature of this division and firmly maintains the Protestant side of it, and he thus thinks that it is clear that Barth's vision for the Church's role in the world stands in stark contradiction to his own.

In the lecture, Przywara highlights these distinctions by using the Augustinian expression "God in us and God above us" as a summary of the Catholic concept of God; it captures, he says, a vision of the "Catholic middle."²⁸ He builds upon his earlier claims about the positive role for the Catholic Church in the modern world by arguing that if the Church is to exist as "a living continuation

(Augsburg: Filser, 1929), 543–78. All citations here will be from the *Ringten der Gegenwart* edition.

27 Przywara, "Gott in uns und Gott über uns," 553. This "rebirth" was a positive development, in Przywara's view, because it enabled a true dialogue between Catholics and Protestants to take place. Bruce McCormack correctly notes that Przywara recognized that an old theological world was falling away and he knew that the time was ripe for a new construal of the doctrine of God. The Protestant and Catholic debate about this doctrine could occur only "when Catholicism and Protestantism, each for its own part, reflected upon the concept of God native to it, and on that basis, carried out the necessary." In this sense, Przywara saw Barth's theology as a positive and necessary development, even though he disagreed with nearly every aspect of it. See McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 320.

28 Przywara, "Gott in uns und Gott über uns," 546.

of God made man,” it must conform to the “law of the unending God.”²⁹ The incarnation reveals the central truth of God’s relation to the world, he argues, and this relationship now takes the shape of the Church’s life as the “body of Christ” in the world. If the Church is to fulfill its purpose of existing incarnationally in the world, therefore, it can do so only by conforming in its very existence to the God who is both “in” and “over” creation. That is, the Church lives a “balanced” existence when it lives in correlation to the unity-in-tension of God’s immanence and transcendence that defines its own life and action.

Przywara clearly believes that this incarnation-centered vision for the Church stands in opposition to any vision that would be possible under the terms of Barth’s theology. With Barth’s second edition of *The Epistle to the Romans* in mind, Przywara argues that, like Luther, Barth correctly understands the “God over us” part of the equation in that “everything of God is fundamentally and diametrically opposed to everything that is human.” Barth fails, however, to balance this pole with a notion of “God in us” that emphasizes God’s connection to creation. The result, Przywara concludes, is a construal where “creation simply is unconnected” to God.³⁰ He argues that this view has disastrous consequences because it leads to a “transcendence that capsizes immanence;” it is a view, in other words, that undermines any notion of God’s involvement in and with the world. It is here that Przywara invokes the *analogia entis*:

It falls also—and here we see the actual contrast to the Catholic concept of God—that in the place of the “analogy” between God and the creature, [Barth puts] pure “negation.” If the *analogia entis* of the Catholic concept of God means the mysterious tension of a “similar-dissimilar,” corresponding to the tension of the “God in us and above us,” then in the Protestant concept of God, the “similarity” has been completely crossed out.³¹

Przywara’s meaning is clear: with all notions of similarity “crossed out,” there is simply no room in Barth’s theology for God’s active presence in the world.³² In other words, not only does Barth not leave space for *any* kind of unity between God and human, he completely closes the door to any notion that the Church exists as continuing manifestation of the incarnation—the true “body of Christ”—in the modern world.³³ The consequence, Przywara believes, is that the Church is left without motivation to do anything other than retreat from the world

29 Przywara, “Gott in uns und Gott über uns,” 565.

30 Przywara, “Gott in uns und Gott über uns,” 553.

31 Przywara, “Gott in uns und Gott über uns,” 553–54.

32 This judgment was later repeated by Hans Urs von Balthasar in his evaluation of the second edition of Barth’s commentary on Romans: “the very heart of Christianity, its most crucial doctrine, the Incarnation, becomes impossible . . . there can be no such thing as the *life* of Christ, but only a *death* of Christ.” See Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth: Exposition and Interpretation*, trans. Edward T. Oakes (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992), 72.

33 Przywara, “Gott in uns und Gott über uns,” 556.

while looking to the God who stands above in judgment over the world. Such a theology is tragic, Przywara believes, because it means the abandonment of the Church's true mission. What the Church needs instead is a theology that holds to a proper understanding of God's relation to the world, one in which God's dissimilarity to the world is kept in balance with God's similarity to it. Such tension, Przywara thinks, is precisely what the Catholic *analogia entis* maintains. Because it describes human existence in relation to a God who exists both above *and* in relation to human beings, Przywara believes that the *analogia entis* promotes a view of the Church whose relation to the world follows precisely the same pattern: it is a Church *above* the world, but it is also a Church *in* the world.

THE EARLY VERSION OF THE *ANALOGIA ENTIS*

This vision drives Przywara's theology after this lecture, and he turns his efforts in the months and years ahead to articulating the *analogia entis* more fully. The pinnacle of this development during this early period is his 1926 book, *Religionsphilosophie katholischer Theologie*.³⁴ The argument in the book follows the line of thinking that Przywara had been developing over the previous years. His central claim is that all creatures exist within the same pattern of relationship to God because everything other than God receives its being from God in the same way. The problem is that while humans can come to some knowledge of this pattern by reflecting upon their own being and existence, they cannot recognize the full extent of it. Przywara demonstrates this fact by starting with a study of human consciousness, and he shows that the philosophical tradition has been unable to discover the true nature of the relation between the human consciousness and God. This failure, Przywara insists, has left philosophies of religion achingly close but finally unable to achieve their intended goal. The solution to their problem is found in the Catholic Church, because the Church's history reveals the *true* pattern of human existence and its relation with God—the pattern of *analogia entis*. The Church's mission, therefore, is to teach the world this pattern by engaging the world on its own terms and by demonstrating the truth of human being in relation to God through its life, liturgy and witness. This gift from the Church to the world will help the world discover its own true being, and this will move humanity away from despair and tension and toward peace with God and one another.

So what exactly is the *analogia entis*? Przywara presents it in this book as a reformulation of Thomas Aquinas' metaphysics in conversation with Augustinian restlessness. He uses Aquinas' distinction between essence and existence to describe how all human beings exist as both distinct from, and in relation to, God. Aquinas, of course, does not argue that God and the creature are part of some

34 This book is important, among other reasons, because its version of the *analogia entis* is the one that Karl Barth had in mind when he initially rejected the *analogia entis*. An English translation of this book exists under the title *Polarity: A German Catholic's Interpretation of Religion*, trans. A. C. Boquet (London: Oxford University Press, 1935). For an account of Barth's interaction with this book and the motivation behind his rejection of the *analogia entis*, see my *Karl Barth and the Analogia Entis*, chapters 4–5.

larger “structure of being.” Rather, for Aquinas, God *is* being, and as such, God is wholly distinct from all creatures who nevertheless have *their* being by participating in *his* being. Thomas works out this notion by drawing a distinction between the essence and existence of God and the essence and existence of creatures.

The logic of this distinction, at least as Przywara interprets it, works as follows: Each creature that *is*, exists. Each creature that exists has a set of special characteristics that are its own, and this set of characteristics is the creature’s *essence*—that in virtue of which the creature is what it is. For example, the essence of a horse is that set of characteristics that make it a horse: the horse’s “horseness.” But the horse’s “horseness” does not cause the horse *to be*.³⁵ That is why a creature is a creature: a creature’s *existence* is something altogether different from its *essence*. Its existence is not something it has but something it receives—and it receives this existence from God. Or, as Aquinas puts it, “all beings apart from God are not their own being, but are beings by participation.”³⁶ In the creature, therefore, essence and existence are not identical because essence subsists in the creature while existence is received by the creature. In contrast, God’s essence *is* to be.³⁷ God *is* being—the one self-subsistent being in whom every potentiality is realized—meaning that his essence and existence are one and the same. Thus, as Aquinas says, “God alone is being identical with essence, [while] in every creature . . . there must be found its essence or nature on the one hand, and its being on the other, which it acquires from God whose essence is his being.”³⁸

Przywara uses this pattern from Aquinas as the basis for the claim that every creature’s being takes analogical form, because he believes that analogy captures both the similarity and the distinction that Thomas sees between the essence and existence of God and that of the creature. His central claim is that this analogous relationship “testifies from itself to a God who is *beyond similitude*.”³⁹ In other words, human being itself testifies to, and in this sense reveals, God, who remains utterly distinct from the creature. This testimony occurs because, like God, the creature has a unity of essence and existence, but unlike God, the creature’s unity is a unity of “tension” and “becoming” rather than identity.⁴⁰ That is, within the

35 For a further explanation of this illustration, see Etienne Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1952), 175.

36 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I.44.1. Hereafter, *ST*.

37 See Thomas on God’s simplicity in *ST* I.3.3–4.

38 Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* 1.8.5.1; quoted and translated by Gregory P. Rocca, *Speaking the Incomprehensible God: Thomas Aquinas on the Interplay of Positive and Negative Theology* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2004), 250.

39 Erich Przywara, *Religionsphilosophie Katholischer Theologie*, Schriften, vol. II (Eisiedeln: Johannes-Verlag, 1962), 401.

40 Przywara, *Religionsphilosophie Katholischer Theologie*, 403. For Przywara, of course, God cannot “become” anything other than what he already is; the creature, however, “becomes” inasmuch as its essence is an “inward process essentially *within* existence.”

context of existence, the creature's essence appears only as "becomingness," because the creature's existence is something she receives at every moment from God. For Przywara, this means that the unity of essence and existence in the creature is never complete because the creature's essence is only realized "*over or above* [its] existence"—indicating that the creature's being cannot be considered apart from its relationship *to* and final end *in* God, who is ever greater than it and from whom it receives its being.⁴¹

Przywara's shorthand phrase for this idea is that the creature's essence is an "essence *in-over* existence." This phrase simply means that the creature, as creature, is intrinsically related to and testifies to God, even though God is wholly distinct from it. This is what Przywara means when he talks about the human existing in "analogy" to God. The human, he says, is similar to God through the possession of a unity of essence and existence, but even in this similarity it is essentially dissimilar to God because, in God, the unity of essence and existence is that of identity, whereas in the creature the unity of essence and existence is one of tension. Now since the relation of essence and existence is the essence of "being," so God and the creature are in "being" similar and dissimilar—that is, they are analogous to one another: and this is what we mean by *analogia entis*, analogy of being.⁴²

For Przywara, then, the creature testifies to God in and through its restless movement toward God, who is the ground and goal of its being. In this movement, however, because the creature is utterly dependent upon God for its being at every moment, God remains wholly distinct from it. Or, as Przywara puts it: "God as the pure 'Is' is, on the one side, so inward to the creation that the transient 'is' of the creation is only *from* him and *in* him—and yet on the other side, differentiated from the creation, above it as the pure 'Is,' for whom no relationship to anything which is 'becoming' is in any way possible."⁴³

This construal may seem complicated, but its point is simple: as Przywara put it, "the ultimate unity of the creature is not [in] itself, but [in] That Which is *above* itself."⁴⁴ Here lies Przywara's uniquely Catholic solution to the problem facing the modern world. He holds that a proper view of God will neither collapse God into creation nor divorce God from creation—as has been the case in both modern religious philosophy and Protestant theology. Rather, it will demonstrate that every creature's being is a revelation of the immanent yet utterly transcendent God who stands in constant relationship with the creature. This is, in fact, what the *analogia entis* demonstrates. It shows us that the creature is what it is only in relation to the God who is utterly other than it by affirming that the similarity between God and creature exists within an ever greater dissimilarity. For Przywara, this result points to a "peaceful tension" as the human remains at every moment

41 See also Przywara, *Analogia Entis*, Schriften, vol. III (Eisiedeln: Johannes-Verlag, 1962), 28.

42 Przywara, *Religionsphilosophie Katholischer Theologie*, 403.

43 Przywara, *Religionsphilosophie Katholischer Theologie*, 404. See also Przywara, *Analogia Entis*, 131–32, 171–73.

44 Przywara, *Religionsphilosophie Katholischer Theologie*, 404.

restlessly yet intimately related to the God who is utterly other than her. This peace is God's gift to the world, and because this gift is fully recognized only through the teaching of the Catholic Church, the Church's purpose and mission is to share this gift with the world.

This point helps us realize the full range of Przywara's theological vision when he formulated the *analogia entis*. As its core, the *analogia entis* is not about "analogy" or "being" at all; it is not, in other words, about technical Scholastic distinctions or metaphysics. The *analogia entis* is about the Church. In the face of a society that had lost its way during and after World War I, Przywara pulled together diverse strands of Catholic theology to formulate a renewed concept of the *analogia entis*, because he believed that it would provide the Roman Catholic Church with the philosophical and theological foundation it needed to engage the world with the truth of the Gospel. He hoped that this engagement would not only help a lost and dying world find the answers about God it had been unable to find on its own, but that it also would lead to a renewal of the Catholic Church itself, transforming it from a reactionary institution standing *against* the world to a vibrant community existing as the body of Christ *in* the world.

Keith L. Johnson is Assistant Professor of Theology at Wheaton College. He is the author of Karl Barth and the Analogia Entis (London: T & T Clark, forthcoming), which examines Barth's involvement in the debate about the analogy of being throughout the course of his career.

THE FRUIT OF THE TREE: ON THE AFFIRMATION AND USE OF ANALOGY

Joshua Davis

... the connexion between Deity as to a certain extent the Ideal of the creation, and the creation as the endless striving forward to this ideal does not reside in the exemplarism of the ever-persistent essence, nor yet in the dynamism of an existence which is forever mutating itself, but in the TENSION-IN-POLARITY which knits them together. Two absolute points of view are hence impossible for Catholic thinkers.

—Erich Przywara¹

[In Gal. 3:28] Paul says that *polarity* in the cosmos has been replaced by *unity* in Christ.

— J. Louis Martyn²

INTRODUCTION

My goal in this essay is to take some steps toward opening the dispute surrounding the so-called analogy of being as it has developed in the wake of Przywara and Barth's disagreement regarding its status for Christian theology. I will not offer close examination of either thinker's texts but will attempt only to propose what I hope are illuminating reflections on the nature of the logics, or grammars, of the respective positions. My guiding assumption is that, on the whole, the debate embodies a doctrinaire refusal, on both sides, actually to engage the opposing position on its own terms.³ For Barthians, Przywara's position is generally accused of being flawed for starting from a "general metaphysics," which, as Hans Frei has shown, is not for Barth an obdurate refusal of philosophy, but rather

1 Erich Przywara, *Polarity: A German Catholic's Interpretation of Religion*, trans. Alan Coates Bouquet (London: Oxford University Press 1935), 52–53.

2 J. Louis Martyn, *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1997), 119.

3 John Betz's recent essays are possible exceptions. See John R. Betz, "Beyond the Sublime: The Aesthetics of the Analogy of Being (Part One)," *Modern Theology* 21, no. 3 (2005): 367–411 and "Beyond the Sublime: The Aesthetics of the Analogy of Being (Part Two)," *Modern Theology* 22, no. 1 (2006): 1–50. Other than Bouquet's translation of *Polarity*, these essays are the most thorough treatment of Przywara's position currently available in English. I have relied on Betz throughout my discussion.

is his own unique brand of demythologizing.⁴ Conversely, Przywara's⁵ most notably object that, not only is the Barthian critique untrue of Przywara's position, but also that Barth's refusal to allow any metaphysical explication of revelation displays his own (flawed) metaphysical assumptions. Each position trades rather facilely on the truth—most likely more applicable of present-day interpreters than of the original thinkers themselves—that neither has really understood the other. This is likely true, but in the absence of a genuine isolation of the nature of the disagreement, the two sides quite simply appear to be stomping their feet.

It will be my claim here that this dispute is much more complex than this particular account of matters will allow. This is due to the genuine commonality that exists between both thinkers as their positions converge around a problem concerning the necessary conditions for knowledge of God. Although they depart from one another in that Przywara develops his insights metaphysically and Barth dogmatically (Christocentrically), what appears from that angle as divergent 'methods' is more accurately understood as different conclusions regarding shared ontological premises. In the end, Przywara and Barth are at odds because they share a common ontological vision from which they draw decisively different conclusions.⁶

The first part of this essay demonstrates this commonality in relation to the epistemological and ontological concerns that develop in the wake of Kant. The second unfolds the consequences of this idea for analogy in light of Dieter Hen-

4 See Hans Frei, "Analogy and the Spirit in the Theology of Karl Barth," in *Unpublished Pieces: Transcripts from the Yale Divinity School Archive*, ed. Mike Higton (Unpublished: 1998–2004), 6–7. Available at <http://goring.net/theology/?p=214>.

5 A number of thinkers that would not understand themselves as advancing Przywara's specific version of analogy would nonetheless fall within his purview in this regard, e.g., John Milbank.

6 The nature of this essay does not allow for detailed textual investigation of Barth's and Przywara's writings. For such discussions, in addition to the original texts, the reader should consult: James Collins, "Przywara's *Analogia Entis*," *Thought* 17 (1942): 119–35; James M. McDermott, "Dialectical Analogy: The Oscillating Center of Rahner's Thought," *Gregorianum* 75 (1994): 675–703; Niels C. Nielsen, "*Analogia Entis* as the Basis of Buddhist-Christian Dialogue," *Modern Theology* 3 (1987): 345–57; "Analogy and the Knowledge of God: An Ecumenical Appraisal (Roman Catholic and Protestant Interpretations in Relation to the Debate about the Analogy of Being between Erich Przywara, S. J., and Karl Barth)," *Rice University Studies* 60 (1974): 21–102; "Przywara's Philosophy of the *Analogia Entis*," *Review of Metaphysics* 5 (1952): 599–620; James V. Zeitz, "Erich Przywara on Ultimate Reality and Meaning: 'Deus Semper Major,' 'God Ever Greater,'" *Ultimate Reality and Meaning* 12 (1989): 192–201; James V. Zeitz, "God's Mystery in Christ: Reflections on Erich Przywara and Eberhard Jüngel [the Analogy of Being]," *Communio* 12 (1985): 158–72; James V. Zeitz, "Przywara and Von Balthasar on Analogy," *Thomist* 52 (1988): 473–98; Frei, "Analogy and the Spirit in the Theology of Karl Barth," 6–28; Bruce L. McCormack, *Orthodox and Modern: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 175–79, 183–200; Bruce L. McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology: Its Genesis and Development, 1909–1936* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995): 14–20, 383–91.

rich's analysis of Fichte's discovery of the impasse of reflective self-determination. This section distinguishes Przywara and Barth in relation to their capacities to avoid the negative determination of identity at work in reflective dialectics. I conclude by drawing on the work of J. Louis Martyn's discussion of Paul's letter to the Galatians as an illustration of the consistency and superiority of Barth's perspective.

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND THE QUESTION OF IDENTITY

Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* is widely recognized as decisive for the shape of modern theology even where it is most stridently rejected. He rightly insisted against Enlightenment rationalist theology that God evades rational objectification, yet his insistence that this assertion also entails an absolute rejection of any objective apprehension of God has been strongly contested from the start. The critiques of that claim have tended to move in two directions, each radiating from a central dissatisfaction with the restraints he placed on discursive thought. The first tended to develop as a defense of Thomist realism, some version of which has since been consistently adopted by Roman Catholic theologians—from Neo-Scholasticism to Neo-Thomism, and from Transcendental Thomism to the so-called New Theology.⁷ The alternate approach is adopted in Romanticism and Idealism, which generally accepts some version of Kant's critique. Although a comprehensive investigation of the intriguing overlapping between these two perspectives is beyond the scope of this present study, it does bear on the present question.⁸ After all, Przywara's Augustinian-Thomism is decidedly not free of Romantic and Idealist influences, nor did Barth's Christocentricism develop apart from important Kantian and post-Kantian influences.⁹ The two perspectives diverge, of course, in their relationship to the Augustinian and Thomist heritage; yet the post-Idealist milieu of German thought in which they wrote has left an indelible mark on each. I will therefore limit my attention to a set of key insights regarding the intersection of epistemological and ontological questions as developed out of Romanticism and Idealism that mark the turn to analogy as something of a response to Kantian dualism.¹⁰

7 Neo-Thomism and Transcendental Thomism both took Kant very seriously. Their work, however, has always been oriented toward demonstrating continuity between Kant's insights and Thomas Aquinas. On these points, see the remarkable two studies by Gerald A. McCool, *Catholic Theology in the Nineteenth Century: The Quest for a Unitary Method* (New York: Seabury Press, 1977), and *From Unity to Pluralism: The Internal Evolution of Thomism* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1989.)

8 For a discussion of this, see McCool, *Catholic Theology in the Nineteenth Century: The Quest for a Unitary Method*, especially 1–36.

9 McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology: Its Genesis and Development, 1909–1936*, 31–77.

10 With regard to this discussion of the issues surrounding the reception of Kant, the reader should consult Manfred Frank, "Fragments of a Theory of Self-Consciousness from Kant to Kierkegaard," *Critical Horizons* 5 (2004): 53–136; Andrew Bowie, *Introduction to German Philosophy: From Kant to Habermas* (Malden, MA: Blackwell,

The fundamental concern in this regard was the impression that Kant had arbitrarily cut off any possibility to attain genuine knowledge of the world. The realist critique of Kant focused on the lack of correspondence between mind and matter, fearing that it undermined the genuine objectivity of truth. Idealism, on the other hand, admiring Kant's commitment to preserve freedom, sought to affirm the subject alone as the basis for their union. At issue in both accounts are the necessary conditions for obtaining genuine knowledge of the world, which both agreed demands a more integrated account of mind and matter than Kant allowed.

This epistemological point opens out directly, at this juncture, onto the ontological questions of the relationship of identity and difference.¹¹ As both Romantic and Idealist critics of Kant soon realized, if the separation of mind and matter was to be bridged, an account of their convergence, their identity, must also be formulated. But that account could not merely repeat Spinoza's vision of nature's singular substance since he conceived that difference only as a negative determination (*natura naturata*) in and through the drive for self-preservation (*conatus essendi*).¹² A genuinely positive articulation of difference was needed as a constitutive component of identity itself, which could articulate some point of identification between the knower and the known that nonetheless maintain their distinction.¹³

This nexus of issues bears directly on the theological question of analogy. If the concern is to articulate how a finite being can apprehend God as an 'object' of knowledge, then there must be some basis upon which the world, precisely as different from God, can be said to correspond to God. Such correspondence must involve neither the creature's divinization nor derogation, and must preclude both the reduction of God to humanity and the claim that God is absolutely unknowable. The dispute between Przywara and Barth occurs here, at these converging epistemological and ontological lines. Yet, precisely because each develops a version of analogy to address this intersection, the point of conflict—and whether those terms were altogether clear to them seems to me to be an open question—only concerns the appropriate interpretation and application of this ontological structure of identification. It does not concern the ontological assumptions themselves. I will take a brief moment to explore this idea in relation to each thinker.

When Przywara insists, following the declaration of the Fourth Lateran Council, that the basic Roman Catholic mode of religion, and its concomitant philosophy of religion, is an affirmation that the world exists in a relation to God

2003), 58–117; and also Thandeka, *The Embodied Self: Friedrich Schleiermacher's Solution to Kant's Problem of the Empirical Self* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1995), 15–37.

11 See Frank, "Fragments of a Theory of Self-Consciousness," 78–110. Such ontological concerns were exactly what Roman Catholic Thomism had maintained and Protestant liberalism had sought to evade, especially in the Neo-Kantian variants of Ritschl and Hermann in which Barth was trained.

12 On the relationship of these issues to Spinoza, see Andrew Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 15–29.

13 See Frank, "Fragments of a Theory of Self-Consciousness," 78–110.

of similarity in ever-greater dissimilarity, he is in part articulating the ontological relation of identity and difference that is required for knowledge to be possible, especially knowledge of God.¹⁴ Przywara does not use the language of identity and difference, preferring instead Thomas' ontological categories of essence and existence. The result, however, is the same. According to Przywara's account, the world's self-identity, its essence, *is* difference precisely because its mode of existence is derivative and therefore does not correspond to its essence.¹⁵ Inasmuch as its existence is derivative, its essence is both "in" and "beyond" it, marking the creature as a *becoming* that displays a "unity-in-tension."¹⁶ As Betz puts it, the creature "only 'is' *as* becoming, specifically, as a 'coming-to-be' of essence."¹⁷

This fact has two important implications for analogy. First, every immanent difference within the world is related by way of an analogical correspondence of reciprocal identification and differentiation that is shared between them, which *identifies* them. Secondly, and most importantly, this immanent differentiation is only manifested in relation to the Absolute Identity of identity and difference that is Being itself (*ipsum esse*). It is only in its manifest differentiation from Being (*ipsum esse*) that finite being (*ens commune*) can display the very difference that defines it. What appears as an analogical "unity-in-tension" in created being is herein disclosed as a unified relation of "tension-in-polarity" between God and the world.¹⁸ As such, the world is "suspended" in the "middle" between God and nothing. As Betz notes, this is a genuine and "insuperable" affirmation of difference.¹⁹ The creature is established in difference as the manifestation of what is absolutely different from it: namely, Absolute Identity.

As I have shown above, this ontological relation of unity-in-difference is not only a basic metaphysical structure, but is the necessary condition for knowledge in general. Betz is surely right to insist that Przywara's position is not tantamount to subsuming God beneath a general category of being. As the perfect and utterly mysterious coincidence of identity and difference, God cannot be a being among others. There is, he notes, always some excessive reserve in which the absolute priority of God is preserved as the basis of the relation.²⁰ For Przywara, this structure is simply the philosophical expression of *creatio ex nihilo*, thus displaying the "unity-in-tension" that marks the creature's self-relation and the "tension-in-polarity" that identifies it in relation to God.²¹

In fact, neither Barth's detractors nor followers readily recognize that his position is the same as Przywara's regarding the ontological assumptions nec-

14 Betz, "Beyond the Sublime: The Aesthetics of the Analogy of Being (Part Two)," 13.

15 *Ibid.*, 22, 29.

16 *Ibid.*

17 *Ibid.*, 26.

18 *Ibid.*, 22–29.

19 *Ibid.*, 19, 30. This is both an ontological and epistemological suspension (see also pg. 15).

20 *Ibid.*, 28–35.

21 *Ibid.*, 29.

essary to obtain genuine knowledge of God. What is more, that position stays largely unchanged throughout his body of work, although he had varying degrees of success in articulating it and may not always have been consistent in his application of its consequences on doctrinal matters.²² With regard to that ontological relation, Barth differs from Przywara only in that he is oriented by epistemological rather than overtly metaphysical questions. Nonetheless, his analogy of faith is premised on the same ontological assumptions as Przywara's, and discloses that structure in much the same way Przywara's ontological language reveals an epistemological possibility—and does so for the same reasons. That Barth agrees with Przywara in this way is at least one important implication of Bruce McCormack's thesis regarding Barth's "critical, dialectical realism."²³ If Barth is indeed the realist McCormack argues he is, this relationship of identity and difference supplies the necessary ontological conditions for it.²⁴ It is Hans Frei though, who in his unpublished essay on Barth's treatment of analogy and the Holy Spirit, has perhaps done the most to convey the mechanics of those commitments.²⁵ Commenting on Barth's distinction between concept and apprehension in *CD III/2*, Frei notes that the analogy of faith takes the form it does precisely because Barth understands faith as an undivided and preconceptual mode of apprehension.²⁶ Barth writes, "Apprehension [*vernehmen*] is the undivided act in which perception [*wahrnehmen*] makes thinking [*denken*] possible and thinking makes perception actual."²⁷ Faith is the mode of apprehension in which both perceptual and cognitive correspondence to God occurs. While faith is not reducible to this apprehension, inasmuch as it is a real apprehension, faith renders truthful reflexive perception and thought of God possible.²⁸

At first glance, this way of conceiving the matter would appear to occlude (in Neo-Kantian fashion), rather than manifest, the ontological structure implied by the epistemological concern. Barth could be read here as suggesting that the

22 This is one important consequence of the critique of Barth in Nathan R. Kerr, *Christ, History, and Apocalyptic: The Politics of Christian Mission* (London: SCM Press, 2008), 63–92, which I take to be largely correct.

23 See McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology: Its Genesis and Development, 1909–1936*.

24 McCormack has also recently called attention to these ontological commitments, underscoring their fundamentally Christological grounding. See McCormack, *Orthodox and Modern: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth*, 183–200.

25 This is true despite the fact that Frei's article continues to unfold the consequences of Barth's position in wholly Idealist terms in its conclusion to a dilemma between Christomonism and untranscended dialectic in Barth. Frei, "Analogy and the Spirit in the Theology of Karl Barth," 6–28.

26 *Ibid.*, 7–8.

27 *Ibid.*, 8 (Frei's translation). The reader should note what appears to be the punning occurring with regard to *vernehmen* and *wahrnehmen* in this passage—namely, the complex relationships between "hearing," "perception," "taking," and "truth." The existing English translations, including Frei's, do not capture this. I am grateful to Craig Keen for drawing my attention to this.

28 *Ibid.*

Absolute Identity of identity and difference occurs only in an act of faith carried out not simply in indifference to being, but in a kind of existentialist negative determination of it.²⁹ A different but related reading would understand this as the actualization of the conceptual mediation of the knowledge of God. A still different reading would take faith as the immediate conceptual content that perception and thought unfold. These last two are different versions of the somewhat Hegelian reading of the threefold form of the Word of God in §4 of I/1.³⁰ What all overlook, however, is that Barth's insistence on the priority of the undivided act of faith in revelation is oriented toward the disclosure of the priority of the order of being over the order of thought.³¹ To oppose faith to being or to render it a necessary moment in the mediation of the knowledge of Being would effectively reduce it to reflective cognition on a state of human consciousness. This would simply repeat the substance of his critique of Schleiermacher, construing faith in a way Barth explicitly refuses. Frei claims Barth ends here. But this conclusion is decidedly not what this discussion of the Word of God nor what the preconceptual status of faith implies, as should be apparent from the fact that the context of these claims is a discussion of the unity of soul and body (i.e., identity of mind and matter). Barth is not describing a kind of immediate relation to a transcendental principle (e.g., Schleiermacher's "feeling," a transcendentalized Christ, or a subject-subject relation of Spirit), but an historical and material relation of trust in an historical and material human being, Jesus of Nazareth.³² His claim is that correspondence to God in perception and thought occurs precisely inasmuch as one relates to this man in trust. Such is the reason Barth's analogy is "of faith" and "of relation."

The ontological aspects are implied by Barth's account specifically insofar as they presume an ontological coincidence of knower and known, of mind and matter, prior to the reflexive acts of perception and thought through which that relation finds expression. Barth notes, in this same passage, it is because of humanity's unique unity of soul and body that we are capable of apprehending God as God in revelation. As Barth states, "that he is body makes it possible for another

29 This is how Barth—especially the early Barth of both the *Roman I* and *Roman II* commentaries—has often been read, and one crucial reason McCormack's work to correct this assumption is so important.

30 There the Word, through the work of the Spirit in and with the solicitation of faith, can be interpreted in just this fashion. Like a kind of objective spirit, it is assumed that the Word is given a determinate content in preaching (i.e., in-itself) and scripture (i.e., for-itself) which is actualized in its immediate reception as revelation by a faith whose content is similarly mediated in perception and thought.

31 Frei notes this fact but continues to believe that Barth fails to escape Idealism. In doing so, Frei does not take seriously enough that a discussion of embodiment is the context for these claims. See Frei, "Analogy and the Spirit in the Theology of Karl Barth," 11, 15–18.

32 See Barth, *CD IV/2*. Because of the complexities and ambiguities involved in the interpretation of Barth's emphasis on the man Jesus in this volume, much more would have to be said about this relationship and the nature of this trust than can be developed here. See Kerr, *Christ, History, and Apocalyptic*, 63–92.

as such to enter his consciousness, for him to posit another as possible.”³³ It is on this basis that human beings are called to a partnership with God, which, “in relation and correspondence to what he perceives of God,” is not to be “limited to a fellowship of knowledge, but . . . [is] a fellowship of action.”³⁴ Precisely as a unified preconceptual apprehension, faith can only be an irreducibly worldly event, understood in a strictly realist sense. Because the knowledge it engenders arises from a worldly event and produces a worldly act, the presupposition for both must be the point of identification between identity and difference, soul and body, self and world. Such apprehension cannot be a transcendental principle, but must be an embodied, relational encounter, and this, Barth notes explicitly, is the basis for both the knowledge of and distinction from God in revelation.³⁵ The account of identity and difference precisely parallels those of Przywara in this regard insofar as some common point of identity serves as the basis for both differentiation and identification.

However, there remains an important difference. Here Barth’s emphasis on epistemology takes on greater importance in distinguishing him from Przywara. The decisive point of Barth’s claim is in his refusal to render this point of identification in the world the basis of analogical correspondence. Instead, he insists that such correspondence occurs only in faith. It is imperative to note that this is the point where his rejection of Przywara repeats the content of his departure from Schleiermacher. For neither Barth nor Przywara compromises the priority of rev-

33 Barth, *CD* III/2, 400–1.

34 *Ibid.*, 406.

35 *Ibid.*, 399–406. It is important to note here that this reading would make Barth’s epistemological assumptions a virtual repetition of Schleiermacher’s as expressed in the *Dialectic*, where mind and matter meet at a point of immediate ‘indifference’ that precedes thought and will. The difference, of course, which is vital, is that Barth refuses to reduce revelation to the mediation of the feeling of immediate and absolute dependence disclosed here. His reasons for refusing this are directly tied to his refusal of Przywara’s position. I elaborate on this point below. Here, in reference to Schleiermacher, it is simply enough to say that this is because Barth takes with the utmost of seriousness—even if he is not always as attentive as he should be—the worldly, embodied character of faith, insisting that it engenders both real knowledge and concrete action. His point is nothing more than insistence that the eventual and relational character of revelation, grace, and faith mean that none can be strictly coincident with the givenness of being as such—the operative assumption of both Schleiermacher and Przywara. This difference is primarily captured in their interwoven but contrasting portraits of election (see Matthias Gockel, *Barth and Schleiermacher on the Doctrine of Election: A Systematic-Theological Comparison* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2006]). The difference in this instance being that faith is not reducible to the mediation of a certain state of being, and revelation is not the disclosure of that given state of affairs. Rather, for Barth, faith is that mode of apprehension that has been made possible by the contingent appearance of an historical, material person. It is the asymmetrical priority of God’s action in the establishment of this relation and the fact that this point of identity is only known within that relation that further forestalls the possibility of its being reducible to an existential “point of contact” (*Anknüpfungspunkt*), as argued for by Brunner.

elation, since both think explicitly in those terms. Rather, Barth's difference from Przywara lies with his insistence on maintaining a pattern of thought in which revelation is irreducible to the disclosure of the immediate status of created being, just as faith is irreducible to a mediating moment in conceptual consciousness wherein such a fact is known. Both revelation and faith are mediate, rather than immediate, determinations (i.e., identifications) of being and precede the reflexive ontic or cognitive acknowledgement of them. This is the unique relational form of asymmetrical immediacy that Barth understands in his claim that God is always the Subject of revelation, which simply cannot conform to von Balthasar's interpretation.³⁶ For, although a given ontological structure of identity must indeed be the context for that perception and thought of revelation, it is not to that *structure* that one is conformed in analogy, but to the One who is revealed to have remained faithful to what She has given. As Frei notes, this is the reason the analogy of faith is an analogy of becoming and not of being.³⁷ Faith does disclose the gifted status of the *given*, but only inasmuch as it *happens* as the gift displaying the given as the theater of God's loving fidelity.

Such correspondence does properly identify an existing state of affairs, yet it does so as irreducible to a principle of Absolute Identity. This is apparent from the fact that Barth refuses—often misleadingly under the heading of “natural theology,” “abstraction,” or “general metaphysics”—to make the additional step Przywara judges as decisive. Barth's refusal to make this step, however, is not tantamount to a rejection of its truth.³⁸ He does not refuse the idea of Absolute Identity, but rather the positing of it as a theological principle. For, as I will now proceed to show, it is only in fidelity to the idea of Absolute Identity that Barth refuses this step. I will unfold this idea in the next section in conversation with Dieter Henrich's discussion of Fichte's insight into the unintelligibility of reflective subjectivity.

THE PROBLEM OF REFLECTION AND THE LOGIC OF ANALOGY

If the question of analogy arises for modern theology in part in response to the epistemological problematic posed by Kant, then that question is likewise inseparable from the ontological relationship of identity and difference. I have argued that Przywara and Barth are in agreement that their respective forms of analogy demand some ontological coincidence of identity and difference as the necessary condition for true knowledge (both general and revelatory). They diverge in their assessments of the theological propriety of positing a principle of Absolute Identity as the ground of that analogical relation. The reasons for this can be illuminated with reference to Dieter Henrich's seminal thesis regarding

36 See Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth: Exposition and Interpretation*, trans. Edward T. Oaks (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992), 163.

37 Frei, “Analogy and the Spirit in the Theology of Karl Barth,” 8.

38 This would, effectively, be to fail to have a doctrine of creation.

what he has dubbed “Fichte’s Original Insight.”³⁹ What I take as illuminating in Henrich’s account of Fichte is what he claims Fichte discovered in his attempt to render subjectivity the foundational principle for Kant’s philosophy. A brief summary of that analysis is in order.

Fichte’s work is in keeping with the Idealist dissatisfaction with Kant’s dualism of subject and object but appreciation of his desire to preserve human freedom with that refusal. Together, these commitments led him to insist that human subjectivity must be the single principle by which the whole of Kant’s philosophy could be united. Convinced that all engagement with the world could be accounted for as the living activity of a self, Fichte’s problem then became that of articulating how the self came to apprehend itself as an object.⁴⁰ *The Science of Knowledge* is devoted to solving this problem, and developed in three distinct forms, each of which makes an additional advance on the prior version in its formulation of the problem posed by self-consciousness.⁴¹

Thandeka has helpfully summarized the three decisive moments in Fichte’s analysis.⁴² In the first, the self recognizes itself in its act of thinking as it returns to itself as self-positing. This is the moment of self-awareness. With the second step comes recognition of the need for a differentiating concept to mediate this awareness. This concept must appear within this activity as ‘other’ to the self precisely in order to make the self apparent to itself. This second moment is the most decisive because it is here that Fichte became aware of the impossibility of grounding self-consciousness in this reflective structure of self-determination. His assumption here was that he could account for self-awareness merely by setting the self up (i.e., positing itself) in opposition to a conceptual ‘other,’ which, as its opposite, would serve as the negative determination of an otherwise empty content. Yet, Fichte recognized that this reflective model already presupposed the fact of self-awareness and did not at all explain it. Indeed, the very content that this ‘other’ was meant to supply must already have been operative. The third and final step was not itself an actual solution to the difficulty, but rather the most adequate articulation of the problem. In this moment, Fichte stated that the self recognizes

39 Dieter Henrich, “Fichte’s Original Insight,” trans. David R. Lachterman, *Contemporary German Philosophy I* (1982) 15–51. The line of development I will take in relation to Henrich’s analysis has somewhat been anticipated in Frei (see “Analogy and the Spirit in the Theology of Karl Barth,” 15). Also consult Frank, “Fragments of a Theory of Self-Consciousness,” 76–84, and Thandeka, *The Embodied Self*, 39–62. Henrich’s most extended discussion of these matters is available in *Between Kant and Hegel: Lectures on German Idealism*, ed. David S. Pacini (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 157–276.

40 Henrich, “Fichte’s Original Insight,” 20–23. See also Thandeka, *The Embodied Self*, 50–55.

41 Henrich, “Fichte’s Original Insight,” 23–50. See also Henrich, *Between Kant and Hegel*, 202–76.

42 See Thandeka, *The Embodied Self: Friedrich Schleiermacher’s Solution to Kant’s Problem of the Empirical Self*, 39–62. Henrich’s original discussion of these three moments can be found in Henrich, “Fichte’s Original Insight,” 23–50, and are most fully elaborated in Henrich, *Between Kant and Hegel*, 202–76.

that the very differentiation of self and other, of identity and difference, is a necessary presupposition of consciousness that cannot be explained by it, and which can only appear for consciousness on the basis of an original unity, a primordial identity of identity and difference. This, Henrich insists, is Fichte's "original insight": namely, that consciousness cannot ground itself through reflective self-positing, but rather reflexively "discovers" itself on the basis of an activity that precedes and determines the self as an expression of that activity.

Just as Fichte understood self-consciousness on the basis of a prior identity of knower and known as the condition for its appearing, so any recognition of difference occurs within an overarching horizon of identity. Neither identity nor difference is established through the reciprocity of their relation to one another, but rather are only known on the presupposition of a more basic identity of the two within being.⁴³ It is altogether beside my point here, in relationship to the question of analogy, whether Fichte's analysis of consciousness is finally correct as an account of subjectivity or as an interpretation of Kant. I have only drawn upon his analysis to shed light on the differences between Przywara's and Barth's accounts of analogy.

For Przywara, analogy is the key to the ontological problem posed by Kant in that it supplies the conceptual framework in which to properly identify identity and difference such that the various terms are neither reduced to a monism nor torn apart by opposition. Przywara's impulses are clearly oriented toward resolving the problem of reflection in a more fundamental harmony. This is most apparent in his step beyond Heidegger's analysis of the ontological difference. Przywara recognizes that Being cannot simply appear as the veiling and unveiling (i.e., identification and differentiation) of manifestation in *Dasein* (or language, for the later Heidegger), but must rather be the absolute union of the two, which cannot itself be one of the reciprocal terms, a being among beings. God is here the absolute horizon of Identity that makes possible the (reflexive) difference that is creation (i.e., identity in-and-as-difference.) Such is his "tension-in-polarity" that "suspends" the world between God and nothingness, thereby rendering God conceivable as that Unity against which not even difference can be set in opposition. As such, as Betz contends, difference has the final word precisely because it is against this horizon that the creature is identified as different from God's Absolute Identity.⁴⁴ The entire issue between Przywara and Barth turns on the nature of this mode of identification.

I have argued above that Barth's position finally amounts to a refusal to concede that a shared commitment to a particular ontological structure of identity is a sufficient condition to account for our correspondence to God. This is much the same as Luther's insistence that metaphysical knowledge of God (i.e., a theol-

43 Manfred Frank has summarized this problem well in noting that it is not enough with regard to utter the tautology $A=A$; nor is it coherent to say that $A=B$. One must be able to say how it is that one can say what one must say, which is that $A/A=B$. See Frank, "Fragments of a Theory of Self-Consciousness from Kant to Kierkegaard," 83–89.

44 See Betz, "Beyond the Sublime: Part Two," 14.

ogy of glory) is genuinely possible, but only discloses God's wrath because it was not how God desired to be encountered, and therefore was a kind of "robbery."⁴⁵ Barth is making a similar point in his association of the analogy of being with the antichrist. That point is also decidedly metaphysical, even as it demands the theological priority of dogmatics.

That point is quite simple: if analogy is deployed, even in the wake of revelation, as a means of identifying created being (*ens commune*) on the basis of its participated share—and therefore difference from—Absolute Identity (*ipsam esse*), then the very *act* of such identification can only commence on the basis of a dialectical inversion of negative determination in which Absolute Identity is *taken up* and *instrumentalized* as an 'other' against which the identity of the world is secured. Such is, in fact, the great irony of John Betz's recent critique of Barth. In seeking to gain ground over Barth by noting that difference has the final word for Przywara, he is inadvertently making Barth's point for him.⁴⁶ While it is true that Przywara always retains God's priority, he does so (if we follow Betz's reading) in a manner that conceives that difference, in its sublime disclosure of beauty, strictly in terms of that 'otherness' against which the creature identifies itself. It introduces a reflective moment into what is otherwise the mere reflexivity of the God/world relation precisely because it inaugurates a mode of identification in abstraction from that positive relation. This is the proper way to speak of abstraction in relation to God and the analogy of being, not in relation to a "general metaphysical" structure, but as the inauguration of a dialectic of negative determination. This is the proper way to interpret the meaning of Barth's claims that the analogy of being never takes adequate account of human sin, for there is no more precise name for such a gesture than "sin." The problem, in the end, is not that Przywara's account is untrue, but that it is unfaithful.

This raises the question of whether Barth is capable of conceiving matters differently. If we disregard his insistence on maintaining the priority of dogmatic language and actually develop the kind of metaphysical application of Christocentricism he refused, isolating the ontological implications of that position, we discover that his argument is oriented toward articulating the sufficient conditions for the cognitive apprehension of that which is most radically *different* from the world. His position is decisively not that the world stands in a dialectical relation to God; nor does his position imply a "theopanism" of "Christomonism." On the contrary, by understanding revelation in the terms that he does, Barth is insisting that in Jesus Christ alone God decisively appears as God in that creation's difference from God is positively determined in that difference, such that God is shown

45 See Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 25–34.

46 It must be noted that this is a strictly Scotist gesture, which Przywara insists is integral to his project. See Przywara, *Polarity*, 108–9, where he states that the "special mission of Scotism" is to declare "the unsearchableness of God and of the poverty-stricken impotence of all human attempts to confine this inscrutability within clear outlines" (109). I am indebted to conversations with Paul J. DeHart for first noting this and drawing my attention to it.

to be free from the world and thereby utterly *for* it, and the creature is decisively disclosed as *for* God. This way of conceiving the matter marks the transformation of difference from a function of identity to a genuine affirmation of true otherness. The result is not the analogy of a “suspended” being, but that of the *faithful* affirmation of the priority of a relation.

CONCLUSION: ANALOGY AND THE PRIORITY OF DOGMATICS

Barth’s position is intended to be an unwavering affirmation of absolute priority of all unity as irreducibly grounded *in Christ*. What I have tried to demonstrate in metaphysical terms throughout this essay, I would like in conclusion to underscore in more dogmatic terms with reference to Scripture.

In his comments on Galatians 3:28 and 6:14-15, J. Louis Martyn notes that Paul insists that in the cross of Christ God has “separated him from a *cosmos* that consisted of a pair of opposites.”⁴⁷ Indeed, within the apocalyptic framework that marks Paul’s thought in this regard, in the cross of Christ, those “elements of the cosmos” (*ta stoicheia tou kosmou*) (Gal. 4:3 and 4:9) have been destroyed and are no longer “pairs of opposites” (*t’anantia*), in that they are united to him in his resurrection. Paul directly associates those elements, in their opposition, with slavery to the powers and principalities, with sin. It is not so much that these distinctions are evil, as that they are enslaving; they do not and cannot express the “glorious freedom of the children of God” that has dawned with the “new creation.”

However, the key, as Martyn notes, is to perceive the importance of the connection Paul draws between these enslaving elements and religion.⁴⁸ Religious distinctions are themselves reflected in the ontological order in that the oppositional pairing of “Jew and Greek” is set alongside the natural pairing of “male and female” and the political and economic pairing of “slave and free”—each of which, Paul says, do not exist in Christ. This claim is made in direct opposition to the Teachers of the Jerusalem church who have infiltrated the Galatian community and their particular interpretation of Jewish-Christian tradition of rectification (justification). Much like the dispute between Barth and Przywara, Paul and the Teachers both agree that God has acted definitely in Christ to set right what has gone wrong in the world. Yet the Teachers understand this to mean that an “explicit relation” exists between God’s deed of “rectification” in Christ and the disclosure of and adherence to a particular religious structure (the Law).⁴⁹ Adherence to the Law is, for the Teachers, a matter of ontological significance in that the salvation of the Gentiles, their rectification, demands their proper identification with the *religio* of God’s covenant people. And this argument is just what Paul most adamantly refuses, insisting that this is merely to reintroduce the very elements of opposition, the very polarities that God has resolved into unity in Christ. It is “to return to the old cosmos” (Gal. 4:9-10).⁵⁰ And, it is this very

47 Martyn, *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul*, 138.

48 See *ibid.*, 138–39.

49 *Ibid.*, 148.

50 *Ibid.*, 139.

return Paul sees displayed in Peter's refusal to continue to share the Eucharistic table with non-Law observant Gentile Christians, which Paul makes clear is the moment of Peter's separation from that rectification. In the categories of this essay, Paul's point can be said to be that, in Christ, all negative determinations have been rendered naught by God's definitive deed of rectification. As a result, any positive analogical correspondence to God occurs only because of the priority of God's positive determination of the world in the revelation of God in Christ, and not according to the identification of a relation within a given state of affairs.

Perhaps it is not insignificant that the peculiar unity Przywara achieves in the analogy of being is one he labels explicitly "religious," for it does appear to presume a fundamental, constitutive opposition of pairs, albeit one of harmony rather than division. In light of Martyn's work on Paul, it is not, finally, the achievement of unity that is decisive in the discussion, but its nature—whether it is predicated on an affirmation of the positive union of difference that is God's work alone, revealed in Christ, or whether it perpetuates an identity generated within a reflective circle of negative determination. The problem, then, is not that Przywara's vision is doomed to such incessant circularity, but that it does not need it. This is what lends to it a rather tragi-comic absurdity. Perhaps here we can grasp what escaped even Barth: namely, the obscure rationale for his tendency to think the analogy of being with abstraction, linking such abstraction both to religion and then sin. Barth is Paul to Przywara's Peter.

In the end, perhaps the analogy of being is best thought of, if thought of at all under that name, like the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It stands at the center of the Garden much less a sign of prohibition than of our matrimony, our union with God, of God's pledge to us. Our eating from it, then, is not injurious because it transgresses a law, but because it betrays that relation—and does so in an act that is more callous than malicious. For there is a peculiar scent of retreat in this moment of self-regard, not merely of refusal but also of a certain fearful contempt.

Joshua Davis is a Ph.D. candidate in theological studies in the Vanderbilt University Graduate Department of Religion. His dissertation is on creation, grace, and Christian subjectivity.

THE ROLE OF THE ANALOGY OF FAITH IN KARL BARTH'S THEOLOGICAL ETHICS, SPECIFICALLY IN RELATION TO "THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY AND THE CIVIL COMMUNITY"

Emily Dumler

Karl Barth insisted that ethics and dogmatics are, and must remain, inseparable. His dogmatics were ethical dogmatics, and his ethics were theological ethics. For Barth, all ethical activity consists in discerning the will of God and bearing witness to it.¹ His approach, however, has been the subject of much criticism and debate within theological ethics. His political ethics are no exception. Particularly his post-war essay, "The Christian Community and the Civil Community," has been scrutinized and attacked. Barth is accused of arbitrariness, lack of concretion, inconsistency in his use of analogy, and imposing conclusions reached on a priori grounds, leading some to deduce that this essay, and Barth's ethics moreover, have little to no significance for theological ethics. Surprisingly, many of these critics make no reference to Barth's doctrine of analogy, which, though not mentioned explicitly in the article, forms the basis of all theological ethics in his work and is the implicit foundation for the use of analogy in this essay. "The Christian Community and the Civil Community" will be misunderstood if read in isolation from Barth's *Church Dogmatics*. Many of the critiques his essay has received are void when understood in light of Barth's *analogia fidei* (analogy of faith). Understood through the analogy of faith, his essay offers significant insight into the relationship of the church and the state, and a compelling moral vision for the church to engage faithfully its mission of witness in the political sphere.

The precise development of Barth's doctrine of analogy, based on the analogy of faith, has been an issue of debate among theologians, but none would deny its centrality throughout the *Church Dogmatics* and his later works. Barth had clearly developed this doctrine and established its significance before 1946, when he wrote and presented "The Christian Community and the Civil Com-

1 Bruce L. McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology: Its Genesis and Development, 1909–1936* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 278.

munity” (hereafter “The CCCC”).² Thus, central questions of this article concern the relationship between the *analogia fidei* and Barth’s use of analogy in “The CCCC.” First we must ask what was Barth’s notion of the *analogia fidei*, and how did it develop? Second, how does the *analogia fidei* relate to his use of analogy in “The CCCC” to establish both the existence of the civil community and the church’s relationship to it? Third, what are the implications of this correlation for understanding Barth’s theological political ethics in this article? Fourth, what is the significance of this understanding for our appropriation of the use of analogy for the church in the political realm today?

I contend that “The CCCC” is most coherent and concrete if read in light of the analogy of faith, and if one understands the distinction between analogy as a theological ontology from analogy as methodology. The *analogia fidei* forms the implicit theological basis for the shape and content of “The CCCC.” Analogy is frequently employed in this essay as a methodological tool for translating the theological notion of the kingdom of God into the political realm. Because analogy as method does not function independently of its foundation in the theological doctrine of analogy in Barth’s thought, this distinction and union is essential for an adequate understanding of Barth’s theological ethic in this article and its appropriation by the church in various epochs. I will turn first to the most common critiques of Barth’s theological ethics, and then offer a brief yet detailed analysis of *analogia fidei* in Barth’s work before lastly analyzing the critiques waged against “The CCCC” in light of a dialectical understanding of analogy.

SECTION I: COMMON CRITIQUES OF BARTH’S THEOLOGICAL ETHICS

Nigel Biggar summarizes numerous critiques that have come against Barth’s theological ethics, all of which claim that Barth fails in some respect to consider empirical data with sufficient seriousness in his discussion of moral problems.³ Biggar evaluates and rejects three possible explanations that have been offered for this weakness of Barth’s empirical analysis, and then presents a fourth. One explanation is from H. Richard Niebuhr, who attributes this deficiency to Barth’s “realized eschatology” which leaves no need to care for the world. A second is from Charles West, who attributes the neglect to a “doctrine of all embracing

2 Karl Barth, “The Christian Community and Civil Community,” in *Karl Barth: Theologian of Freedom*, ed. Clifford Green (1946; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991).

3 Nigel Biggar, *The Hastening That Waits* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 156–57. The following are Biggar’s summaries of the critiques of various Christian ethicists. He claims that Stanley Hauerwas complains about the frustrating “abstractness” of Barth’s ethic. H. Richard Niebuhr criticized Barth’s refusal to make specific moral judgments. Charles West claims that Barth ignores “the vast body of social scientific literature.” John H. Yoder also made this last point when he criticized Barth for his lack of social psychological realism. Charles Curran critiques Barth’s disregard for empirical information regarding homosexuality, accusing him of “Christological monism.” Finally, Charles Sykes implicitly rebuked Barth in respect to his discussion of the authority in the Church, for not advancing his theological assertions in terms of sociological realities.

grace,” which causes Barth to trivialize the phenomenon of moral perplexity. A third explanation comes from Robert Willis, who recognizes Barth’s investment in the empirical data of the behavioral and social sciences, but claims that the ontic independence Barth attributes to creation and the relationship of empirical knowledge with the knowledge of faith in his theology impair his capacity to adequately use such data.

The fourth explanation is what Biggar calls the “division of theological labor.”⁴ Throughout the *Church Dogmatics*, Barth distinguishes between what he calls “theological” and “Christian” ethics. “Theological ethics,” concerned with formulating and expounding basic principles differs from “Christian ethics,” which undertake the actual handling of the problems of human life. Therefore, Biggar argues, Barth may have been inclined to regard dogmatics as ethically self-sufficient. According to Biggar, if this is true, then Barth was in danger of making one of two mistakes: either deriving a general ethical framework from dogmatic grounds, or deriving the full content of ethics from dogmatics. Biggar affirms that Barth’s is the more modest understanding: to derive an ethical *framework* from dogmatic premises in which it is the task of “Christian ethics” to interpret empirical data properly. He concludes that if this is the case, Barth’s neglect of empirical data is less a problem than a limitation. In sum, “was not Barth correct in insisting that the Christian ethicist arrive at the necessary task of empirical analysis by ways of a theologically derived ethical framework?”⁵

The problem with these views is that they fail to account for or incorporate an understanding of the analogy of faith by which Barth related all empirical knowledge to knowledge of God by faith. Even if Barth does distinguish between these two forms of ethics, he could not have imagined them as detached through the division of theological and ethical labor. Barth’s ontological, noetic, and moral *analogia fidei* would not allow it. For Barth, theological ethics is more concerned with obeying the will of God through the direction of the gospel, which necessarily has to do with the problems of everyday life, than with formulating and expounding basic principles. The difference between “theological” and “Christian” ethics might be better understood through the distinction between the theological relationship of analogy and the use of analogical method to translate and make decisions based on the reality of these relationships in daily living. It may be that Barth did not frequently expound empirical analysis because he understood the task of translation to be necessarily communal and contextual. He was intent to develop a theological framework and method of translation to be exercised within and by the Christian community—not as two separate tasks but as two aspects of the task of theological ethics.

4 Ibid., 158.

5 Ibid., 161.

SECTION II: BARTH'S DOCTRINE OF THE *ANALOGIA FIDEI**Opposition to analogia entis*

To understand Barth's theological ethics we must begin with a sketch of Barth's doctrine of analogy and how it developed throughout his work. Though Barth's doctrine of *analogia fidei* developed over several years, and had roots in his writing as early as *Romans II* (1922), it was finally articulated largely in opposition to the Catholic doctrine of the analogy of being (*analogia entis*). Barth most likely adopted the phrase *analogia entis* from a series of dialogues and exchanges with a Roman Catholic theologian, Erich Przywara.⁶ After much debate with Przywara, Barth declared the *analogia entis* to be the invention of the Antichrist in the introduction to *Church Dogmatics I/1*.⁷ His rejection of *analogia entis* did not lead to a rejection of analogy altogether, but to an analogy of faith rather than being.

Barth came to understand the analogy of being as the assumption that there is commonality, similarity, and continuity between God and humanity—i.e., that it is somehow possible to understand God and humanity within a common framework of ontology. He argued that any attempt to find a framework in which the categories of God and humans are unified is mistaken. In rejecting the analogy of being, Barth rejects the element of continuity in the divine-human relation which is rooted by all Catholic theology, following Augustine, in creation itself and in the *imago Dei*. The danger in this view for Barth is that if humans have some “secret identity” corresponding to God, then the distinction is not one of similarity in the dissimilarity, but of equality in the inequality. This approaches the dangerous assertion of not merely human conformity with God but the deification of humanity. In opposition to this notion, Barth held that the fact of creation establishes only a Creator-creature distinction and discontinuity. Continuity in the relation to God is a second miracle of the love of God. This correspondence between God and humanity is only established by the gracious act of God in Jesus Christ.

Despite Barth's intractable opposition to this doctrine, Hans Urs von Balthasar claimed that Barth did adopt a form of *analogia entis* in the end. McCormack is adamant that Barth did not take up this term in the way von Balthasar proposed, and George Hunsinger likewise confirms that Barth's rejection of the *analogia entis* did not waver.⁸ The only *analogia entis* that Barth ever conceded is the analogy that God has *within* God's being *in* God's relating to the creature. Barth's firm rejection of *analogia entis* gave birth to an articulation of *analogia fidei* that would shape the form and content of every doctrine throughout the *Church Dogmatics*.

6 McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, 390.

7 Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of the Word of God I/1*, ed. G. T. Thompson and T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1956–1960), xiii.

8 George Hunsinger, *How to Read Karl Barth: The Shape of His Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 7.

Rethinking the von Balthasar progression

To understand the development of the doctrine of analogy in Barth's thought, one must grasp the distinction between *analogia fidei* as expression of a theological reality, "analogy" as method, and its development in his work. McCormack challenges the initial periodization of the doctrine of faith, established by von Balthasar. Von Balthasar espoused the accepted theory that there were two major breaks in Barth's theology: from liberalism to dialectic, and from dialectic to analogy. According to this theory, Barth experienced a revolution while writing his book on Anselm, which incited him to rewrite the first volume of the *Church Dogmatics*, in which the classic formulation of the *analogia fidei* was found. Conversely, McCormack avers that *analogia fidei* has roots in Barth's writing as early as *Romans II* and is based on the dialectic of "veiling and unveiling," such that there was no fundamental shift from dialectic to analogy in Barth's thought.

McCormack, refuting the von Balthasarian formula, points to four principle problems which argue for its abandonment and which clarify the nature and use of *analogia fidei*.⁹ The first problem has to do with von Balthasar's failure to distinguish between *Denkenform* (dialectical method) and *Realdialektik* (the ground for a particular theology). The second problem is that the *analogia fidei* is itself an *inherently dialectical concept* grounded in what McCormack refers to as the "dialectic of veiling and unveiling" in revelation. The third weakness is that it brings two concepts (method and ontology) onto the same plane of theological discourse, thereby committing a categorical error. McCormack indicates that "method" is something that humans do, and the analogy of faith is the result of something God does. The analogy of faith has methodological *implications*, but is not primarily a method. McCormack's fourth argument is that the von Balthasarian theory fails to penetrate the material theological conditions in Barth's theology (the anhypostatic-enhypostatic model of Christology and the doctrine of the immanent Trinity), which birthed the notions of "dialectic" and "analogy." These four critiques and insights are central for comprehending both the doctrine of the analogy of faith, which undergirds "The CCCC," and Barth's methodological use of analogy within the essay.

Analogy of faith: From Romans II to the Church Dogmatics I/1 and IV/1

McCormack, with Ingrid Spiekermann, traces the beginning of the formation of analogy of faith to its initial form as the "analogy of the cross in *Romans II*. Like the analogy of faith, the analogy of the cross is a christocentric, actualistic analogy given through the event of revelation always working from above to below."¹⁰ Michael Beintker also found what he deems to be an analogy of the cross in *Romans II*, as well as what he calls an analogy of relation in which love of neighbor should and can mirror the love which God has for us. The seed for

9 These four problems are described in McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, 16–20.

10 *Ibid.*, 261.

the analogy of faith had taken root in the analogy of the cross and the analogy of relations as early as *Romans II*.

The *analogia fidei*, sprouted in *Romans II*, found full expression in *Church Dogmatics I/1*. All revelation and knowledge and language about God is characterized by the analogy of faith. Concerning the doctrine of the Word of God, Barth depicted the objective and subjective side of the event of revelation, and the relation of revelation to language. For Barth, "Language about God has the proper content, when it conforms to the essence of the church, i.e. to Jesus Christ ετε προφηταιν, κατα την αναλογιαν την πιστεως (Rom. 12:6)."¹¹ The task of dogmatics is to investigate Christian language by raising the question of this conformity. Conformity with Christ, in Christ, by God's gracious action, is the basis for any language about God and all divine and human agency, and is thereby the ground of all theological ethics.

In *Church Dogmatics I/1* revelation is expressed not only through the incarnation and cross, but also through human words, thus establishing an analogy between the Word and words. This would lay the foundation for his later articulation of secular parables and true words and empirical knowledge outside of scripture in *Church Dogmatics IV/4*.¹² For Barth, ethics is concerned with discerning, knowing, and doing the "good," which is ultimately defined by the will of God. But can human beings really know the will of God? According to Barth, the will of God is, in itself, unintuitable. Only through the dialectic of veiling and unveiling will God's will be known.¹³ Thus, the analogy of faith points to the revelation of God that is necessary to discern God's will, and it conveys the theological anthropology which clarifies divine and human agency.

Regarding human freedom, Barth abandons all concepts of autonomy, in light of the notion that our freedom is grounded in God's freedom. Our freedom is a matter—answering to the freedom of God's self—of human freedom *for* God. The analogy of faith is displayed in the analogy of faithfulness, just as human faith corresponds to God's prior faithfulness. In the so-called "*genitivus mysticus*: 'πιστις Ιησου Χριστου' we see the divine decision taken about man."¹⁴ In the first volume of the *Church Dogmatics*, Barth establishes the centrality of the analogy of faith for all revelation and language about God, for divine and human agency, and for covenant relationship in and by God's faithfulness.

11 Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of the Word of God I/1*, 11. Barth frequently cites Rom. 12:6 throughout the *CD* when referring to the analogy of faith.

12 Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics: The Christian Life IV/4*, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981).

13 *Ibid.*, 262, 277.

14 *Ibid.*, 261. Paul's passages are Rom. 12:6; Gal. 1:23, 3:22; 1 Tim. 4:1, 6; and then Jude 3, 6. Πιστις may signify, as in Rom. 3:2 (and as in particular the use of the adjective πιστος shows), the faithfulness of God.

The rejection of *analogia entis* and affirmation of *analogia fidei* resurfaces with new poignancy in *Church Dogmatics* VI/1, *The Doctrine of Reconciliation*.¹⁵ Here, Barth reaffirms the absolute distinction and dissimilarity between God and humans, and the incapacity of humans to establish relation to God. Justification and sanctification are accomplished through the reconciling work of Jesus Christ by faith alone, which rests on the theological ontology established in *analogia fidei*. Only in faith do humans have anything to do with an *imitatio Christi*. Human confidence which gives a corresponding answer to the faithfulness of God is an imitation of Jesus Christ—an analogy to his attitude and action. The doctrine of reconciliation is comprised of the two-fold act of God, justification and sanctification, and the analogous human response. Regarding this negative and positive aspect of atonement, Barth wrote:

They correspond to the positive and negative character of the substitutionary being and activity of Jesus Christ Himself (as the *analogans*), and they mark the beginning and end of the way on which the life of the Christian—the one who recognizes Jesus Christ in faith—will become and be the *analogatum*, the parallel, the likeness—no more but no less—of His justifying being and activity. What is this *analogans*? The man of sin is vanquished . . . and the right and life of man is established.¹⁶

By faith in Christ, justification and sanctification form the root of all ethical human agency.

Sanctification, for Barth, is the basic presupposition of all Christian ethics. Sanctification is the means by which the will of God claims all human life, being and activity for the active fulfillment of that will. Thus, in Christian ethics the atonement made in Jesus Christ cannot be a presupposition which has been left behind. According to Barth, ethics must testify to God's atonement by giving humans direction in Jesus Christ—direction that forms the norm for all ethics. Barth writes that “the *αναλογια τες πιστεως* is the norm which true prophecy must observe and which distinguishes between the true and false.”¹⁷ In *Church Dogmatics* IV/1, Barth displays that his theological ethics are based on this analogy of faith by which humans are sanctified by God and enabled to respond in faith.

Theological anthropology: From above to below

Barth's *analogia fidei* was novel grounding for theological anthropology in the framework of the theological tradition.¹⁸ In the *analogia fidei*, Barth understands the correspondence between the existence of God and the existence of the

¹⁵ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of Reconciliation* IV/1, trans. G. W. Bromiley (New York: Scribner and Sons, 1956).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 770–75.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 634–35. Reference to Romans 12:6.

¹⁸ Wolf Krötke, “The Humanity of the Person in Karl Barth's Anthropology,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Barth*, ed. John Webster (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 167.

human person to be something that only discloses itself in faith in the God who affirms all human beings in the man Jesus. Barth emphasizes that the direction in which the analogy works is always “above to below.” God’s act is the analogue; ours is the analogate.¹⁹ Through analogy, this theological anthropology understands human being and agency to be established in divine being and agency.

McCormack notes that insofar as true humanity is realized only in the act of faith and obedience, “covenantal ontology” is actualistic on the human side as well as the divine.²⁰ Barth gives unwavering attention to one set of historical incidents as ontologically, noetically, and morally fundamental. This sequence from ontology to morality, Barth insists, is fundamental to our moral projects only if we vigorously resist two temptations: “the temptation to see God’s act in Jesus Christ as self-enclosed and incommunicable, and the temptation to see it as a mere possibility awaiting our moral actualization.”²¹ “Theomonism” and “anthropomonism” are rejected by Barth because both abstract from the history of Jesus, whose life is God with us and is thereby grace restoring to us our human reality. Having firmly rejected the existentialist approach of Kierkegaard, Barth employs historical categories to overcome the purely essentialist treatment of classical theological anthropology.

Moral ontology: Foundation of being and act

Barth’s ethics have been characterized by the phrase “moral ontology,” which Charles Taylor coined to describe this ontological, noetic, and moral relationship. McCormack claims that Barth was seeking to completely relocate the problem of ethics.²² It was no longer to be pondered apart from knowledge of God. Ethics, for Barth, must concern itself first with what God has done in Christ and second, with the demand that God’s gracious actions lay upon human beings. Those demands will be distinct from the ethic that humans would contrive on their own because they will be analogous to God’s action in Jesus Christ.

Early on, Barth did not entirely replace his idealist morality with a realistically conceived and actualistically realized “command of God” rooted in the being of God. Later, *analogia fidei* would prompt Barth to offer sustained critiques of idealist ethics in favor of a critically realistic ethic. The *analogia fidei*, from its inception as early as *Romans II*, and throughout the rest of Barth’s work, is central to understanding both the method and content of Barth’s ethics. McCormack states clearly, “Analogy—whether the analogy of the cross or the later analogy of faith—is a description of a relation of correspondence between the divine Self-knowing and human knowledge of God which arises as a consequence of God’s

19 John Webster, *Barth’s Moral Theology: Human Action in Barth’s Thought* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 200.

20 Bruce McCormack, “Grace and Being: The Doctrine of Election,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Barth*, ed. John Webster (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 108.

21 John Webster, *Barth’s Ethics of Reconciliation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 98.

22 McCormack, *Karl Barth’s Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, 276.

act of Self-revelation.”²³ Talk of analogy in this sense has to do with what God has done; talk of dialectic emerges in the context of what human beings can do. The difference between these two realms of discourse is fundamental. It does not exclude the use of analogy as method, but determines that the method of analogy cannot be understood apart from the analogy of faith, which describes divine and human correspondence.

SECTION III: THE *ANALOGIA FIDEI* IN “THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY
AND THE CIVIL COMMUNITY”

Critiques of “The Christian Community and the Civil Community”

With this understanding of some general criticisms of Barth’s theological ethics, and his notion of the analogy of faith, we turn to evaluate the main critiques that have been aimed specifically at “The CCCC.” Biggar claims that the most notorious instance of Barth’s sporadic tendency to carry on as if dogmatics were ethically self-sufficient occurs in this post-war essay. Several critiques attack the arbitrariness of Barth’s use of analogy. According to Biggar, Emil Brunner and Helmut Thielicke claim that Barth employs a method of analogy that can be used to arrive at nearly any conclusion whatsoever. Biggar also contends that Wil Herberg, citing Brunner (who agrees with this judgment), alleges that Barth was really framing Christological arguments to support conclusions “already reached on other grounds.”²⁴ In reference to Yoder, Biggar asserts that he observes that it is possible to use analogy for reinforcing that which one considers desirable, but that to establish anything (in a context of disagreement) the method of analogy is useless. Russell Palmer concludes, with Brunner and Thielicke, that Barth’s use of analogy is essentially arbitrary:

Analogy as a device for deriving ethics from the Word of God is simply not a reliable guide. There is no way to control or check it. . . . It would appear that what Barth actually does is to start with a certain ethical judgment, and then find justification for it via some more or less fanciful parallel with some feature of the Christian message.²⁵

This criticism is serious, but does not hold water. Is Barth’s use of analogy really pure eisegesis rather than rooted exegesis? Is his framework and method of analogy so arbitrary that anything could be derived or justified on these grounds?

The problem with these critiques regarding the arbitrariness of analogy is their failure to deal adequately with Barth’s own stipulations about the use of analogy, or to recognize *analogia fidei* as the foundation for the use of analogy as method. They make the von Balthasarian mistake of conceiving of analogy only as method, rather than first as description of a theological relation. Barth’s political ethics cannot be understood if these two forms of analogy are separated.

23 Ibid., 313–14.

24 Ibid., 180.

25 Ibid.

He did not intend for analogy as a “device” or method to be a “reliable guide,” normative in itself. The norm, direction, and line by which the church discerns “just” from “unjust” political action is the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is not true that “anything” can be derived from Christology as described by Barth.²⁶ Barth’s Christology is the foundation of a “critically realistic ethic commensurate with his critically realistic theology.”²⁷

Webster, though he affirms many aspects of Barth’s moral ontology, criticizes the apparent lack of concretion in his use of analogy. According to Webster, Barth proceeds on the assumption that material questions can be resolved into questions of moral ontology: once an agent is aware of her analogous relationship to God, the agent will automatically know the will of God. One effect of this, he claims, is a lack of concretion particularly in Barth’s theology of politics. He criticizes Barth for remaining at the level of the analogies between the Kingdom of God and civil society and not specifying the implications. Though there may be instances of his initial critique where Barth seems to “resolve material questions into moral ontology,” Barth’s moral ontology is not deterministic but actualistic.²⁸ Rather than proposing that the will of God would be evident, Barth is clear that the will of God is, in itself, unintuitable. God’s will is known only in the analogy of faith through the continuous dialectic of “veiling and unveiling.” Webster’s second critique—that Barth’s theology of politics lacks descriptive concretion—is true, not because Barth was content to remain at some abstract level of analogy, but because he saw these analogies as the method for arriving at descriptive concretion which must take place within particular Christian communities. Barth knew that it would be impossible for him to specify all the implications for all

26 Robert E. Willis, *The Ethics of Karl Barth* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971), 402. Willis defends Barth by arguing that his use of analogy is regulated by a definite Christology, according to which the event of reconciliation is one in which humankind is set on the way to authentic co-humanity. “One is not free, then to derive any or every possibility by analogy.”

27 McCormack, *Karl Barth’s Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, 280. McCormack offers insight into Barth’s reformation of Kant’s categorical imperative. “Barth’s critical correction of Kantian ethics did not entail an outright rejection. Barth remained convinced that Kant’s categorical imperative had a critical role to play. Because of its universality and objective validity as a formal principle, the categorical imperative provided a useful tool for unmasking the arbitrariness of all limited and privatized human goals. But the Kantian ethic was only a witness to an ethic of divine command; it was not a substitute for it. Barth sought to transcend Kant by giving his purely formal ethical principle a Christological content. What emerged was a critically realistic ethic commensurate with his critically realistic theology.”

28 *Ibid.*, 278. “Given the actualism of Barth’s understanding of revelation, it is not surprising that the will of God must necessarily be sought afresh in each new moment. . . . It must be ‘given’ in each new moment. Still, the fact the Barth grounds ethics in Christology means that the divinely willed direction of human activity can be known, even if the details of the way to be taken remain unknown apart from a fresh hearing of the Word of God.”

situations and contexts for all time. He viewed this task of translating analogies and parables as the task of the church in particular places and times.

Barth was explicit that the political guidelines in “The CCCC” were intended to illustrate *how* the church can make decisions on a Christian basis in the political sphere, to illuminate the analogical but concrete relationship between the Christian gospel and certain political decisions and modes of behavior. Though one must assume that the examples offered in this piece were serious attempts to illustrate the use of analogy and parable, they were ultimately only loose examples. The *analogia fidei* that undergirds the content of this article is both the theological foundation and the method for translating human decisions and action. Therefore, I do not share Biggar’s criticism of the elusiveness of the logic by which the analogies are derived. Barth did not mean for them to be static logical formulas but, rather, examples demonstrating how Christian communities might perform the same discerning task.

Understanding “The CCCC” through the analogia fidei

Barth wrote “The CCCC” in 1946 as a lecture to be given in the immediate post-war period. The main themes of the essay echo the premises of the fifth thesis of the Barmen Declaration. His context, the aftermath of the Holocaust and a war-torn Europe, is evidenced by his frequent reference to this fifth article. For Barth, Barmen had secured the principle that the systematic coordination of the gospel and political arrangements tends to absolutize the state, and that a Christological definition of the nature of the civil community is necessary to avoid this tendency.²⁹ Furthermore, Barmen established the mutual responsibility that the Christian community and the state have for civil society. The fifth thesis shapes the major themes of this article—the God-given nature and purpose of the church and state and their relation to one another. The *analogia fidei* is the implicit doctrine that establishes Barth’s development of the nature, role, and relationship of the church and state and his use of the method of analogy in this article.

Curiously, while Barth’s explicit use of analogy as a method for the church to translate the gospel in the political realm has met much criticism, the inherent theological analogy that underlies the church/state dynamic in this essay seems to have been ignored by the aforementioned scholars. These criticisms could be due, in part, to Barth’s failure to distinguish clearly between the two forms of analogy. Barth’s aim in “The CCCC” was not primarily to reify or expound on the analogy between the spheres, but to show *how* the possibility and necessity of comparisons and analogies between the two spheres shape the decisions which have to be made in the transition from one to the other. The thrust of the article is toward the concrete discernment of decisions in the political sphere—formed by analogies, parables, and corollaries of the Kingdom of God.

McCormack proposes, rightly in my estimation, that Barth’s mature theology is best understood as a form of “dialectical theology,” which McCormack refers to as “critically realistic dialectical theology.” Hence, “The CCCC” is also

29 John Webster, *Karl Barth*, 2nd ed. (New York: Continuum, 2004), 152.

best understood in light of the analogy of faith and analogy as method, which proceed from this mature dialectic. McCormack indicates that where this mature dialectical theology has not been grasped, “virtually the whole of Barth’s theology has been read in the wrong light.”³⁰

Webster seems to miss this very distinction in “The CCCC.” Referring to the essay Barth wrote, Webster states, “[it] is chiefly known for proposing that ‘the existence of the State [is] an allegory . . . correspondence and an analogue, to the Kingdom of God.’ Sometimes the analogies which Barth spells out work well. . . . At other points . . . the theological material seems to be conscripted.”³¹ In the latter sentence Webster critiques Barth’s specific analogies without distinguishing between the relational and methodological use. He does not recognize that Barth himself pointed out weaknesses in particular analogies while affirming the possibility and necessity of the analogical method. I will next demonstrate the relationship of the *analogia fidei* to the themes of “The CCCC” and examine its implications for understanding Barth’s use of analogy as method.

Christian and civil community: Distinction in unity

Barth uses a Chalcedonian-like formula evinced in the *analogia fidei* to illustrate the unity and distinction of the church and state. Barth defines the “Christian community” as that which is “usually called ‘the church’” and the “Civil community” as that which is “usually called ‘the state.’”³² These distinct communities are united by their very nature as “Community.” The state and church are united by their common center in Christ and the Kingdom of God. Barth conceives of both spheres under the Lordship of God in Jesus Christ, as both are commissioned to serve God in their ultimate purpose of witnesses to God.

The distinction between these spheres lies in the specific tasks and roles they are given; the state maintains peace by force if necessary, which secures space for the church to confess and preach the name of Jesus Christ. The purpose of the state is to safeguard the external, relative, and provisional freedom of individuals and the external, relative peace of their community. The church is distinctly a people gathered together by belief in Jesus Christ, who corporately confess and preach the name of Jesus Christ. Neither the Christian nor the civil community is an end in itself. The civil community needs the Christian community for its prophetic witness, and the Christian community needs the state for the protection it provides.

The *analogia fidei* articulated in the *Church Dogmatics* is most obvious in Barth’s discussion of the existence of the state itself. Political organizations, according to Barth, can be neither a repetition of the church nor an anticipation of the Kingdom of God. An *equating* of the state and church on the one hand, and state and Kingdom of God on the other, is out of the question. Likewise, a simple and absolute *heterogeneity* between state and church, or the state and Kingdom of

30 McCormack, *Karl Barth’s Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, ix.

31 *Ibid.*, 153.

32 Barth, “The Christian Community and the Civil Community,” 266.

God, is just as much out of the question as a simple and absolute equating. Barth asserts that the only possibility that remains is to regard the state as a parable, as a correspondence and an analogue to the Kingdom of God. The existence of the state is thus established and only truly “revealed” in analogy to the Kingdom of God.

Barth indicates that the state also has an analogous relationship to the church. As the analogy of faith always proceeds from above to below, the state can indirectly reflect the truth and reality, which constitute the Christian community. Thus, the church, when choosing among the political options open at any one time, will choose those which most suggest a parable—a correspondence to, an analogy and a reflection of, the content of its own confession and gospel. The church will always support the decision, which clarifies rather than obscures the Lordship of Jesus Christ, such that in political judgments, it bears indirect but nonetheless real witness to the gospel. This indirect, yet real witness is rooted in the veiling and unveiling of God: the ontological, noetic, and moral relationship described by the *analogia fidei*.

Direction and line as norm: Rejection of natural law

In “The CCCC” the analogy of faith also undergirds the direction and line that the Christian community uses as norm for its indirect witness in the civil community. The Christian decisions that have to be made in the political sphere, according to Barth, have no system to refer to, but rather have a direction and a line that must be recognized and adhered to in all circumstances. In isolation this “direction and line” sounds esoteric at best. Barth clarifies what the direction is not: namely, it is not “natural Law,” which is not sufficient.³³ The tasks and problems that the Christian community is called to share are “natural” and secular, but the norm by which it should be guided is a spiritual norm, which is derived from its own faith, not from a system or ideology outside itself. This law to which Barth refers is the gospel and the church’s knowledge of the Jesus who is Lord of its criterion. Again, Barth, in his *Church Dogmatics*, establishes that the norm and direction of all ethics are found in the *analogia fidei*.

According to Hunsinger, Barth’s reference to this “direction and line” in other writings cannot be summarized by a single law or teaching in the Scriptures, but has to do with “underlying modes of thought.”³⁴ Barth views these modes of thought, based on the norm of Christ, as authoritative for Christians. This norm is the “direction” by which the church will make decisions in the political sphere.

33 Ibid., 276. “By ‘natural law’ we mean the embodiment of what humanity is alleged to regard as universally right and wrong, as necessary, permissible and forbidden ‘by nature’ that is, on any conceivable premise.” This is also an implicit rejection of *analogia entis*.

34 Hunsinger, *How to Read Karl Barth*, 241. He offers two examples of these modes of thought in Barth: 1. “The *circulus virtuosus* . . . the Biblical witness assumes God and does not try to prove the truth of its witness to God.” 2. The Biblical witness always presupposes “the uniqueness and the absolute normativeness” of what it has received and attests (*CD IV/3/92*).

Despite whatever ambiguity remains in Barth's explanation of the "direction" in "The CCCC," he is clear that the source of the "direction and line" is established in the analogy of faith in Jesus Christ.

Barth's concessions: The necessity and limitations of this approach

Having described the nature and task of the church and state and their mutual but distinct responsibilities in the public sphere, Barth offers several specific examples of analogies that might be drawn and their implications in the political realm.³⁵ These analogies have been the central object of criticism in this essay. Rather than analyzing these analogies in detail, which has been done by other scholars, I turn to Barth's own concessions regarding his examples and the use of analogy, which have been greatly overlooked by critics of this essay. Barth beats his critics to the criticism! He elucidates not only the necessity and possibility of the use of analogy (grounded in analogy of relation) but the challenges and limitations of this approach.

First, he is adamant that the analogies listed are but a few examples, and as such, they are open to critique and further discourse. The analogies are not thereby flippant, but rather illuminate the parabolic, yet extremely concrete *relationship*, between the gospel and political decisions and modes of behavior. Second, these analogies are not intended to become constitutional law, but are rather a methodical tool for translation between the spheres. Third, and closely related, Barth conceived of these analogies only as starting points, admitting that much work is needed to extend, deepen, and particularize them. The very nature of all points of comparison and decisions is such that the details of translations and transitions from the one sphere to the other will always be open to discussion and never subject to absolute proof. Fourth, he readily grants that it is not possible to deal with every problem in this way (but the Christian approach will move in one direction and line). Finally, his intention in giving specific examples was only to show the *possibility* and *necessity* of comparisons and analogies, not to expound or establish these particular parables.

Though Barth insists that the translation, transition, and details of the analogies remain open and never subject to absolute proof, he proclaims that the "inevitable consequences" of the analogies will "*always and in all circumstances* be interested primarily in human beings and not in some abstract cause or other."³⁶ Thus, analogies' translations and concrete forms of manifestation are entirely open to the discerning Christian community. Likewise, one analogy could be abandoned if a better analogy were offered in light of the normative direction of the gospel. For some analogies Barth uses softer language to indicate that an analogy only "implies" or "suggests" a certain implication or decision. These distinctions are rooted in the differentiation between the relation and the method of analogy.

35 Barth, "The Christian Community and the Civil Community," 282–88. I will not detail all of them here. For a concise summary of all eleven analogies, see Appendix 4 in Nigel Biggar's *The Hastening that Waits*.

36 *Ibid.*, 283, original emphasis.

A critique would have to be waged against either the *possibility* of coherently creating such analogies, or the *necessity* of such comparisons for theological ethics. I do not believe either critique has been cogently made. Where some point to ambiguity and inconsistency in Barth's use of analogy in "The CCCC," I find analogy to be used realistically within the confines of this essay and in line with Barth's analogy of faith moreover. Barth conceived of these analogies as essential, necessary, and indispensable yet not absolute, complete, or fixed. They are necessary for discernment in the church and action in the civil community, and yet they are continually open for debate within the Christian community.

SECTION IV: IMPLICATIONS

Understanding "The CCCC" in light of the analogy of faith in Jesus Christ, which determines all ethical activity, gives the church in its various contexts and times constructive guidelines for responsible and faithful socio-political action. These guidelines are characterized by covenantal, communal, contextual, and critical concretion. The Christian community recognizes that the basis of its existence and mission are expressed by this analogy of faith in *covenantal* relationship with God and with the world. It must faithfully preach the gospel, which is necessarily prophetic and political. This responsibility entails the task of translation through analogy, which is inherently *communal*. It is not the work of isolated individuals, but of the Christian community through prayerful dialogue, discussion, and debate, using all of the spiritual, prophetic, and empirical resources available. The communal nature of discernment will involve the cultivation and nurture of lay theology, such that all members of the Christian community, whether those in academia, the pulpit, or the pew, contribute to this critical task. The analogies are necessarily *contextual*: they incorporate empirical data and the complexity of daily life in the social and political realm, in the specific time and place of the Christian community. The Christian community is called to be *critically* realistic, rather than idealistic, in the process of forming a critically realistic ethic based on a critically realistic theology.

The analogies and parables are not casuistic principles to be applied without the burden of thought. Rather, they provide a direction for informed Christian decision making. The norm and guide, the unswerving direction and continuous line for this community is rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ, who is the only principle of *concretion* for the church. Barth maintains that analogies and parables must not be based on abstractions, ideologies, or ethical theories derived from or established by any other source. This is the norm by which the Community will distinguish the "just" from the "unjust" state. The Christian community will live in the necessary tension of sub-ordination to the state, co-responsibility with the state and if necessary rebellion against the state.

I have argued that Barth's *analogia fidei*, which expresses absolute dissimilarity and yet correspondence between God and humans, forms the theological basis for creation, revelation, justification, and sanctification. The *analogia fidei* is the theological framework undergirding his use of analogy as method in "The Christian Community and the Civil Community." This understanding by

no means simplifies the prophetic task of the Christian community in the public realm, but it does render possible the use of analogy as method in light of Barth's theological, ontological, noetic, moral ethics, in a way that many critics of "The CCCC" do not recognize. The Christian community in many tongues and contexts prays, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." They cannot sincerely pray this prayer without responding with corresponding action in this particular sphere, which requires the task of discernment according to some ethical norm or direction. Barth cogently argues that this gracious mystery—that God's kingdom and will have analogous expression through humans on earth—is expressed, acknowledged, and discerned through the analogy of faith.

Emily Dumler is a Th.M. student at Princeton Theological Seminary, where she completed her M.Div. in 2007. Upon graduation from the M.Div. program, she spent a year studying and teaching in Guatemala before returning to PTS for further study. Emily has accepted admission to the Ph.D. program in Religion and Society at PTS for the fall of 2009.

MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR AND THE ANALOGY OF BEING

Benjamin Heidgerken

Perhaps the most important result of the conference on the *analogia entis* in 2008 was its tentative suggestion that some sort of Christocentric concept of analogy might act as an ecumenical *via media* between the Reformed, Catholic, and Orthodox Churches.¹ The Catholic participants recognized and attempted to avoid the devastating charge that a philosophical analogy acts as a competitor to Christ, the One Mediator. The Protestant participants, for their part, were willing to put some distance between themselves and Barth's more polemical articulations of his position.

Despite these meritorious gestures, however, it remains unclear whether the normativity of this mediating position has been adequately established for Catholic theology as a whole. In the wake of the conference, does an ecumenically skeptical Catholic have good reason to understand the position of the Church on analogy as intrinsically Christological? Perhaps some of the work done by the Catholic participants points in that direction. But unless Catholic Tradition—and not just the *theologoumena* of certain participants at the conference—can be shown to point inherently and necessarily toward such a consonant position, the conference will not have succeeded and the Churches will remain divided.

Of course, arguing for a Christological analogy from the whole of Catholic Tradition is a vast and difficult task, but the objectives of the current work can only be understood as part of this larger enterprise. I will argue here that in the seventh-century patristic theologian, Saint Maximus the Confessor, one finds a figure in the Tradition of the Catholic Church who strongly supports a Christocentric model of analogy. Because his concerns are in some ways different from those of the current debate, it would be unfair and futile to make Maximus's model conform to any modern system or theory in every detail. Despite these idiosyncrasies,

1 For a summary of this debate, which I here assume to be familiar, see John Betz, "Beyond the Sublime: The Aesthetics of the Analogy of Being (Part Two)" in *Modern Theology*, 22:1 (Jan 2006), 3–5. The only text of Erich Przywara's concerning the *analogia entis* currently available in English is *Polarity: A German Catholic's Interpretation of Religion*, trans. by A. C. Bouquet (London: Oxford University Press, 1935). The notorious appellation of the *analogia entis* as the Antichrist appears in Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics (CD) I/1* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1963), x. The understanding of Barth's contentions with the *analogia* amid Catholic circles comes first and foremost from Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971).

though, I hope to show how the contours of a Maximian position can be fruitful for demonstrating the traditional nature of a Christological analogy of being.²

The current work can be divided into two sections. The first will be an exposition of Maximus's cosmic theology with a particular ear to its relevance to the modern analogy debate. I will show that Maximus's doctrine of the *Logos* and the *logoi* has an intrinsically Chalcedonian character; for him, the Incarnation of Christ is the quintessential and normative representation of God's relationship to the world. The second section will address the practical ramifications of Maximus's doctrine. Consequentially, it is in this section that difficult questions about natural theology must be raised. According to Maximus, how do human beings have access to knowledge of God? Is analogy an element of faith, something that we have no access to outside of grace? Or can non-Christians have a rudimentary knowledge of God by means of this Christological analogy? Though Maximus does not address these questions in so many words, I will indicate the positions that Maximus's texts tend to support on these questions.

MAXIMUS'S DOCTRINE OF CREATION: THE *LOGOI*, THE *LOGOS*, AND CHALCEDON

Maximus's doctrine of creation is first and foremost a reaction against and correction of the doctrine of creation put forward by Origen. Origen argued that souls pre-exist their embodiment as purely rational principles, i.e., *logoi*. Immediately after coming into being, they live in the beatific vision in a state of rest, until they become satiated—in essence, bored—and turn from God to try something else. In doing so, they sin, enter into motion, and fall into the material world. For the *logoi* of human individuals, this Fall means to enter a material body. Origen thus establishes an ordering of the way in which creaturely beings come into existence with which Maximus explicitly disagrees: first, coming into being; second, resting in the beatific vision; and third, moving into the material world.³ That is, becoming, rest, and motion.

Maximus critiques Origen's ordering on at least two grounds. First, he argues that Origen's ordering of events has devastating consequences for the nature of God's beauty. If creatures were created in perfect union with God, how is it that they could ever fall from God's presence? To say that creatures could tire of God is tantamount to saying that God is not supremely beautiful.⁴ Second, Maxi-

2 I believe Maximus's historical position as a mediator between the East and the West puts him in a unique position to function ecumenically even today. On Maximus's mediatorial position with regard to many situations of his own time, see Paul M. Blowers and Robert Lewis Wilken, eds., *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003), 13. Hans Urs von Balthasar also saw Maximus in a similar light; for him, Maximus is "the philosophical and theological thinker who stands between East and West" (Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy: The Universe According to Maximus the Confessor* [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988], 25).

3 Andrew Louth, *Maximus the Confessor* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 65–66. See also Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 127–30.

4 Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 129–30.

mus argues that Origen's position has faulty anthropological principles. Maximus states that

the human being is composed of a soul and a body, for soul and body are indissolubly understood to be parts of the whole human species. Soul and body came into being at the same moment. . . . For that reason it is inconceivable to speak of the soul and body except in relation to each other. It is only as they come together to form a particular person that they exist.⁵

Both of these critiques take issue with Origen's supposition of a primordial state of rest. For Maximus, motion is not an evil by-product of the Fall. Rather, it is simply a quality of contingent, mutable being, present from the moment of the being's creation. This motion is ordered from the start toward a state of rest that is accomplished in the presence of God at the end of life. Based on these arguments, Maximus reverses the latter two stages of Origen's theory of created being: first is becoming; second, motion; and third, rest.

In trying to correct the mistakes of his predecessor, Maximus also has to modify Origen's doctrine of the *logoi* of creaturely being.⁶ For Origen, these principles of existence are divine ideas or thoughts, present in God eternally, and they constitute the essence of a creature. Problematically, these claims seem to imply that creatures exist eternally within God.⁷ Maximus rejects this position because it confuses a characteristic of the Creator—namely, being eternal—with something intrinsic to created being. Maximus tries to negotiate the meaning of the term so as to remove this difficulty:

The *logoi* of all things known by God before their creation are securely fixed in God. They are in him who is the truth of all things. Yet all these things, things present and things to come, have not been brought into being contemporaneously with their being known by God; rather each was created in an appropriate way according to its *logos* at the proper time according to the wisdom of the maker, and each acquired concrete actual existence in itself. For the maker is always existent Being, but they exist in potentiality before they exist in actuality.⁸

5 Maximus the Confessor, *Patrologia Graeca* (PG) 91:1101BC, translated in Blowers and Wilken, *Cosmic Mystery*, 73–74. See also *ibid.*, 86–89.

6 Origen, it should be mentioned, was not the only Greek patristic to speak of these principles of being. Gregory of Nyssa speaks of them in relation to contemplation of the created world, and he was perhaps influential on Maximus's doctrine of the *logoi*. See Louth, *Maximus*, 72.

7 Maximus the Confessor, *Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca* (CCSG) 22:81, translated in Blowers and Wilken, *Cosmic Mystery*, 128.

8 Maximus, PG 91:1081A, trans. Blowers and Wilken, *Cosmic Mystery*, 56–57.

The *logoi* are not created beings themselves, but aspects of God's divine *will* to create them.⁹ As such, the *logoi* are properly eternal, since God's will is eternal, but they no longer constitute the proper essence of the creature, thus avoiding the error of Origen's original position.

Here, one strikes on a central characteristic of Maximus's cosmology, one that requires careful articulation. Maximus claims that the *logoi* of creation are identical to the one *Logos* of God, the second Person of the Trinity: "The one *Logos* is many *logoi* and the many *logoi* are One [*Logos*]." ¹⁰ Maximus's affirmation does *not* confuse creation with God or vice versa.¹¹ In addition to the argument above—that the *logoi* are not created beings—he explicitly and adamantly defends the gulf between created and uncreated being:

It is impossible for the infinite to exist on the same level of being as finite things, and no argument will ever be capable of demonstrating that being and what is beyond being are the same, nor that the measured and immeasurable can be put in the same class, nor that the absolute can be ranked with that which exists in relation to other things, nor that that which has nothing predicated of it and that which is constituted by predication belong together.¹²

There is a sense of mystery concerning this relationship between the *logoi* and the *Logos*, a mystery that tends to be confusing, if not contradictory, to modern Westerners.¹³ On the one hand, it seems that the *logoi* cannot be part of God's essence, since they are not properly infinite as God is. On the other, as discussed above, they cannot be created beings, since they exist eternally as objects of God's will and knowledge. If both these statements were true, the *logoi* would seem to occupy some fictional middle position between creation and Creator, an idea that does not seem to be supported in Maximus's texts. It may be tempting to invoke the distinction between the theology and the economy (between God *ad intra* and God *ad extra*) to solve the problem, but this solution has intractable difficulties as well. If one argued that the *logoi* of creation are only identical with the economic *Logos*, and that only the immanent *Logos* is utterly transcendent, then the economy and the theology are thereby made irreconcilable for the same reasons that the *logoi* and an undifferentiated *Logos* are irreconcilable. Such a bifurcation

9 For Maximus's words, see PG 91:1085ABC, trans. Blowers and Wilken, *Cosmic Mystery*, 61–62. See also Torstein Tollefsen, *The Christocentric Cosmology of St. Maximus the Confessor: A Study of His Metaphysical Principles* (Oslo: Unipub Forlag, 2000), 81; Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 117–19; and Aidan Nichols, *Byzantine Gospel: Maximus the Confessor in Modern Scholarship* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), 124–25.

10 Maximus, PG 91:1081B, trans. Blowers and Wilken, *Cosmic Mystery*, 57.

11 Nichols, *Byzantine Gospel*, 121–22.

12 Maximus, PG 91:1081B, trans. Blowers and Wilken, *Cosmic Mystery*, 57.

13 An almost exact parallel to this doctrine of the *logoi* applies to the Eastern concept of divine energies, which are not immediately reducible to God's essence, but which Eastern theology nevertheless claims to be eternal, apparently contravening God's simplicity.

of God will not do. What is needed is a way to identify the *Logos* with the *logoi* of creation without thereby destroying the distinction between God and the world. Here is where Maximus's reflections on the person of Christ become key, for Christ himself *is* this identity.

Maximus's Christology from start to finish functions as a meditation on the Chalcedonian definition that Christ's human and divine natures coexist "without confusion, without change, without division, without separation." Most famously, Chalcedon is what led him to defend dyothelitism (the doctrine of Christ's two wills, one human and one divine) all the way to Maximus's own bodily dismemberment. Besides this crucial instance of his adherence to the definition, Maximus's various commentators have noticed the language of Chalcedon arising again and again in his explanation of the relation of the *Logos* and the *logoi*.¹⁴ This dogmatic reflection on the *Logos* made flesh is the lens through which Maximus reads the relation of God and the world because in the person of Christ, creation and Creator are held in an inseparable yet unconfused relationship.¹⁵

Nowhere are this fundamental insight and its consequences made clearer than in Maximus's *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ*. In this rather short piece, all of what I have been arguing is explicit. Maximus affirms that the Incarnation is "that for whose sake all things are, though itself for the sake of nothing."¹⁶ As the *telos* of creation,

It is the mystery which circumscribes all the ages, and which reveals the grand plan of God, a super-infinite plan infinitely preexisting the ages. [In the Incarnation] the Logos . . . [displayed] in himself the very goal for which his creatures manifestly received the beginning of their existence.¹⁷

Christ alone, the *Logos* incarnate, is the proportion or ratio between the eternal, transcendent God and the creation. Though above Maximus stated that "it is impossible for the infinite to exist on the same level of being as finite things,"¹⁸

the union between a limit of the ages and limitlessness, between measure and immeasurability, between finitude and infinity, between *Creator and creation*, between rest and motion, was conceived before the ages. This union has been manifested in Christ at the end of time, and in itself brings God's foreknowledge to fulfillment.¹⁹

14 Louth, *Maximus the Confessor*, 66–67; Blowers and Wilken, *Cosmic Mystery*, 16, 54; Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 44–46; and Nichols, *Byzantine Gospel*, 120, 123–24.

15 Louth, *Maximus the Confessor*, 70.

16 Nichols, *Byzantine Gospel*, 121. For Balthasar's agreement with this assessment, see Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 125, where he states that that the Incarnation is the "connecting link" which "anchors the whole process."

17 Maximus, *CCSG* 22:75, trans. Blowers and Wilken, *Cosmic Mystery*, 124–25.

18 Maximus, *PG* 91:1081B, trans. Blowers and Wilken, *Cosmic Mystery*, 57.

19 Maximus, *CCSG* 22:75, trans. Blowers and Wilken, *Cosmic Mystery*, 125, emphasis added.

The importance of this text cannot be overestimated. It states explicitly that in Christ one finds the unity between the *logoi* of creation and the eternal *Logos* of God that is required of Maximus's position.

One finds in Maximus a doctrinal conception of the relationship between God and the world that constantly focuses on the second Person of the Trinity made incarnate. It recognizes the unbridgeable difference between created nature and the infinite God, as the Reformed and Orthodox Churches are adamant in asserting. But it also recognizes that there is an intimate protological, soteriological, and teleological bond between God and the world that is *identical* to their convergence in the person of Jesus Christ. This fact satisfies the theological criteria set by Barth, who insists on an ontology driven primarily by the person of Christ, while also satisfying the sensibilities of Catholic theologians whose theological methodology commonly rests on the assumption that there *is* such a bond between God and the world. Now that the concrete exposition of Maximus's cosmology is finished, it remains to see how his position fits into modern debates concerning natural theology and human reflection on God.

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF CHRIST: ASCETICISM AND CONTEMPLATION IN MAXIMUS

As might be anticipated, Maximus does not discuss these questions in the way that modern theologians tend to do so. Maximus's theology has a lateral character and strict divisions are hard to draw.²⁰ The Christian life is organic and interconnected, so there is no rigid separation between spiritual discipline and doctrinal reflection, orthopraxy and orthodoxy. As regards the former, Maximus takes a common Patristic approach, presenting three stages (the moral, the illuminative, and the unitive) of the individual's relationship to God. Each of these stages constitutes a certain form of knowledge of God, so this inquiry cannot avoid discussing these aspects of Maximus's doctrine. After briefly spelling out these stages in Maximus's theology, I will attempt to make clear by what means and for whom the divine knowledge presented in the spiritual life seems to be possible.

The first of these stages consists of ascetic and moral practice by which individuals come to purify their souls in preparation for later stages. This purification must take place, because the Fall plays a central role in this part of Maximus's anthropology.²¹ Due to the Fall, humanity's existence has ceased to coincide with God's eternal plan for it. In terms of Maximus's *logoi*, there is a rift that opens between the concrete existence of a creature and its *logos* in the Son. Because of this incongruence, the human individual can only imperfectly participate in its own image, so the purpose of ascetic and moral practice is to attempt to realign one's existence with the original plan in the Son for which it was created. Because it entails a certain participation in the Second Person of the Trinity, this first stage is already in a sense to attain divine knowledge:

20 See, for instance, Louth, *Maximus the Confessor*, 46 and 94.

21 Louth, *Maximus the Confessor*, 68.

Our Lord Jesus Christ himself is the substance of all the virtues. . . . These things [virtue words] of course are said about him absolutely, since he is wisdom and righteousness and sanctification itself. They are not, as in our case, simply attributed to him. . . . It is evident that every person who participates in virtue as a matter of habit unquestionably participates in God, the substance of the virtues.²²

Though not a major concern of Maximus at any time, the moral life is not understood as merely the product of human striving after perfection. Maximus affirms that God's grace is the prerequisite for right action.

The guarding and preservation of this [good life, or deification] in God depends on the resolve of those thus born: on their sincere acceptance of the grace bestowed on them and, through the practice of the commandments, on their cultivation of the beauty given to them by grace.²³

Maximus makes clear that even the most rudimentary knowledge of God—which is attained in the good, moral life—is a product of Christian grace.²⁴

Maximus's treatment of the second and third stages of the spiritual journey takes the form of an extended interpretation of the Transfiguration of Christ. There are two objects in this passage that he takes to be of great metaphorical value: Christ's garments and his body. Looking beyond the bare literal meaning of the passage, he argues that the pure white garments of Christ are a metaphor for our contemplation of the world in Scripture and in the *logoi* of creation. This contemplation leads to right understanding of creation as a whole, allowing our minds to be illuminated and brought into the second stage of the spiritual journey. Christ's body, in turn, is an image for the contemplation of truly divine things in the third stage of the spiritual journey.²⁵ The second stage is transitory because in itself it fails to attain the goal of the journey, i.e. union with Christ. Indeed, without a contemplation that strives beyond the "garments" to the Person of Christ himself, one runs the risk of worshipping the actual words of Scripture or the contents of the natural world:

I necessarily think that those who are rational should reflect on the body, which is much more important than its clothes, that is on the divine and exalted thoughts, disclosed by Holy Scripture and by looking at the created order. . . . lest at any time they are convicted of not having these things, not grasping the Word that brought and brings everything into being.²⁶

We must strive to look to the incarnate Word through the "garments" of creation,

22 Maximus, *PG* 91:1081D, trans. Blowers and Wilken, *Cosmic Mystery*, 58.

23 Maximus, *CCSG* 23, translated in Louth, *Maximus the Confessor*, 34.

24 Louth, *Maximus the Confessor*, 34.

25 Maximus, *PG* 91:1129ABCD, trans. Louth, *Maximus the Confessor*, 110–11.

26 Maximus, *PG* 91:1132A, trans. Louth, *Maximus the Confessor*, 111–12.

lest, in a Gentile way, we become murderers of the Word and *worship the creation instead of the Creator*, believing that there is nothing higher than what is seen or more magnificent than the objects of sense, or else, in a Jewish way, looking only as far as the letter, we reduce manifold reality to the [human] body alone, and deifying the belly and regarding what is shameful as glorious, we receive the same inheritance as the deicides, not discerning the Word who, for our sake and by means of what we are, became flesh to be with us.²⁷

Without true knowledge of the relationship between the “garments” and the body of Christ, human beings necessarily fall into idolatry when they strive to contemplate the *Logos* or the *logoi*.

In this complicated interpretation of the scene, Christ’s body serves as both the goal and the means of the spiritual journey. As the goal, it signifies the contemplation of divine things in the third stage. As the means of reaching this goal, Christ’s body is the proportion between creation and Creator that makes a correct, non-idolatrous understanding of the *logoi* and *Logos* possible. Without explicit knowledge of him, one can correctly contemplate neither the things of this world nor the things of God.

With this brief exposition of Maximus’s spiritual ascent into knowledge of God, one can begin to see the relevance of his thought to modern questions concerning God’s grace and questions of natural theology. A brief remark on the topic of grace first: it is not just to call Maximus a Pelagian. As mentioned above, Maximus states clearly that grace is at work from the very beginning of knowledge of God in the spiritual life.²⁸ This dependence is not fundamentally called into question in the second stage of natural contemplation; the phrase is misleading and would be better called “contemplation of nature.” It does not consist of using one’s rational faculties independent of God’s grace to perceive the true nature of the *logoi*. For Maximus, this perception is impossible even in principle, due to the Fall.²⁹ In any case, the centrality of the Transfiguration in the second and third stages makes such a reading highly improbable because of its heavy dependence on the mediation of Christ to understand the world or God.³⁰

Central to the debate over analogy is the question of eligibility for grace. Is explicit Christian faith a prerequisite for knowledge of God in Maximus’s thought? Maximus does not answer this question in so many words, though our comments above certainly bear some import on the topic. In his reflections on the virtuous life, Maximus proves that the ontological ground of the spiritual life is found in Christian doctrine, but he only assumes that such right belief is the epistemological ground as well. On this ground, could God sanctify a non-Christian as such? Does justifying grace necessarily precede sanctifying grace? Does God

27 Maximus, *PG* 91:1129CD, trans. Louth, *Maximus the Confessor*, 111, emphasis added.

28 Maximus, *CCSG* 23, trans. Louth, *Maximus the Confessor*, 34.

29 Louth, *Maximus the Confessor*, 68.

30 Maximus, *PG* 91:1132A, trans. Louth, *Maximus the Confessor*, 111–12.

justify non-Christians? How does God offer grace to the ungodly, even in the case of the individual who is to be a Christian? As important as these questions may be, they are not Maximus's. I would argue that based on his place in the philosophical virtue tradition and on the remarks above, Maximus would not be opposed to arguing that non-Christians can act according to Christian virtue through an implicit offer of grace made by God. This position would not contradict Maximus's theological principles.

In modern terms, this interpretation makes sense of the Second Vatican Council's admiration of the empirically irrefutable moral practices and precepts of non-Christian religions.³¹ In Scriptural terms, it would also make sense of Paul's argument in Romans 1 and 2, in which he indicts non-Christians for failing to know God and follow the moral law. In addition to the fact that Paul explicitly mentions that God made himself known to the Gentiles (Rom 1:19), there is a strong connection in that passage between knowing God and following moral precepts, just as in Maximus. If it were not possible for the Gentiles to have known God in some rudimentary way, the logic of Paul's argument seems to collapse. There is thus a strong affiliation between these Pauline ideas and my reading of Maximus's understanding of grace. If these arguments are compelling and my reading of Maximus correct, one must accept with Maximus the possibility that non-Christians have sufficient access to divine knowledge to be able to follow the moral law.

When it comes to contemplation of the *logoi* and of the *Logos*, however, it does not appear possible, on Maximus's principles, to affirm non-Christians' ability to access such grace. Because an explicit, conscious knowledge of the Incarnation is so central here, only a Christian who understands the relation of the *logoi* to the *Logos* can properly know God through these contemplative acts. In the second stage, without understanding the proportion between creation and the Creator, Maximus indicates that non-Christians—Greeks and Jews—fall into idolatry. In some way, they forget that creation and even Scripture are not ends in themselves. Objectively, perhaps, these aspects of creation point beyond themselves to their transcendent unity in the *Logos*, but without Christ, the non-Christian has no way of understanding this fact correctly. Similarly, without Christ, the third stage of direct contemplation of God is not possible, for only in Christ are our thoughts of God true to their transcendent archetype in the eternal *Logos*.

If this analysis of Maximian principles is correct, the following results hold. Opposed to some Catholic strands of thought, there is no such thing as a proper, effective "natural" theology since all true knowledge of God—from the life of virtue to a proper understanding of the world to the things of God—is in some way a gift of grace. Opposed to many Protestant claims, Maximus's thought indicates that not all grace is available only to Christians. Forms of grace that allows people to live virtuously are not limited to individuals who subjectively appropriate and believe the Christian mysteries, though these mysteries remain the objective grounding even of the non-Christian virtuous life. Other forms of this

31 Walter M. Abbott, ed., *The Documents of Vatican II*, trans. Joseph Gallagher. (New York: Guild Press, 1966), 660–64.

grace are only Christian, since they presuppose explicit knowledge of and belief in the Christian mysteries. Despite problems concerning the unity of grace that may arise from these suggestions, they seem to be the practical ramifications of Maximian Christocentric cosmology.

I have attempted here to present Maximus's teaching concerning the relationship of God to the world in a way that has ecumenical significance for the debate over the *analogia entis* today. As stated in the beginning, his teaching does not and could not conform in every way to the contemporary theology of the Churches in question. If Maximus is to function as a basis for convergence, certain statements would need to be affirmed by the Protestant and Catholic sides more explicitly than at present. For instance, if my reading of Maximus above is correct, Reformed or Barthian churches would have to affirm at least the *possibility* of the movement of grace outside any subjectively experienced or understood connection to Christ. Ontologically, of course, this connection to Christ would remain absolutely incontrovertible from any perspective. Catholics for their part would have to acknowledge the thoroughgoing Christocentric nature of the analogy in Maximus's theology. This reading would consequentially rule out certain forms of natural theology that pretend to offer access to knowledge of God through any other means than Christ. This suggestion may make some Catholics uncomfortable. Nevertheless, Catholics ought to accept Maximus as a living and accepted voice in the Tradition of the Church, and thereby consider his cosmic theology seriously. Even today, the Confessor's words are of considerable ecumenical value. Many in his day attempted to silence his voice, and it would be a mistake for anyone to try to silence him again in our own time.

*Benjamin Heidgerken is a second-year M.Div. student at
Princeton Theological Seminary.*

THE IMPORTANCE OF EBERHARD JÜNGEL FOR THE *ANALOGIA ENTIS* DEBATE

Ry O. Siggelkow

Between the two World Wars, the so-called *analogia entis* (analogy of being) was famously defended by the Jesuit philosopher-theologian Erich Przywara against the onslaught of attacks it received from Reformed theologian Karl Barth. Despite the ubiquity of the term in theological discourse during the mid-twentieth century, it is now widely acknowledged that the numerous debates that have ensued around the *analogia entis* have been remarkably *confused*. On the Protestant side, following Barth, the *analogia entis* has often been rejected for setting up a formal system that comes too close to subsuming God into creation. On the Catholic side, however, it is commonly argued that the *analogia entis* does nothing of the sort. Rather, it has been asserted time and time again that the *analogia entis* is, in fact, intended to protect the sheer *otherness* of God.

In his seminal book *God as the Mystery of the World*, the Protestant theologian Eberhard Jüngel observes that, paradoxically, the usual Protestant “criticism of the genuinely Catholic doctrine of the so-called ‘analogy of being’ (*analogia entis*) is directed against the very thing against which this doctrine itself is directed.”¹ According to Jüngel, clouded by the “early” Barth’s polemics against the *analogia entis*, Protestant and Catholic discussions have often missed the important shift in Barth’s thought on the subject. In contrast to Barth’s early critique, which interpreted the doctrine as emphasizing an ontological similarity between God’s being and creaturely being, the later Barth, according to Jüngel, “feared that the so-called *analogia entis* would not do justice to the difference between God and man by overlooking the *nearness* of God.”² Despite Jüngel’s clarifications of the later Barth’s understanding of analogy and his own work in moving the discussion of analogy forward, it is still common to hear the same type of polemically-driven discourse between Roman Catholics and Protestants that took place in the mid-twentieth century.

The primary purpose of this paper is to respond to and offer a critique of John R. Betz’s recent attempt to resurrect Przywara’s doctrine of the *analogia entis*. Betz’s failure to engage Jüngel’s work on analogy in his defense of the *analogia entis* is an evasion of the most pressing and serious critique of Przy-

1 Eberhard Jüngel, *God as the Mystery of the World: On the Foundation of Theology of the Crucified One in the Dispute between Atheism and Theism*, trans. Darrell L. Guder (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 281–282.

2 Jüngel, *God as the Mystery of the World*, 282. Emphases are in the original unless otherwise noted.

wara and would-be defenders of the *analogia entis*. Rather than addressing the most substantial theological challenge raised against the *analogia entis*, Betz is content with maintaining problematic caricatures and misinformed criticisms of Barth that stem from a remarkable lack of familiarity with much of the past twenty-five years of Barthian scholarship. As Kenneth Oakes rightly states, Betz's reading and presenting Barth now "as a kind of abstract dialectician of negation and affirmation, is simply unconvincing."³ Indeed, Jüngel's thesis amounts to a radical *inversion* of the standard terms of debate that ought to be taken seriously by Roman Catholic and Orthodox interlocutors. In his exposition of this thesis, following the later Barth, Jüngel argues not for a rejection of *analogy* as such, but for a more thoroughgoing *theological* articulation of analogical predication of God. In short, he develops a use of analogy in theological discourse that is radically grounded in the context of faith in the event of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ. Hence, in contrast to the Roman Catholic doctrine of the *analogia entis*, Jüngel's project attempts to extrapolate and extend the later Barth's concept of the *analogia fidei* (analogy of faith). Any adequate defense of the *analogia entis* must take into account and finally come to terms with Jüngel's challenge to the doctrine and his positive proposals for a way forward.

JOHN BETZ AND THE DEATH OF THE *ANALOGIA ENTIS*

In his two-part article in *Modern Theology*, John R. Betz vigorously and polemically resurrects Erich Przywara's account of the doctrine of the *analogia entis* from the grave.⁴ In his account of the doctrine's demise, Karl Barth and Martin Heidegger play the leading roles—"a secret alliance"—that dealt the final blow to the doctrine.⁵ The critiques of both figures, according to Betz, exemplify how "the power of rhetoric often eclipses the power of thought."⁶ Barth's now famous denunciation of the doctrine as the invention of the Anti-Christ⁷ is dismissed for its "little attention to detail."⁸ In Heidegger's case, the doctrine "is uniformly classified as a relic of 'onto-theology,' a hold-over of the same 'metaphysical' thinking that has dominated the West since Plato."⁹

Betz does admit certain medieval precursors deserve at least some blame for the death of the *analogia entis*. Betz, of course, includes all the usual suspects—Scotus, Ockham, Cajetan, and Suarez—and, as in every good declension narrative, Descartes' *cogito*, Kant, and Nietzsche all stand condemned before the

3 Kenneth Oakes, "The Question of Nature and Grace in Karl Barth: Humanity as Creature and as Covenant-Partner," *Modern Theology* 23, no. 4 (October 2007): 596.

4 John R. Betz, "Beyond the Sublime: The Aesthetics of the Analogy of Being," *Modern Theology* 21, no. 3 (2005): 367–411, and 22, no. 1 (2006): 1–50.

5 Betz, 367.

6 Ibid.

7 See Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics I/1*, trans. Geoffrey Bromiley (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975) xiii.

8 Betz, 367.

9 Ibid.

court's jury.¹⁰ According to Betz, the doctrine was given "new life" in the nineteenth century, culminating with Przywara,¹¹ who is the *hero* of Betz's narrative.¹² But his story seems to end here, with Przywara, who is evidently the last great defender of the *analogia entis*, rightly understood. Although he admits the doctrine "lingered" in the works of Maritain and Gilson, Przywara's book marked the "curtain call"—the end of the so-called *analogia entis* in modern philosophy and theology—until now, just in time for Betz to take the stage.¹³

Unfortunately, Betz's account of the demise of the *analogia entis* reveals a number of problematic assumptions. First, and perhaps foremost, Betz assumes that the *analogia entis* has one constant, stable, and self-evident meaning. However, the convoluted history of the doctrine of the *analogia entis* is much more complex than Betz wants to admit. After all, there is no single, universally authoritative, and unambiguous doctrine of the *analogia entis*. To speak, then, of the *death* of the *analogia entis* is surely strange, for it is fundamentally questionable whether there is *one* doctrine of the *analogia entis*. Of course, Betz's understanding of what is constitutive of the *analogia entis* and what this means for the entire theological enterprise becomes quite clear in the course of his narration of the demise of the doctrine. It should at least be acknowledged, however, that Betz's account is almost entirely keyed to Erich Przywara's distinctive articulation of the *analogia entis*. Hence, for Betz, the doctrine either stands or falls depending on how it is employed or rejected in relation to Przywara. It is on this highly contestable basis that Betz contends the *analogia entis* is dead.

A second problematic assumption, one that has consistently led to a great deal of confusion in this discussion, is the notion that where one stands on the doctrine of the *analogia entis* necessarily *determines* one's entire theological enterprise. Thus, one's take on the *analogia entis* becomes almost shorthand for one's views on nature and grace or the relationship between faith and reason.

10 Ibid., 367–68. Here Betz builds on the work of Catherine Pickstock and in line with much of the British "Radical Orthodoxy" movement, argues that Scotus and Ockham held to a univocal concept of being, which marked a departure or even a denial of a Thomistic account of the analogy of being. For her account of this development, see Catherine Pickstock, *After Writing: On the Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 121f. For a critique of Suarez, Betz points us to John Montag, S. J., "The False Legacy of Suarez" in *Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology*, ed. John Milbank, Catherine Pickstock, and Graham Ward (London: Routledge, 1999), 38–63.

11 See Erich Przywara, *Analogia Entis*, in *Schriften*, vol. 3 (Einsiedeln: Johannes Verlag, 1962). The first edition of the book was published in 1932 under the title *Analogia Entis: Metaphysics*. As of yet, there is still no published English translation of the book. It is my understanding that John R. Betz and David Bentley Hart are in the middle of translating the book. Evidently, we can expect to see a publication of it soon through Eerdmans. For an introduction to Przywara, see Thomas F. O'Meara, O. P., *Erich Przywara, S. J.: His Theology and His World* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002).

12 Betz, 368.

13 Ibid.

Because Betz thinks Barth does not maintain a proper understanding of analogy, the result is a “complete overpowering of the creature, whereby the creature as secondary cause (*causa secunda*) is obliterated, in keeping with the tendency of Reformed theology in general.”¹⁴ Because Barth does not hold to the doctrine of the *analogia entis*, his doctrine of creation is weakened, and ultimately, Barth is accused of “obliterating” any positive role for creation altogether. Of course, we should be clear that Betz is not alone in this assumption. It was Karl Barth, after all, who famously identified the *analogia entis* as the root of almost everything that he perceived to be wrong with Roman Catholicism—everything that the Protestant reformers attacked. From Catholic dogmas on Mary to papal infallibility, Barth saw the *analogia entis* as the formal principle always lurking in the shadows, providing the framework and basis for much of what he found to be problematic in Catholicism. Nevertheless, it is by no means obvious why one’s stance on the doctrine of the *analogia entis* necessarily determines from the outset the whole theological enterprise. How one articulates the ontological relationship between creaturely being and God’s being is surely important to any theological project, but how this ontological relationship functions and relates *concretely* to specific areas of doctrine is not so cut and dried.

Let us step back for a moment. Perhaps Betz is not totally misguided in his article. Indeed, Karl Barth and Martin Heidegger have certainly had an enormous impact that continues to be felt in contemporary theology and philosophy. The sound of Barth’s strong condemnation of the *analogia entis*, when heard together with his famous *Nein!* in response to Emil Brunner,¹⁵ rings loudly in contemporary theological discourse.¹⁶ There is also no doubt that Heidegger’s critique of “onto-theology” looms large over philosophy. Perhaps, as Betz argues, this is evident in a certain tendency towards a sort of “valorization of the sublime.”¹⁷ Furthermore, Betz is quite right to note the brilliance of Przywara’s account of the *analogia entis*. However, let us not forget that Przywara’s understanding of the *analogia entis* came much closer to Barth’s own position than the doctrine he saw at work in much of Catholic theology and was so bent on demolishing. After all, despite their fundamental disagreements, it is important to remember that Przywara and Barth, like Brunner and Barth, shared much in common.

For Betz, Barth’s polemical denunciation of the *analogia entis* was so *loud* that the sheer brilliance of Przywara’s nuanced position was simply drowned

14 Ibid., 6.

15 See Barth, “No!” *Natural Theology: Comprising “Nature and Grace,”* trans. Peter Fraenkel (London: Geoffrey Bles, The Centenary Press, 1946), 65–128.

16 As Hans Urs von Balthasar noted, Barth positions his work “between two flanks: on the left, he rejects the *content* of liberal Protestantism while admitting its formal principle; and, on the right, he rejects the *formal* structure of Catholicism while showing a deep appreciation for the content of many of its doctrines.” *The Theology of Karl Barth: Exposition and Interpretation*, trans. Edward T. Oakes (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992), 36.

17 This is Oakes’ description of Betz’s critique. See his excellent response and defense of Barth in Oakes, 595.

out—if anyone had even taken the time to read and understand his work. In Betz’s own words, “Perhaps it is to be expected that one remembers the ‘prophets of extremity’ and not the genius in their midst; the rhetoric of the hour, and not the work of a lifetime.”¹⁸ Despite the fact that Betz thinks Barth is completely mistaken on the issue of analogy, he does admit that Barth had legitimate concerns in mind, namely, “the reduction of God to anthropological terms, leading to a Promethean glorification of humanity.”¹⁹ Both Barth and Heidegger in their differing ways “waged an allied war against representation: for the sake of the event (whether of divine revelation or Being) that disrupts all conceptual attempts to determine it in advance and scatters them in its coming.”²⁰ For both thinkers, the *analogia entis* “presented an obvious target, because it seemed to represent a chain of reasoning to God, moreover, a fixing of God as the supreme referent within an intelligible, if prodigious economy of similitudes.”²¹ Barth’s rejection of the doctrine of the *analogia entis* went hand-in-hand with his critique of liberal Protestantism, and indeed, his critique of any theological methodology that failed to begin with the sheer otherness of God. As Betz rightly observes, for Barth the *analogia entis* “seemed to ensconce a thoroughly ontic deity atop a pre-established hierarchy, and thus to confuse the God of the philosophers.”²² Or, better, as Barth himself put it, the *analogia entis* “tries to synthesize from the standpoint of the onlooker, to survey and see through what is not given to us to see.”²³

In his assessment of whether or not this is a fair critique of the doctrine, Betz argues that Barth, along with many of his followers, simply got the doctrine all wrong. According to Betz, “what generally passes for a critique of the doctrine is a critique of something to which it bears scarcely any resemblance at all.”²⁴ In other words, what Barth and his followers critique is basically a *phantom* doctrine, for the doctrine of the *analogia entis*, rightly understood, expressly rejects any assertion of *univocity* between creaturely being and God’s being. As Przywara, Hans Urs von Balthasar, Gottlieb Söhngen, and now Betz (among many others) all emphasize in response to Barth, the intention of the doctrine of the *analogia entis* is to stress that the ontological similarity between God and creation must always be understood only within the context of an *ever-greater ontological dissimilarity*.²⁵ The principle of analogy is invoked to avoid the dual problems of an assertion of either univocity or equivocity to describe the relation between God’s being and creaturely being. The intention of Przywara was to “dispose his con-

18 Betz, 368.

19 Ibid., 369.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid., 370.

22 Ibid.

23 Barth, *Church Dogmatics* I/1, 252.

24 Betz, 370.

25 It should be evident by now that Kenneth Oakes is absolutely correct in his assertion that “Betz is actually reprising a whole host of interminable debates which took place in twentieth century theology when he resurrects this issue of analogy in Barth” (Oakes, 604).

temporaries to ever more *humble* service of an *ever-greater* God, whose ‘depths’ no creature can fathom apart from the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:10f.).”²⁶ Thus, Betz affirms that Przywara’s articulation of the analogia entis was actually in continuity with Barth’s overall concerns.

In his defense of the analogia entis, Betz summarizes the thrust of Przywara’s account. For Przywara the analogia entis is a restating of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215. According to the Council, “one cannot note any similarity between Creator and creature—however great—that would obviate the need always to note an ever-greater dissimilarity.”²⁷ In following this principle, Przywara observes that the analogia entis “in no way signifies a ‘natural theology’; on the contrary, it obtains precisely in the domain of the supernatural and the genuinely Christian.”²⁸ In Przywara’s perspective, the analogia entis signifies the “dynamic transcendence” of God, precisely the opposite of Barth’s criticisms. Przywara’s doctrine of the analogia entis does, in fact, stand in sharp *antithesis* to the object of Barth’s criticisms. Far from subsuming God into creation under a common ontological *genus* called “being,” the doctrine as articulated by Przywara insists on the being of God as ever beyond and above creation. God is decidedly *non aliud*, to echo Nicholas of Cusa—that is, God is not an other among others; God is not a thing alongside other things in the universe. In the words of Rowan Williams, the analogy of being emphasizes that “there is no system of which God and creatures are both part.”²⁹

Betz, then, is quite right in castigating Barth for his lack of attention to Przywara’s articulation of the analogia entis. As Jüngel points out, much of Protestant polemics have followed this weak line of attack and to this extent have failed to engage the real problems inherent in the doctrine of the analogia entis.³⁰ However, Jüngel argues that the later Barth shifted his criticism by pointing out “that the so-called *analogia entis* would not do justice to the difference between God and man by overlooking the *nearness* of God.”³¹ Betz’s attacks on Barth, however, completely fail to acknowledge his later more developed criticism of the analogia entis and Jüngel’s further exposition of this critique.³² The central failure of Betz’s defense of Przywara, then, is that he does not fully address this line of criticism leveled against the analogia entis. The failure to address Jüngel

26 Ibid., 7.

27 Przywara, cited in Betz, 9–10.

28 Ibid.

29 Rowan Williams, “Balthasar and Difference,” in *Wrestling with Angels: Conversations in Modern Theology*, ed. Mike Higton (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 80.

30 Jüngel, *God as the Mystery of the World*, 282.

31 Ibid. See also Jüngel, “Die Möglichkeit theologischer Anthropologie auf dem Grunde der Analogie,” *Evangelische Theologie* 22 (1962): 535ff.

32 Although Betz does acknowledge Jüngel’s understanding of the “apparent” shift in the later Barth’s critique of the analogia entis, he simply dismisses it in a few sentences as just another one of Barth’s misunderstandings. Thus, he never takes the actual content of Barth’s shift or Jüngel’s own theological proposals seriously (Betz, 12).

is problematic because his work arguably presents the most serious challenge to defenders of the *analogia entis*.

EBERHARD JÜNGEL'S ACCOUNT OF ANALOGY

Jüngel acknowledges that the debate about analogy in theology has been thoroughly confused, not least due to misguided Protestant theological criticisms of the *analogia entis*. Critiques from the Protestant side are, in Jüngel's view, "directed against the very thing against which this doctrine itself is directed."³³ He goes so far as to say that the common Protestant objections raised against the *analogia entis* tend to "miss the point of the so-called *analogia entis* entirely."³⁴ For Jüngel, the use of analogy in theological discourse is necessary if "human talk about God is supposed to correspond to him."³⁵ Therefore, theology must "devote concentrated attention to analogy."³⁶

Jüngel observes that Przywara's account of the *analogia entis* faithfully follows the Fourth Lateran Council in stating that the basic principle of analogy emphasizes a "greater dissimilarity in so great a likeness" between God and creature. According to Jüngel, the problem with this particular application of analogy to "being," at least in the sense of Przywara's understanding, is that it "applies primarily to the inaccessibility of God, applies only too much."³⁷ In his view, if analogy is understood in this way it effectively becomes "the most thoroughgoing *hindrance* to a closed system which forces together God, man and the world."³⁸ In this framework, any mediation between God and creation (including perhaps even the mediation of Jesus Christ) is "totally excluded."³⁹ Thus, Jüngel contends that the *analogia entis* really "protects the holy grail of the mystery, and as such is really the opposite of what Protestant polemics have made it out to be."⁴⁰ Jüngel argues that the doctrine of the *analogia entis* does precisely what Betz and Przywara claim that it does: respect the transcendence and sheer *otherness* of God. In

33 Ibid., 281–82.

34 Ibid., 283. It is interesting to note that the few times Betz actually *does* cite Jüngel he does so with unqualified *approval*, particularly because Jüngel agrees with Betz's thesis that Protestants have by and large been *wrong* about their attack on the analogy of being. Of course, this is quite odd when we consider the fact that Jüngel's criticisms of the *analogia entis* absolutely undermine Betz's entire argument.

35 Ibid., 281.

36 Ibid. In Jüngel's view, it is even "thoughtless" to think that theology could evade thinking about the "exposition of the conditions" of the possibility of analogy for talk about God, as much of recent Protestant theology has in fact done. Although Jüngel is critical of much of the Christian tradition's use of analogy, as Philip Rolnick points out, at least in Jüngel "we now have both Catholic and Protestant agreement on the necessity of analogy." See Philip Rolnick, *Analogical Possibilities: How Words Refer to God*, American Academy of Religion, no. 81 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 200.

37 Jüngel, *God as the Mystery of the World*, 281.

38 Ibid., 284.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

fact, according to Jüngel, if one really wants to respect the otherness of God, then “nothing would be more appropriate than to think up the much-scorned *analogia entis*.”⁴¹ Ultimately, however, this cannot “be the concern of a theology which accords with the gospel.”⁴² Rather, the task of a Christian theology that accords with the *gospel* is to think about analogy *within* the context of faith, that is, in light of God’s self-revelation in Jesus Christ.⁴³

JÜNGEL’S COMPARISON OF KANT, ARISTOTLE, AND AQUINAS ON ANALOGY

In order to fully understand Jüngel’s critique of the *analogia entis* and his own positive proposal to the debate about analogy, it is crucial to understand his particular perspective and reading of the development of the doctrine in the Western theological tradition. Jüngel undertakes his criticism of the *analogia entis* in the context of a broad and comprehensive critique of the Western metaphysical tradition as a whole. Indeed, Jüngel goes so far as to accuse the Western metaphysical tradition of causing modern day atheism.⁴⁴ Further, he accuses the metaphysical tradition of failing to think through the *death of God*. Because the metaphysical tradition had determined in advance that God is *supra nos* (beyond or above us) and therefore necessarily impassible, omnipotent, and imperishable, it could not ultimately take the depth of revelation seriously, particularly the death of God in Jesus Christ on the cross.⁴⁵

In developing his critique of the *analogia entis* Jüngel notes a problematic similarity between Kant and Aquinas on the use of analogy, which he argues they both share with Aristotle. Kant’s use of analogy then, in his assessment, whether knowingly or not stands firmly within the “classical theological tradition.”⁴⁶ Theology raises the following epistemological problem for Kant: If we can only think

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.

43 Before exploring further the line of Jüngel’s complex critique of the *analogia entis*, it is important to remember that Jüngel’s assertion of the “indispensability” and “unavoidability” of analogy “for every thoroughgoing theology,” does not mean that Jüngel ultimately agrees with Betz on the appropriateness of Przywara’s doctrine of the *analogia entis*. For Jüngel, the *analogia entis* is *one* appropriation of analogy in theological discourse, one that applies the concept of analogy in order to speak of a relationship between creaturely being and God’s being. Indeed, in Jüngel’s understanding, analogy is indispensable, but every appropriation of analogy “always involves a decision about what may be considered analogy within the realm of theology.” Thus, in line with the later Barth, Jüngel intends to articulate a properly *theological* ground for the appropriate use of analogy in discourse about God—what both Barth and Jüngel refer to as an *analogia fidei*—in contrast to the “genuinely Catholic doctrine” of the *analogia entis*. Ibid., 281.

44 For instance, he states that theology “should have seen its responsibility in preventing such philosophical developments from ever happening.” Ibid.

45 Rolnick, 196.

46 Jüngel, *God as the Mystery of the World*, 263. Although Kant thought it necessary to do away with appeals to metaphysical knowledge altogether, his philosophical system could not dispense with the *idea* of God—i.e., God is *necessary*—for if we can-

of a being (God) using formal and abstract concepts, then we think of nothing concrete or real at all; on the other hand, if we think of a being (God) by applying certain properties from our concrete experience of the world, then we have conceived of God as an object of the world.⁴⁷ In order to resolve this perceived problem, Kant resorts to the principle of analogy. Because we can only think of God, whose being must exist *beyond* the world and is therefore *unknowable*, by appealing to empirical reality, we can only speak about God purely in terms of a *relation*. For example, God is to the world as a shipbuilder is to a ship. By analogy we can speak of God as the “builder” of the world. By using analogy, Kant understands himself to be avoiding the problem of “dogmatic anthropomorphism” by achieving a “symbolic anthropomorphism”—one that is fundamentally linguistic. His use of analogy, then, is purely linguistic in that it “concerns language only and not the object [God] itself.”⁴⁸ Only the *concept* of God is thinkable and speakable; what we can objectively “know” about God is precisely that God cannot actually be known at all.

Jüngel points out that whenever Kant uses the principle of analogy it is always a way to describe a relation “between dissimilar things which express *dependence*. God is called *God* through a comparison with dependent relationships.”⁴⁹ In other words, Kant’s usage of analogy is always expressed in terms of proportionality or relation and in terms of attribution or dependence. For example, God is to the world as a watchmaker is to a watch; or God is to the world as a shipbuilder is to a ship. God is represented as both *independent* and always surpassing creaturely being, and God is “that entity on which everything else depends: as the *highest* essence, or the *first cause*.”⁵⁰ Jüngel observes that whereas the classical tradition (e.g., Aristotle) at least formally distinguished between two types of analogy—namely, the analogy of proportionality and the analogy of attribution—in Kant the two are intermixed.⁵¹

In order to illustrate this point more clearly, Jüngel provides an analysis of analogy in the work of Aristotle. He discovers the two models of analogy in Aristotle that he argues appear as intermixed in Aquinas and Kant. Aristotle understands the first model of analogy (the analogy of proportionality), as a particular instance of metaphor, which is “the result of a transference in language.”⁵² In Aristotle’s words, “That from analogy is possible whenever there are four terms so related that the second (B) is to the first (A) as the fourth (D) to the third (C); for

not think of God, this would inevitably mean that the world were infinite, and therefore lead Kant to problematically posit that the world were God.

47 Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics*, ed. L. W. Beck (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1950), 103ff. Cited in Jüngel, *God as the Mystery of the World*, 264.

48 Kant, *Prolegomena*, 105ff. Cited in Jüngel, *God as the Mystery of the World*, 264.

49 Jüngel, *God as the Mystery of the World*, 266.

50 *Ibid.*

51 *Ibid.*

52 *Ibid.*, 267.

one may then metaphorically put D in lieu of B, and B in lieu of D.”⁵³ According to Jüngel, Aristotle presupposes analogy in the sense of *proportion*, which can be expressed mathematically as $A:B = C:D$. In the analogy of proportionality, things are compared strictly in terms of their relation—there is *absolute* dissimilarity in terms of essences or being. Aristotle uses the following example to illustrate this point: “As old age (D) is to life (C), so is evening (B) to day (A). One will accordingly describe evening (B) as the ‘old age of the day’ (D + A)—or by the Empedoclean equivalent; and old age (D) as the ‘evening’ or ‘sunset of life’ (B + C).”⁵⁴ In Aristotle’s view, this model of analogy belongs strictly under the heading of rhetoric.

In contrast to the analogy of proportionality, the second model Aristotle uses is the so-called analogy of attribution, which occurs when one word is employed to name two different things, but in a *similar sense*. This happens when the similarity is expressed because the two different things are mutually related to some other thing. In this model of analogy, the two things can be named with the same word, because they are related to a “hermeneutical *first thing*, on the basis of which and in relation to which other things can also be named.”⁵⁵ To illustrate this point Aristotle uses the example of the word “healthy.”⁵⁶ Despite the fact that we are talking about different things, we can equally refer to the human body, medicine, urine, and the color of one’s face with the same word “healthy.” We speak *analogously*, however, because all are *related* in *differing* ways to “one identical thing.”⁵⁷ So, for instance, urine *demonstrates* that the body is “healthy”; medicine *affects* the “health” of the body; the body is *made* “healthy” by medicine. According to Jüngel, in this example, “Health itself is the *proton hygieinon* (‘first health’) as the principle and ground for healthy being.”⁵⁸ Each different thing is related in different ways to a “*common thing*, on which as the ontological first thing ‘the other things depend, and in virtue of which they get their names.’”⁵⁹

As explained above, the analogy of attribution in Aristotle relates different things to one common thing—what is referred to as a hermeneutical “first thing.” Significantly, in medieval scholasticism, this logical “first thing” shifts to an ontological “first thing.” In this framework, different things are related to and have a certain dependency of *being*. As Jüngel observes, “The hermeneutical first thing appears as the ontological origin which under certain circumstances can also be thought of as the ontic causer.”⁶⁰ This ontological shift in the use of analogy of

53 Aristotle, *De Poetica*, ch. 21, trans. Ingram Bywater, *The Works of Aristotle*, ed. W. D. Ross (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), 11, 1457b, 1ff. Quoted in Jüngel, *God as the Mystery of the World*, 267.

54 Jüngel, *God as the Mystery of the World*, 267.

55 *Ibid.*, 269.

56 *Ibid.*, 270.

57 *Ibid.*

58 *Ibid.*

59 Aristotle, *Metaphysica*, *The Works of Aristotle*, paragraph 2, 1003b, 16f. Quoted in Jüngel, *God as the Mystery of the World*, 270.

60 Jüngel, *God as the Mystery of the World*, 272.

attribution, according to Jüngel's narrative, takes on a special *theological* significance in Aquinas and Kant.

For Aquinas, God the Creator is always understood as the highest essence and first cause of all that exists in the created order. The principle of analogy arises for Aquinas as a means to resolve the common predicament, namely, to answer the question concerning how human language is capable of talk about God, who is genuinely *other* than the world. For Aquinas, like Kant and Aristotle, analogy is understood as the appropriate middle ground between univocity and equivocity. In Aquinas' view, one cannot simply use human language *univocally* when we speak about both creation and the Creator. If one names God *univocally*, then one fails to properly distinguish between God's being and created being. However, because God's effects are genuinely *known* by creaturely being, predication of God cannot end finally in total equivocation. For Aquinas, like Kant, the principle of analogy of proportionality is the obvious way of resolving this.⁶¹ Jüngel traces the commonality between Aquinas and Kant to Aristotle.

The problem that Jüngel sees in Aquinas is similar to what he identifies in Kant's use of analogy. He argues that in building on Aristotle, both thinkers intermix the analogy of proportionality and the analogy of attribution. For Aquinas and Kant the analogy of proportionality is fundamental to any appropriately human speech about God. As described above, the analogy of proportionality can be expressed as follows: A:B = C:D. In the analogy of proportionality, things maintain their absolute dissimilarity and are comparable purely in terms of their relation. The analogy of attribution, which is illustrated above by Aristotle's "health" example, takes place when two different things are related to one "first thing" in a similar sense. In applying the analogy of attribution to speech about God, Aquinas uses Aristotle's "health" example, except the term "health" is now keyed or *proportioned* to an *ontological* first thing (namely, God). For Aquinas, God becomes the perfection and cause of being—God is the ontological and hermeneutical "first thing" as God *causes* the similar (within a greater dissimilarity) perfection to exist in creaturely being. It is here where Jüngel argues that the analogy of attribution has "drawn into itself" the analogy of proportionality when speaking about God.⁶²

The principle of analogy has been raised by Aquinas, Kant, and indeed most of the classical theological tradition in order to resolve the problem of the *speaking-ability* and the *thinkability* of God. How can human speech refer to God without anthropomorphizing or humanizing God, who is divine and therefore presupposed as existing *out* of this world? As we have shown, Jüngel argues that both Aquinas and Kant follow the basic logic of analogy as proportionality as a way to resolve this problem. In order to employ this type of analogy, Jüngel argues that one must at least presuppose a "lingual *acquaintance* with the *situation* of the thing to be

61 Ibid., 272–73.

62 Rolnick, 206–7. Rolnick sums up his position clearly, "Jüngel sees a latent presupposition in the analogy of attribution—i.e., God has a given perfection to God's being as the creature has the same perfection to the creature's being. And this reading amounts to: a:b = c:d, or the analogy of proportionality."

expressed; the *relations* of the two things to the further thing must be known to us if the naming is not to be meaningless.⁶³ He suggests that this presupposition is expressed in the analogy of attribution, which asserts that God is the ontological “first thing.” In this framework, *God*, then, is presupposed as the “unconditioned condition of the world.”⁶⁴ The analogy of attribution, therefore, allows Aquinas to speak of God in relation to the world precisely “as the unknown, who in his unknown state relates to the world in a way which we know of.”⁶⁵

According to Jüngel, the theological critique against this metaphysical tradition is that in its “obtrusiveness the unknownness of God has become an unbearably sinister riddle.”⁶⁶ The analogy of proportionality, based on the analogy of attribution, actually increases God’s unknownness—God becomes totally inaccessible. God, in this framework, is articulated only as the unknown causer who is *supra nos*, always above and beyond the world. The formula for this model of analogy can perhaps more aptly be described as A:B = C:X.⁶⁷ What we end up with following this framework is fundamentally an *agnostic* account of God. In Jüngel’s view this model of analogy must be actively opposed for strictly theological reasons. In his own words, “Faith in the God who is identical with the man Jesus forces theology to dispute the very premises of the metaphysical tradition.”⁶⁸

JÜNGEL’S ANALOGY OF ADVENT

Against the background of his critique of the *analogia entis* Jüngel develops his analogy of faith, using the metaphor of advent. The metaphor of advent is “the rising sun of the new day (“Every morning is fresh and new. . .!”): that light in which the owl of Minerva gives in to the dove of the Holy Spirit.”⁶⁹ In Jüngel’s view analogy must be understood as an *event* where the One (X) comes to the Other (A) by the means of a relationship of another Other (B) to one more Other (C).⁷⁰ What Jüngel is trying to accomplish in his *analogy of advent* is a way to express “God’s arrival among men as a definitive event.”⁷¹ In this understanding of analogy, God (X) fully *comes* to the world (A), so the world-relationship (B:C) “appears in a completely new light, in a light which *makes* this world-relationship

63 Jüngel, *God as the Mystery of the World*, 277.

64 Ibid.

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid.

67 Ibid., 279.

68 Ibid., 280. Jüngel goes on, “Can the indispensable articulation of the *distinction* between God and man be done only through the assertion of the *total difference* of God and man? There is christological reason to ask whether there is not a God-enabled, a God-required, even a God-demanded anthropomorphism which moves far beyond the naive of ‘dogmatic’ anthropomorphism as well as the skepticism of ‘symbolic’ anthropomorphism. Briefly: is there a theological use of analogy which corresponds to faith in the incarnation of God?”

69 Ibid., 285.

70 Ibid.

71 Ibid.

new, an eschatological light.”⁷² On the natural level, that is, on the level of “being,” the world-relationship (B:C) has no inner capacity to refer to God, but in the event of God’s coming the world-relationship “now begins to speak for God.”⁷³ God’s Word, then, is actually and truly *spoken* in the world with a “worldly obviousness in the service of something even more obvious, and thus as a completely new case because of the new light which illuminates it.”⁷⁴ God reveals God’s self in the event of God’s *coming* in Jesus Christ and so makes use of the “obvious world in such a way that he proves himself to be that which is even more obvious against it.”⁷⁵

Against the classical account of the *analogia entis*, which leaves God speakable only as the One who is fundamentally *unknown* and *unspeakable*, Jüngel takes God’s self-revelation with the utmost seriousness. He argues that, in the event of God’s coming in the person of Jesus, the *unknown* ceases to be unknown. “In the event of the analogy $x:a = b:c$, God ceases to be x . He introduces himself in that he arrives. And this arrival belongs to his very being which he reveals in arriving.”⁷⁶ God’s “arrival” is God’s complete self-disclosure in the world, in human history, and this takes place as “an arrival-in-language.” The gospel in Jüngel’s conception is thus an event—the “event of correspondence.”⁷⁷ In this event it is not the case that human words come too close to God, but “rather God as the word comes close to man in human words.”⁷⁸

Indeed, this event, which is properly called *revelation*, unveils the *difference* between God and humanity. In Jüngel’s words, “he carries out his divinity’s own humanity, in order to make concrete the difference between his divinity’s own humanity and the humanity of man.”⁷⁹ The fundamental *difference* between God and humanity is not guaranteed by recourse to an abstract formalism as in the metaphysical tradition, but only in this event of God’s coming. The difference is revealed to be “not the difference of a still greater dissimilarity, but rather, conversely, the difference of a still greater similarity between God and man in the midst of a great dissimilarity.”⁸⁰

CONCLUSION

John R. Betz should be commended for his effort to bring Przywara back into the discussion of the use of analogy in theological discourse. Unfortunately, his attack on Barth and those critical of the *analogia entis* simply reprises the debates of the mid-twentieth century without considering crucial developments.

72 Ibid.

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid.

75 Ibid.

76 Ibid., 286.

77 Ibid.

78 Ibid., 288.

79 Ibid.

80 Ibid.

In particular, I have argued that it is problematic that Betz does not adequately deal with the work of Eberhard Jüngel. I have shown that Jüngel's work radically inverts the standard terms of the debate. In Jüngel much of the polemically driven ecumenical debates of the mid-twentieth century become obsolete. Indeed, in acknowledging the basic premise of Przywara and Betz regarding the *intent* of the *analogia entis*, Jüngel's rejection of the doctrine is based on fundamentally different grounds. His critique of the classical types of analogy poses a real and pressing *theological* challenge to Betz and all defenders of the *analogia entis*.

Ry O. Siggelkow is an M.A. student at the University of St. Thomas in Saint Paul, Minnesota.

BOOK REVIEWS

George Hunsinger, *The Eucharist and Ecumenism: Let Us Keep the Feast*, Current Issues in Theology, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 350. \$29.99 (paperback)

Christians are often a frustrating lot. We argue about how to read scripture, how to worship, and about what temperature to keep our sanctuaries. Our churches split over great theological matters as well as minor political or even preferential issues. Within denominations we segregate on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, and social status. Among all of these problems lies the issue of the Eucharist and the horrible scandal that Christians refuse to invite one another to the Table of Christ. But with all of the theological disagreement, political obstacles, indifference, and historical mistrust, is there any chance that the ecumenical movement can become successful in uniting the churches in one common Lord's Supper? George Hunsinger thinks there is.

In his new book, *The Eucharist and Ecumenism*, Hunsinger takes a great step in mapping out a path toward the common celebration of the Eucharist. He begins by situating his outlook and methodology in the ecumenical movement. In contrast to enclave theology, which is interested in dialogue only for the purpose of gaining hegemony for its particular tradition, and modern academic theology, which reduces historical Christianity to "an ancient patriarchal religion of obscure Mediterranean provenance," ecumenical theology holds fast to the orthodox creeds and doctrines of the faith while finding value in the various traditions that comprise the Church—even those of modern academic theology. Hunsinger, then, affirms here what he has developed elsewhere, a generous orthodoxy that is steadfastly committed to traditional Christian faith but which charitably values the diversity through which this faith is expressed.

When it comes to the issue of the Eucharist itself, Hunsinger identifies three areas of disagreement that are of the greatest importance. The first of these is the issue of the real presence of Christ. The great divide on this matter seems unbridgeable at first glance. That is, the chasm that separates the Roman Catholic position of transubstantiation and the symbolic interpretation adopted in the bulk of churches in Hunsinger's Reformed tradition is extraordinarily large. Hunsinger, however, finds a creative and, if somewhat circuitous, largely convincing answer. This solution is centered on the Eastern Orthodox conception of the Eucharist known as "traselementation," which affirms the real presence in such a way that is acceptable to Roman Catholics but which does not contain the pitfalls that have traditionally alienated Protestants. In fact, traselementation affirms some points emphasized by the Reformation, such as Calvin's assertion that the Holy Spirit draws the mind of the believer up to heaven through the Eucharist, that have since fallen out of favor. Indeed, Hunsinger sees in traselementation a starting point

where Roman Catholics and Protestants can reach out in charity to accept one another without having to sacrifice any core theological understandings.

The second point of controversy is that of Eucharistic sacrifice. Nothing was more offensive to the Reformation than the notion that the mass is a propitiatory sacrifice. Hunsinger deals with this issue first by questioning whether the Reformation truly understood the Catholic position and arguing, upon close examination, that the positions of the chief Reformers were not nearly as far from the Catholic position as was believed in the sixteenth century. The real solution, however, lies not only in reconciling the various positions (although that is important), but in reorienting the discussion. This Hunsinger attempts to do by focusing on the image of Christ as Passover lamb. In other words, he wishes to reorient the language of Eucharist as sacrifice to that of Eucharist as participation in a way similar to that of Jewish Passover. The Jewish people experienced God's deliverance from Egypt through the Passover in a unique way that is unrepeatable. However, each corresponding generation of Jews participates in the Passover through remembering the narrative and participating in Passover rituals. Likewise, Christ's sacrifice was a one-time event that, through faith and the celebration of the Eucharist, allows the faithful to be brought into participation. Such a reorientation, Hunsinger plausibly believes, could go a long way toward Christian reconciliation.

Competing views on ministry and its relationship to the Eucharist comprise the third controversy. While the issues of the real presence and sacrifice in the Eucharist may seem like much more divisive issues, Hunsinger rightly points out the importance of resolving disagreements over Eucharistic ministry. Many significant issues regarding ministry such as the authority to ordain, the nature of ordination, the offices of ordination, and the functions of ordained ministry are in question. Hunsinger sees a way forward in all of these areas through mutual respect, generosity, and historical and theological reflection. The question of who is eligible to be ordained, however, is more difficult and Hunsinger questions if it might even constitute an "impending impasse" in the ecumenical movement. Of central importance here are the issues of female and homosexual ordination. It is interesting that on these points Hunsinger drifts somewhat from his otherwise steadfast adherence to an ecumenical approach. That is, he no longer attempts to find a middle ground upon which all could retain their current substantive positions. Instead, he argues for the inclusion of women (wholeheartedly) and homosexuals (somewhat reservedly) to ordination in the ecumenical churches. It is unclear whether this change in tone is taken because Hunsinger sees no ground for compromise on these issues or whether they are for him, matters upon which he is unwilling to compromise. Whatever the case, this shift from a thoroughgoing ecumenical stance to a somewhat enclave position may signal that the eligibility of ordination is, indeed, a very difficult issue to resolve.

The final two chapters are dedicated to developing a social ethic based upon a theology of the Eucharist. They argue, first, that culture can and should be transformed through Eucharistic love and, second, that Nicean Christianity and its emphasis on the Eucharist should be at work in ushering in the peaceable kingdom. These chapters, along with the conclusion, comprise the real heart of the book.

For while it is essential that doctrinal matters be resolved to the satisfaction of all, such resolutions can only come about as people and institutions are transformed by the heart of the Gospel. As Hunsinger points out, positions must be achieved that do not sacrifice anyone's principles. This cannot happen, however, without an ecumenical mindset that is willing to reach out in love and to doubt one's own infallibility. *The Eucharist and Ecumenism* is one great step in that direction. It offers wonderfully creative and largely convincing arguments by a learned and passionate scholar that, if taken to heart as well as to mind, could mark a genuine move toward Eucharistic sharing.

Ross Moret
Princeton Theological Seminary

N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church*, New York: HarperOne, 2008, pp. xiv + 332. \$24.95 (hardback)

N. T. Wright's recent book, *Surprised by Hope*, calls upon Christians to think biblically about the future and God's plan for it. Arguing against various platonic understandings of the afterlife that have plagued Christianity, Wright defends the biblical hope not for a disembodied and purely spiritual experience but for bodily resurrection from the dead into a new creation where heaven and earth are renewed and joined together.

The book is divided into three parts with the first dealing with the historicity of Jesus' resurrection. This material is a summary version of Wright's more detailed *The Resurrection of the Son of God*. Wright's argument for belief in the historical reality of Jesus' resurrection is perhaps the best presently available. His thorough understanding of the world of the first century allows him to demonstrate convincingly that Jesus' followers would not simply have concocted the story of the resurrection in order to keep the movement alive. Instead, Wright argues, they would have pursued other options such as appointing one of Jesus' brothers as their leader. He also rightly and humorously argues that modern science has not disproved Jesus' resurrection. People ancient and modern have always known that dead people do not come back to life. Wright concludes that the best way to explain the rise of Christianity in the first century is to believe the early Christian witness that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed raised bodily from the dead.

To Wright's credit, he does not believe that historical argument alone is sufficient ground for belief in Jesus' resurrection. Instead, he poses an historical challenge to those who suggest alternative explanations for the rise of Christianity. Wright affirms that history can only take us so far and believes his historical work can help to clear away some of the skepticism that hinders faith, hope, and love. This clearing of the skeptical brush, so to speak, is one of the major contributions of the present book.

In the second part of the book, Wright argues that the Christian hope is not to go off to a disembodied ethereal world. Instead, he argues from scripture

that the Christian hope is nothing less than sharing in the full bodily resurrection that is true of Jesus. The resurrection of all believers will be into the world of new creation which is this earth renewed by the glorious transforming work and personal presence of the Triune God. He helpfully reminds the reader of the classical Christian teaching of a two stage postmortem experience including, first, an intermediate stage in the presence of Christ and, second, a final resurrection of the body into God's new creation

Based on the historic event of Jesus' own resurrection and the future hope of bodily resurrection, Wright uses the third section of the book to establish a vision for the present mission of the Church. He claims that because God intends not to destroy the present world but rather to redeem it, that Christians should find appropriate ways to celebrate that redemption and anticipate it in the present. Wright sees the Church's mission not as the building *of* the kingdom but as building *for* the kingdom which is then worked out in the areas of justice, beauty, and evangelism. Wright's categories here are generally on target. However, it is the view of this reviewer that he significantly neglects evangelism. Wright seems most excited about issues of social justice, being especially interested in doing away with the massive debts that keep so many poor countries in their impoverished condition. This is certainly an important issue, but it strikes me as something that follows evangelism in chronology at least if not importance. If Christians are to work for issues of social justice, it is first necessary to gather converts for the task. I was also disappointed with his treatment of evangelism itself. Having argued forcefully for the Christian hope of resurrection and being highly critical of evangelism that falls short of announcing this hope, Wright remains rather vague when it comes to practical matters of doing evangelism. A generation of Christians that has been taught that Christianity is primarily about where one goes when one dies will need instruction on how to interact with potential converts about God's plan for the world and the hope of resurrection. Wright leaves such readers without concrete answers.

Overall, this book is highly recommended. The first two sections were certainly the strongest. Wright is at his best when at the task of New Testament exegesis and history. Of course, his pastoral sensibilities are strong as well and central to this book. Among the most important contributions of *Surprised by Hope* are undoubtedly its accessible defense of Jesus' bodily resurrection and its emphasis on the importance of Jesus' resurrection for the ultimate Christian hope of resurrection. Hopefully it will help the Church to recapture the meaning and importance of these essential Christian doctrines.

Matthew P. O'Reilly
Asbury Theological Seminary

David Bentley Hart, *In the Aftermath: Provocations and Laments*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009, pp. xiii + 204, \$20.00

Since the 2003 publication of *The Beauty of the Infinite*, David Bentley Hart has quickly garnered a reputation as one of the most promising up-and-coming American theologians, a standing that has been further propelled by the numerous academic and popular articles he has written. Thanks to the folks at Eerdmans, the first of two volumes of these reworked articles has been released as *In the Aftermath: Provocations and Laments*.

Compiling a number of his popular writings from the last eight years, the articles consist of cultural analyses, brief dogmatic treatments, and book reviews—often blurring the boundaries between all three genres in the process. Known for his often-daunting prose, these essays provide a more accessible introduction to Hart while simultaneously managing to bring out many of the themes of his theology.

Despite being his least favorite essay, Hart's piece "Christ and Nothing (No Other God)" starts the collection out. This piece orients one to Hart's entire theological undertaking in late-modernity's final dissolution of lingering Christendom. Hart sees contemporary humanity's exaltation of unfettered and arbitrary individual choice as the final obeisance to the god of nihilism: all pretensions of anything greater than exerted self-will have been stripped away before the stark reality of meaningless choice. Against this backdrop Hart contends that, paradoxically, the advent of Christianity, which alone subverted the pantheon and managed to offer a viable alternative to nihilism, helped bring about this situation. For, as secularization has eclipsed Christianity in the West, all that remains is the nihilism of the self bereft of even the beauty which haunted the gods of ancient religion, philosophy, and art who masked the meaninglessness hidden behind themselves. In the midst of this, Hart suggests that the church rediscover the ascetic tradition to expose the numbing vacuity of the system, in the recognition that the only option is to serve the God Christ revealed or *the* nothing. Put simply, "there *is* no other god" (19).

Beginning with "Freedom and Decency", Hart draws out the implications that this nihilistic mentality creates for societal behavior and discourse, which he will follow up in later articles concerning, among other things, pornography, John Paul II's theology of the body, and Terry Schiavo. "Freedom and Decency" offers a corrective to the myth that libertarian choice is the same as freedom by highlighting the tragedy that American free-expression developed along these lines free from any overarching moral formation or understanding of public responsibility. As such, Hart suggests the possibility for an artistically preserving type of censorship (while ruefully admitting that the proposal is unlikely to garner widespread support) to support a rediscovery of freedom as the actualization of the *Good* to which human nature is directed. He concludes that "we are not free because we can choose, but only when we have chosen well" (79). Whether one agrees with Hart's dynamics of church/state relations, his vision of the intrinsic

cally *formed* nature of freedom seeks to rediscover an emphasis of both early philosophy and theology that is begging to be reconsidered.

Three of the shorter pieces include interactions with the Christmas 2004 tsunami in Banda Aceh, which led to the publishing of his book *The Doors of the Sea: Where Was God in the Tsunami?* The first two, “Tremors of Doubt” and “Tsunami and Theodicy,” are short articles that spawned the book, and the third is an interview with Hart about the monologue. While not offering much by way of further theological construction, the combination provides an interesting insight into the genesis of the above work.

Following these, the inclusion of book reviews amidst talk of tsunamis and Terry Schiavo offer a gentle reminder that, despite all the upheaval and turmoil in the world, the theologian’s calling is to carry out the task in relation to *both* currently occurring events and to the thoughts and events of all that have come before. Accordingly, Hart converses with a number of different works, including the writings of Maurice Cowling, Evelyn Waugh, Gogol, and the humor of Kierkegaard. Each of these gives a glimpse into Hart’s influences—both negative and positive—and often provides a jumping-off point for his own thoughts, the most stunning example being his chapter, “The Angel at the Ford of Jabbok: On the Theology of Robert Jenson.”

Following a suggestion that he had misrepresented Jenson’s theology in *The Beauty of the Infinite*, Hart has gone back to reexamine Jenson’s thought. The result is one of the most theologically *clarifying* essays in the volume, wherein Hart traces the difference between the two of them to a disagreement over what God’s acts in history reveal about God in Godself. Do they fully reveal the entirety of the Triune Godhead (as in Jenson)? Or do they provide an “analogical interval” from which one must move back from Jesus Christ to a timeless and fleshless Word of God as the ultimate disclosure of the Godhead (as in Hart)? Upon framing the question so, one realizes—as recent discussions have sought to flesh out—that nothing short of the entire shape of theology is dependent on this crucial distinction. Indeed, Hart acknowledges that were it “not for the absence of that . . . ‘analogical interval,’ Jenson’s theology might appear to me impeccably sound” (165). Besides being a more thorough and illuminating examination of the differences (and points of connection) between his and Jenson’s theology, part of what makes this engagement compelling, especially in relation to some of the other essays, is both the charity that Hart demonstrates towards someone he largely disagrees with and the care he takes to trace out the contours of Jenson’s thought. One wishes that that same respect and cordiality came through towards other interlocutors!

The final selection of essays brings out this dynamic in his engagement with the resurgence of the “new-atheism.” Whether being spurred on to a consideration of its waning through Alister McGrath’s writings or tackling Daniel Dennett head on in “Daniel Dennett Hunts the Snark,” Hart follows the conclusions of “Christ and Nothing” in lamenting the vapidness of late-modern atheism and the intellectually and culturally impoverished vision offered by the loudest proponents of this fundamentalist movement, while longing for a true atheist-giant like Nietzsche.

The latter essay in particular, though a fairly thorough exposure of the shortcomings of Dennett's argument, is the most caustic article of the collection, as Hart brings his entire rhetorical arsenal into play in order to deconstruct those he has placed in his sights. As such, he refers to Dennett's argument as "poorly reasoned and almost comically inadequate" and concludes that he himself was "entirely unprepared for how exorbitantly bad an argument the book advances" so that "the truly fascinating question... was how so many otherwise intelligent persons could have mistaken it for coherent or serious philosophical proposition" (184–85). Even without considering the Gospel's summons to love and charity in regards to "enemies," if one of Hart's admitted goals is to *persuade* the reader with his rhetoric, all of this simply raises two questions: First, whether his harshness might distract or alienate the reader from the forcefulness of his actual argument; second, whether it is really *necessary* to prove his point. The author suggests it is, but this reader is not so convinced.

Love him or hate him, agree or disagree, this compilation is a poignant reminder of the impact Hart has had on the theological landscape and the great breadth of learning he brings to the table. As above, part of Hart's renown (or notoriety, depending on one's theological position and whom his writing is directed against) stems from the elegance of his prose—whether it be his caustic responses to those with whom he disagrees, his sharp wit, or his seemingly limitless dictionary-in-hand vocabulary. This volume fully showcases these traits by producing consistently *enjoyable*, and often beautiful, pieces to read even for those—such as this reviewer—who largely disagree with his operating framework. Indeed, Hart acknowledges that part of his aim in writing has been "at least, in part—to entertain," explaining that he has given his "natural inclinations towards satire and towards wantonly profligate turns of phrase far freer rein than academic writing permits," with the hope that readers will even take pleasure in the reading (x). Even with the above caveats in mind, these characteristics are what make this volume a true joy to read, as in them is found a reminder of the importance of carefully worded and crafted theology.

The strongest pieces are undoubtedly the dogmatic treatments or lengthier cultural engagements, such as "Christ and Nothing" and his piece on Jenson, while some of the shorter works simply flesh out the details of Hart's overall theological program by highlighting the array of his conversation partners. Also, given that earlier versions of the pieces have been previously published—and most can be found online through the respective journals and newspapers—one might want to wait for his next major work. For now, however, they serve as a great introduction to, or opportunity to re-whet one's appetite for, the work of one of the most interesting and promising theologians writing in the English language today.

Daniel C. Simmons
Princeton Theological Seminary

CALL FOR PAPERS

“THEOLOGY AND RACE”

You are invited to submit an article, reflection, or book review for publication in the Fall 2009 issue of the *Princeton Theological Review* on the topic of “Theology and Race.”

In an effort to foster responsible theological reflection on contemporary issues and challenges, the Fall 2009 issue of the *Princeton Theological Review* will be dedicated to articles pertaining to the topic “Theology and Race.” Submitters are encouraged to reflect on theological anthropology, theological ethics, the relation between the Gospel and culture, the biblical witness concerning ethnic and cultural diversity, the ongoing problem of racism inside and outside the church, and the church’s witness to the Gospel in contemporary society. Specifically, we invite submissions engaging J. Kameron Carter’s recent book, *Race: A Theological Account*. An important and wide-ranging work, Carter’s book deserves sustained and careful attention. We invite submissions engaging both his historical work and constructive proposals.

If you would like to submit an article, reflection, or book review that is pertinent to the *PTR*’s Fall 2009 theme, please contact ptr@ptsem.edu, or visit www.princetonontheologicalreview.org. All submissions are due by September 14, 2009. Please send them by email attachment to ptr@ptsem.edu.

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