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Analogia Spiritus—“Eternity in our hearts”

Relational dynamics and the logic of spirit: An interdisciplinary inquiry into the tripartite structure and irreducible dynamic of perichoresis in person, community and Trinity.

By

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Ph.D. Thesis – Divinity/Theology
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Abstract

The fundamental structure of reality as inherently relational is not foreign to the Christian Scriptures, or early Christian tradition, as evident in the emergence of the theological relational dynamic of perichoresis. We find a precursor to this view of reality in the Gospel of St. John, where Jesus prays that “they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us” (17:21). In an attempt to describe the relational structure and unity of the Trinity, John Damascene and other Church fathers employed the concept of perichoresis to signify the mutual interanimation and dynamic reciprocity of the divine persons. I shall argue that the unity expressed in this relation is an irreducible relational dynamic that simultaneously affirms both the individuality and mutuality of persons. Furthermore, this dynamic is the force that constitutes and sustains all Creation and, a fortiori, human beings themselves. In addition, I suggest that the fundamental drive within the world and humans is to relate perichoretically (love). In so doing, I address an omission in the literature, noted by Colin Gunton, that humans, created imago Dei, have never seriously been considered perichoretic in nature.

This thesis attempts to redress this gap in the literature by arguing that humans are in “perichoretic reciprocity,” that is, they stand in relation to one another in terms of perichoresis. As such, perichoresis represents an irreducible relational dynamic that maintains the person’s distinctive identity in relationship while at the same time constituting them qua persons from within the living formative matrix of the relational unity itself. To help develop this understanding I turn to Søren Kierkegaard, for whom this mutuality becomes a positive third term that intensifies the polarities. That Power that constitutes relationship is He who is ‘before all things, and in Whom all things hold together’ (Col 1:17). By formulating the dynamic of relationship this way, I challenge the conventionally understood dual structure of relationality, 'subject-object', and posit instead an alternative tripartite consideration of subject-relationship-subject.

By positing this tripartite relational structure, I am positioned to draw upon the logic of spirit developed in recent Trinitarian theologies and explore the fundamental dynamic within perichoresis—analogia spiritus—the non-reflexive transformational dynamic facilitating personal holistic change and meaning from with the living dynamic of the relationship. In essence, I am proposing to draw upon developmental and social constructivist theory, and related human sciences in order to understand human being as differentiated unity; this in turn opens to the possibility of relational dynamics active in human as spirit that can be analogically correlated to God’s reciprocal trinitarian and Eternal activity as Spirit.

This thesis considers the dynamic of perichoresis in the following ways:

1. In the construction of meaning. Using a hermeneutical approach, I inquire into the holistic nature of theological knowledge and method, contrasting Nancey Murphy’s theological use of I. Lakatos’s philosophy of science with social construction theorists Kenneth Gergen and John Shotter, who draw from M. Bakhtin. Based on this contrast I propose a methodology that rejects the conceptual and experiential bifurcation found in Murphy, and suggest instead an irreducible holistic criterion of fullness of life.

2. In persons. This section proposes that emotions be viewed as dynamic unified complexities that are ultimately inseparable from knowledge and experience—an attribute of person as spirit.

3. As persons in dialogical relations. The social theory of Alistair McFadyen and his dialogical consideration of openness and closure is correlated with Kierkegaard’s understanding of person as infinite and finite, and with his prohibition against their material synthesis.

4. As persons. I consider the theory of James Loder who, using Jean Piaget and Kierkegaard, presents a developmentalist perspective of humans as perichoretic, a
relationship unto itself which becomes a differentiated unity constituted out of the positively created third term of relationship.

5. In Trinitarian dynamics. I correlate Jürgen Moltmann’s understanding of Trinity and God’s Spirit to the dynamic of human spirit.

6. In the perichoresis of time and Eternity. In this penultimate section, I consider divine ‘immanence’ and ‘transcendence’ in light of the *perichoresis* of time and Eternity, and its potential reciprocity within human relational dynamics. Using established categories of human relationality, I consider how human relations might participate through *analogia spiritus* in God’s preeminent process ‘before all things’.

In conclusion, this research suggests further development in the direction of a relational ontology in which truth, meaning and ‘being’ are located neither ‘out there’ (realism), nor ‘in here’ (idealism), but always *within* the constituting third term of the immediate relational occurrence itself. If indeed all humans are fundamentally constituted as such, this ultimately presents analogically the possibility of common ground between the Church and culture—the desire to relate *perichoretically*, love.
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Note: A glossary of key terms is included for supplement, and for occasions in which the reader may find it helpful to review their usage within this thesis. Terms are introduced with an asterisk (*).

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<td>PH</td>
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<td>SUD</td>
<td>Sickness Unto Death</td>
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<td>TC</td>
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Chapter 1

Introduction

That they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us.

John 17:21 (NASV)

Age of discontent, Church of disruption

The history of Western ideas reveals a progressive intensification and focus upon the subject, leading to the subject's near deification within Modernity. In our own time, this exalted position is under serious attack by those who proclaim the death of the subject. In short, the presumably fatal blows to Modernity begun a century and a half ago are now being realized. If this is so, Modernity, nevertheless, was not without gain. It has increasingly awakened us to a unique dignity within the human self and the notion of cultural progress, though a self in alienation that finds no ultimate satisfaction, and progress so prolific it threatens to overtake us. For each challenge that humanity overcomes, humankind flourishes, creating a host of new questions and desires.

The obstacle forever remains, ourselves. Within us all lies a dynamic analogy of the infinite—'Eternity in our hearts'. We are finite creatures endowed with infinite desire, a desire that satisfies itself for only a season. Then, almost immediately, we desire more. Can finite creatures survive the unceasing emergence of such longings? Once again, we find ourselves in the cultural cycle in which our desires tax the ability of our existing relational structures and understanding to satisfy them. Nevertheless, there is no going back, no returning to the old settlements. Our memories, unknowingly trimmed of former disappointments, the ancient groanings of times long since satisfied, are all taken for granted. As we remember those times, they never existed. The 'memory' is a perichoresis of past, present and future times; stories in which our current desires take meaningful and redemptive shapes within our ruminations of the past.

We live in dangerous and speculative times in which human desire is intensified by the confluence of plurality due to an increasing cinemagraphic and economic global society. The steady process of maturing the Edenic innocence will now exponentially and irreversibly speed up. Traditional relational practices and paradigms of reality will no longer socially or theologically satisfy. We are irrevocably within a philosophical and theological reformation, a cycle to be sure, but, as Peter Hodgson expresses it,¹ a spiraling helix that

slowly progresses through time. In order to survive, both existing social and ecclesial structures must further develop and deepen within themselves, and do so integratively.

In many respects, the gap between the Church and culture must now narrow. The understanding and communicative structures of atonement must not be rejected, but expand in ever more relevant ways into the fibers of society. The longings and disappointments within each culture must be addressed in a relevant manner and subsumed into a richer praxis and relational paradigm within the Church. This is already evident in the radical cries for new order and meaning emerging from society and the academy. For example, one noted developmentalist is convinced we must “reduce the tendency to place moral judgment on the other (or the self). We are, instead, invited to spread the concern to the network of relations from which issues of conflict or wrong-doing arise.”

He is not delimiting the moral judgement of the individual, but merely expanding it in wisdom. We need to understand that every decision is one that, though intensely personal and responsible, is also interwoven into a complexity of interpenetrating relations and cultural developments.

Likewise, the former stability of science is in current upheaval. The Newtonian worldview no longer adequately reflects reality as we know it. The failure of former philosophical moorings to account for the new phenomena of science gives way to Quantum, Relativity and Chaos/thermodynamic theories. These theories can no longer be considered merely speculative. Whether we like it or not, time bends. Such phenomena and their implications, like those from earlier epochs (as in the Copernican revolution), must be incorporated into our worldview and theology.

Relational ontology

Nancey Murphy has recently argued that theological progress in our understanding of God’s action in the world must entail a revision of current metaphysical notions of causation and matter. What is ‘out there’ (matter), the nature of our relation to it, and the subsequent development of our understanding of it (explanations of causality*), are reconsidered within this study. Amid the pounding surf of philosophical upheaval—critical realism, postmodernism, non-foundationalism—this thesis will draw and develop upon the growing wave of those espousing a relational ontology. This currently equivocal term, however, takes shape within this thesis through the exploration and focus upon an ancient theological

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2 Gergen (“Social Theory”), p.11.
4 Gunton (1993), p.194, n.18, distinguishes between two senses of ‘relational’. The first idealizing sense has to do with things being “known only in terms of their relation to us, or rather as they appear to us; the second, realist, sense, is that according to which things have their (objective) being in relation.” The first leads to relativism, the latter, and focus of this thesis, leads to relativity, and thus the possibility of authentic difference in unity (differentiated unity).
dynamic, *perichoresis*, and its comparison with research currently active in several areas of theological inquiry.

Within current theological discourse, relational dynamics takes shape in several ways when considering an eternal infinite God and temporal finite humanity. For the preliminary purpose of broadly framing this study I would like to suggest four theological attempts to justify mutuality within such a paradoxical relationship. In *Classical thought* (e.g., Thomas Aquinas) God is assumed to be somehow outside the flow of time. He affects time, but He Himself is not temporally affected in any way that we can understand. In an effort to establish a greater mutuality, *Process theology* has posited God within time. Here God does not know the future before it happens, which does in fact present a more relatable God to humanity's temporality, however, the deeper more paradoxical elements of faith and God's preeminent promises are compromised, as well as our dialogical relation to a Personal God in a personal way. As of late, Barth, Pannenberg, Moltmann and others (e.g., Gunton and James Loder), have presented a *Trinitarian* God who both relates in Time and proleptically from the future in an expanding, more complex, understanding of mutual relationality. In a Kierkegaardian manner these theologies consider a relational dynamic of differentiated unity in which, for Loder, the individual participates to some degree in the Eternal light of the Logos and the *moment* that contains the fullness of time. This is usually explicated through the recent insights of spontaneous self-organizing processes within developmental and thermodynamics theories. If these dynamics are considered within a Trinitarian theology and from the point of the resurrection, we could understand such activity within human existence, says Loder, as a "*prefiguring* of the 'new creation', [in which] giving rise to new order could be seen as a wrinkle in time, a leap into the future, bringing the future into the present ahead of time."⁵ In this way, God's Eternal activity is visited upon humanity in proleptic correlational experiences of communication from a Telos or future. This, however, does not obviate clearly enough the impositional God of Classical thinking, or explain how human action within its freedom authentically relates with an Eternally constituted God. Simply put, the venture of this thesis not only agrees that God from the future affects human temporal existence, but furthermore, I seek to argue and clarify the possibility that humans, constituted within time, are likewise drawn into a unique relation with God's openness to them and therefore affect God's Eternal preeminent action of creation through His Trinitarian relations, an *emergentist trinitarian theology*. In this manner, prolepsis is broadened into a mutually interrelating feedback system of communication within the dynamic singularity of God's Eternal action of creation into which redeemed humanity is drawn, in which God's will is an asymmetrical influence. This basic consideration is not

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⁵ (1992), p.215, my emphasis.
new, but it is odd within a discipline which is vitiated with Classical and Reformed influences. I would suggest such implications are implied and inherent in some fashion within the bold claims of *theosis* within the early Church, the divinization of humanity.⁶

The difficulty of this study is exasperated simply because it attempts to investigate new paradigmatic grounding. When such shifts occur, the meaning and use of our former language transforms*, no-thing stays the same.

The ‘will to power’: Is there nothing good that dwells within our flesh? In reconsideration: Is there nothing good that dwells within our relations?

The predominate creed of the humanities and biological sciences today, whether modern or postmodern, maintains that survival is a fundamental force within humanity. From Darwin and Nietzsche to Wittgenstein and French Poststructuralism the claim remains the same, the defining force in nature and human existence is ‘the will to power’. Power ensures survival.⁷ The Church has not gone untouched. Commensurate themes have vitiated ecclesial structures leading to over-simplistic doctrines of both a ‘totally other’ God and the ‘total depravity’ of humanity. Nothing of personhood or culture remains significant for experiencing the sacred. Indirectly, the pervasive influence of ‘the will to power’ and the scientific and often materialist world view of Modernity has shaped the meaning of the Church’s claim that ‘nothing good dwells within our flesh’.⁸ As the subject was reified, grace and hope faded from view. The Church had forgotten Christ’s prayer and the message it contained (Jn 17:21). Clearly, we might agree, within the singular ‘subject’ or closed structures of culture nothing of goodness is sustained; however, I want to argue that a degree of goodness dwells *within the dynamic* of relating persons. We are only now just beginning to ‘remember’ that which was always too ‘simple’, too ‘familiar’, that which is still most ‘powerful’.⁹ In fact, like a fish in water, the ancient Greeks had yet to develop a distinctive word for it—relationship*.¹⁰ We have recently come to further realize the extent persons are...

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⁶ Athanasius: “He became man that we might be made God;” Augustine: “I heard... thy voice from on high crying unto me, ‘I am the Food of the full grown: grow, and then thou shalt feed on Me. Nor shalt thou change Me into thy substance as thou changest the food of thy flesh, but thou shalt be changed into Mine’” (cited from Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism*, p.419ff). Maximus Confessor: “By nature man remains wholly human in soul and body, but by grace he becomes wholly God both in his soul and in his body” (Moltmann 1992, p.94). Basil of Ceasarea: “The souls inhabited by the Spirit themselves are rendered wholly spiritual [and] from this source comes... the power to become divine” (*de spiritus sancto* (375), cited by Bettenson 1970, p.71).


⁸ ‘Flesh’ is here considered more than just the body, yet it is never considered the whole of the person. No matter how we use this term, it is important we understand it as a differentiated aspect of the person in relation to the whole of itself and its relations within existence.

⁹ Reference is here made to Wittgenstein (1953), p.50e.

¹⁰ For example, typical of the New Testament, when the author of Matthew in 19:10 attempts to express the generic concept of relationship and the relatedness of one person to another, Εν ὃσι ἐστὶν Ἡ αἰτία τοῦ ἀνθρώπου μετὰ τῆς γυναικὸς... (‘If the cause of the man with his...')
dependent in their constitution as such through and in relationships; and only to the degree that we as whole individuals authentically enter into it do we abide in goodness, become goodness. Personhood is more than ‘flesh’, and this is always constituted in some degree of open and active relations. Therefore, the dynamic goodness, which presses from within the dynamic of every relationship, will always have some degree of play upon and within the individual. Tragically much of the Church’s current notion of sin and its corresponding message of life in Christ has once again fallen into cultural obsolescence simply because the Church has relaxed the development of its understanding and ongoing integration of both sin, relational dynamics and the person in relation. This has stultified the active complementarity* between Christ’s redemptive and communicative action in both Church and culture.

The phenomenon of suicide

Can we continue to imply that the foundational force within human life is the neo-Darwinian, Freudian, or Heideggerian ‘struggle against death’, or biological annihilation? Is it merely the struggle to ensure the most efficient course for our progeny? Is this the ground that motivates and sustains human flourishing? Furthermore, is Richard Dawkins right: “We are survival machines—robot vehicles blindly programmed to preserve the selfish molecules known as genes.” Or, on the other hand, is our primal goal to establish peace and unity through egalitarian compromise, a longing to minimize disruption, pain and violence? In this respect biological life is oftentimes risked and sacrificed (e.g., war) in order to achieve what seems to be the political peace and stability of egalitarian order. Though laudable, this cannot be fundamental.

Indeed, the struggle for self-distinction from the world is an undeniable force in life (biological survival being only one aspect). But, is that all there is? Holmes Rolston, III, in his 1997 Gifford Lectures argues that “genes are favored if and only if they ‘make a contribution’ or have a part, a ‘share’ in the integrated coping capacities of the whole organism.” Rolston effectively presents gene activity far from the descriptions of

wife...'), he is reduced to employing the Greek concepts of cause and effect (αἰτία, cause). The idea of relation had not yet developed to an explicit signifying of a dynamic or something between—relationship. The Hebrews, on the other hand, had at least developed a limited equivalent in ‘covenant’.  

11 Kierkegaard’s “dread” and “death,” though inclusive of physical death, did not ultimately refer to physical but relational death. The bulk of European existentialism that grew from Kierkegaard’s thought failed to recognize this distinction simply because of its secular and rational rather than theological and relational presuppositions.  

12 _The Selfish Gene_ (1976,1989), p. v. Furthermore, he claims over the last few decades his “central message has become textbook orthodoxy” (p. viii). 

13 Philip Hefner tells us that: “We distrust the term survival if it refers simply to the biological perpetuation of life, because we suspect that if that is what nature is up to, it is not enough for us.” In (1993), p.74.  

14 Forthcoming, _Genes, Genesis and God_, [lecture 3, p.11].
‘selfishness’ employed by Dawkins. For Rolston the gene is driven by an immanent force both toward self-distinction and outward in cooperative integration.

I suggest the foundational reality and ‘metaphysical’ constituting Power within existence produces within humanity a fundamental desire to relate as genuinely and intimately as possible with the Other—co-relational connection. This latter possibility reveals itself to be the probable rationale when we consider the act of suicide.

The phenomenon of suicide itself obviously negates the metaphysics of ‘survival’. Why would one kill oneself if the simple continuation of biological life is the fundamental force within human existence? Furthermore, many cases of suicide are replete with sociological and relational states of ‘peace’ and ‘unity’. Therefore, it can be argued that the feeling of relational ‘purposelessness’, the loss of real, imaginary or potential relationship is what ultimately motivates suicides. Every suicide, in one way or another, bears witness to the death of intimacy* or its possibility, repeated stories of broken relationships, or isolation and loneliness. Human developmental psychologist James Loder tells us, “Harry Stack Sullivan, noted psychoanalyst, said he could bring patients to relive almost any experience from anxiety to violent trauma, but he could not bring them to relive loneliness. . . . [Loneliness] is the closest we can come to experiencing our own death. Loneliness is proximate to death.” In other words, loneliness (the loss of authentic* relations) and the well expressed ‘nothingness’ of existential thought is more threatening to human life than biological annihilation or social ‘disruption’. The peace and unity of egalitarian compromise, which flies from all struggle, disruption and even violence, does not constitute fullness of life, and furthermore, fails to traverse the often necessary struggles which maintain fulfilling interaction. Such insights into human behavior warrant our consideration that human life is fundamentally constituted by the desire for genuine relationship.

When former foundational notions of human existence, such as ‘significance’, are reinterpreted according to this more fundamental dynamic they are deepened and enriched. In this same respect, the ‘will to power’ becomes reinterpreted as ‘relational insurance’. In other words, the attainment of ‘significance’ and ‘power’ merely represent currencies with which to insure and secure that which is most sought after, and most fundamental—authentic relationship. This does not negate the reality of ‘will to power’ and ‘significance’, it simply warrants their practical expansion and redefining according to an even more fundamental dynamic within human existence. The essential question then becomes, what is meant by authentic relations?

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15 I am not here focusing upon the ideological sacrifice so often encountered in war and terrorist activities, which too can likewise be explained by relational forces and desires.
17 Cf. Sullivan’s Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry and Carl Roger’s Client Centered Therapy.
The logic and shape of authentic relationship

If there is any legitimacy or value to such ontological soundings, how are we to understand, identify and corroborate authentic from inauthentic relationality? Furthermore, what existing polemics might be better resolved or understood in contrast to such theories? Each subsequent chapter will attempt this by investigating various theological problems and trajectories which have begun to reveal a common structure of relational dynamics. This common dynamic, here presented as perichoretic, will be identified and described as something which is attempting to be achieved and is slowly emerging in identifiable ways within human and cosmic relations, an ideal relationality that only exists perfectly within the Trinity. Before we can understand the dynamic of perichoresis, however, we must first begin to grasp the logic of spirit*, and to do this we must obviously begin an attempt to critically understand what is currently one of the most obscure and ubiquitous concepts in any language—spirit (πνεύμα).

If accurately understood such a dynamic should begin to reveal insights into many of the paradoxes within the Modern enigmas. For example, Imre Lakatos once colorfully suggested, "all our scientific beliefs are, always have been, and always will be false." Every new discovery with time dissolves underneath the new explanatory praxis of the next. In a seemingly contrary sense, Ludwig Wittgenstein broadly taught us that all human action is 'truth' and meaning, and all metaphysical construals, though inflated, nevertheless emerge from these actions. Or, as Heidegger’s dictum suggests “untruth must derive from the essence of truth. Only because truth and untruth are not in essence indifferent to one another, can a true proposition contrast so sharply with its correspondingly untrue proposition.” In a circumspect manner, we can all sense the propriety of each of these statements despite the paradoxical nature of their combined affirmation. Our world is always changing, all of it, and yet, somehow we long for and find continuity within it.

Kierkegaard’s concept of spirit

Søren Kierkegaard as much as any before him, attempted to resolve this enigmatic dynamic within human existence. This he did by positing human being as a synthesis between time and eternity, the finite and the infinite, in a unique way.

By virtue of the relationship subsisting between the eternal truth and the existing individual, the paradox came into being. . . . How does the paradox come into being? By putting the eternal essential truth into juxtaposition with existence. . . . [If] the subject is prevented by sin from taking himself back into the eternal, now he need not trouble himself about this; for now the eternal essential truth is not behind him but in front of him, through its being in existence or having existed so that if the individual does not existentially and in existence lay hold of the truth, he will never lay hold of it.

18 Cited by Alasdair MacIntyre (1980), p.73.
20 Concluding Unscientific Postscripts, p.187. [Once noted, all references to Kierkegaard will be abbreviated as listed within the bibliography.]
The often-unnoticed uniqueness of this coupling is the creation of the third term, the "subsisting between," of the relationship itself, which is human being. Self as a relationship, a dynamic synthesis, immediately suggests a possible direction for understanding many of our dilemmas. For Kierkegaard it has everything to do with properly understanding the dynamic of spirit and relationship.

"Man is spirit. But what is spirit? Spirit is the self. But what is the self? The self is a relation which relates itself to its own self." As merely a relational synthesis of the temporal and the eternal, the individual is not yet a self. "In the relation between two, the relation is the third term as a negative unity, and the two relate themselves to the relation, and in the relation to the relation; such a relation is that between soul and body." Kierkegaard here presents us with the confluence of, in one manner of thinking, sensory datum (as the temporal) and the human dynamic that processes the kairotic experiencing of time (an effect of the eternal). This confluence in itself is nothing. This new relationship between the two remains nothing until it is constituted in relation to something outside itself.

If on the contrary the relation relates itself to its own self, the relation is then the positive third term, and this is the self. Such a relation . . . must either have constituted itself or have been constituted by another. . . . But this relation (the third term) is in turn a relation relating itself to that which constituted the whole relation.

Here we begin to see the emergence of Kierkegaard's tripartite structure of relationality. The new relation becomes a positive third term only to the degree it is "willing to be itself" in relation to another or self, and this is accomplished by "the self [being] grounded transparently in the Power which posited it." Moreover, this dynamic produces the "I*-self" or "I-me" synthesis "only by relating itself to that Power which constituted the whole relation," and by willing to be itself wholly ventured within existence (the relationship).

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21 The Sickness Unto Death, pp.146-7, my emphasis. Pannenberg assumes in large part Kierkegaard's notion of spirit and presents it in a naturalistic manner as an "exocentric centeredness" outside of oneself. (1985), pp.96-104.
22 SUD 146.
23 When Anti-Climacus (Kierkegaard) tells us that "Such a derived, constituted, relation is the human self, a relation which relates itself to its own self; and in relating itself to its own self relates itself to another" (SUD 146), C. Stephen Evans argues that his use of another in this case means others. From this point on in SUD human being must be considered inherently relational and grist for social theory (1995, p.82-3). Cf. also D. Bonhoeffer: "Only in interaction with one another is the spirit of human beings ever revealed; this is the essence of spirit, to be oneself through being in the other" (1998, p.73).
24 Ibid., my emphasis.
25 Ibid., 147.
26 Ibid.
27 Again, Evans argues that "Power" is here to be considered the divine action of God as Person in relation to the individual through Christ, which constitutes the individual as person (1995, p.83).
Either way, the constituting of the self happens within a dynamic tripartite structure and this by virtue of relating to the Other. Therefore, any abstracting of knowledge (speculation) into time-less inflated truths outside the kinetic constitution of the immediate relationship is, always has been, and always will be false. To the extent, however, we remain wholly constituted “I-self” in existence, in the full immediacy of the existing relationship, we will be constituted in truth. Heidegger here speaks of an always-necessary freedom of truth as “a relationship of open resolve and not one locked up within itself.” In this respect, all knowledge which is constituted through the relating of the whole self in relationship becomes transparently grounded by the constituting Power of relationship, and therefore, in analogous relation to the eternal truth. As we shall investigate later, our enigmatic poles within the paradox represent two poles or cycles of dialogical existence, two dimensions of life that dynamically, never materially, synthesize within interaction.

It is this holistic notion of person as spirit that will immediately present a reoccurring problem for many readers. From here on spirit will never mean something divisible from any aspect of the whole of the person, as in the common Platonic (dualistic) renderings of an embodied spirit. Without a body there is no human spirit, and furthermore, human spirit is the holistic presence of the person-in-relationship. This is also commensurate with Bonhoeffer’s insistence that “human spirit in its entirety is woven into sociality and rests on the basic-relation of I and You.” Therefore, “what is spirit?” “The individual becomes infinite [spirit] only by virtue of making the absolute venture,” by “venturing everything”

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28 The term ‘Other’ will here refer to both God and other persons. The noteworthy use of Emmanuel Lévinas is not altogether different; the significance of the ‘Other’ is established by the quality of our receptiveness (gaze) into “what cannot become a content, which [our] thought would embrace; it is uncontainable, it leads [us] beyond” (1985, p.86). “The face is signification, and signification without context, . . . the meaning of something [in the usual sense] is in its relation to another thing. Here, to the contrary, the face is meaning all by itself” (p.86). This *prima facia* seems contrary to a relational hermeneutic and constitution of social person, however, I believe Lévinas is simply describing the important human factor identified in Loder and Kierkegaard’s relational logic of human spirit as *perichoresis* (a relationship unto itself, or the “Christ within us”) (Loder 1992, and Kierkegaard *SUD*). The true unitive ground upon which the third term of the relationship is perichoretically established is the Trinitarian mediation which constitutes both the self and the other respectively, and is itself infinitely capable. Though Lévinas would refuse the terms Trinity and *perichoresis*, this infinite mediational factor within the relational structures of all human beings is that same quality which Lévinas observes within the face as the Other.

30 (1998), p.73.
31 *CUP* 379.
32 Ibid., p.382.
to be reconstituted within authentic relationship; and to that degree one will “perceive analogies in the realm of the spirit.”33

For Kierkegaard to venture everything means to relate absolutely to that which is Absolute, and therefore, genuine selfhood requires the always incomplete maturation process of becoming conscious of God. Even though God constitutes us a relation, He releases us in freedom,34 and therefore, as Evans suggests,

The problem comes into being when the adult lacks a God-relationship and thus gives to the relations with other human selves (and with what is less than human) a priority and ultimacy such relations do not deserve. I am not here talking merely about a case of “arrested development,” a case in which an individual does not discover God and fails to grow, but the case in which the individual chooses not to grow by suppressing the knowledge of God.35

It is not the existing conceptual level of the knowledge of God that is of specific concern here, but the disposition of the individual toward any possible growth in that knowledge. Such a disposition characterizes Kierkegaard’s notion of venturing.

Therefore, spirit is irreducibly the self-constituted-as-whole-self in relation to the Other, just as the analogy of spirits is self-constituting-as-whole-self while in holistic relation to the Other-constituting-as-whole-self. Spirit is ‘the dynamic totality of the self’. Until we begin to better understand and develop the notion of spirit, and the holistic dynamic of perichoretic relationality, we will be hard pressed to emerge from our current theological and cultural quagmire with anything other than an alternating swing back into a romanticism that has so typified our Western (Greek) heritage.

**Perichoresis**

The major concept upon which this thesis takes shape is the relational dynamic of *perichoresis*. This concept expresses for the Cappadocians and John Damascene an emerging concept of “mutual interpenetration or eternal circulation of divine life” amongst the persons of the Trinity.36 It was John Damascene “who first used perichoresis as a technical term in trinitarian theology,” and furthermore, placed it “on a level with the unity of the divine nature as the ground of divine unity.”37 Etymologically the term contains, peri, meaning ‘around’ and ‘at all points’, and choreo meaning ‘to proceed, or to make room’. Similarly, concerning the Latin use, *circuminessis*, Loder informs us “that among the persons there is mutual interpenetration at all points without loss of identity. Individuality and mutuality are simultaneously affirmed and the members of the Trinity can change places

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33 Ibid., p.379.
34 *SUD* 149.
35 (1995), p.84. Cf. also, Bonhoeffer: “For Christian philosophy the human person originates only in relation to the divine; the divine person transcends the human person, who both resists and is overwhelmed by the divine” (1998, p.49).
37 Ibid., p.240-1.
without changing their identity.\textsuperscript{38} Most understand \textit{perichoresis} as a 'spiritual' activity of interpenetration and indwelling. This thesis, however, will endeavor to maintain Loder's irreducible dynamic, which maintains both interpenetration and instantiation of polar individuality. In this respect, the dynamic of \textit{perichoresis} is not to be solely identified with the action of God's Spirit, but as a Trinitarian dynamic. Therefore, for both Badcock and Loder, \textit{perichoresis} bears a relational quality in which Loder adds, "the unity of the Trinity is the relationality, and the relationality is the unity."\textsuperscript{39} In this respect, the dynamic can be considered irreducible within the Cartesian meaning-frame. Ultimately, Loder suggests, this dynamic quality is inherent in all relationships and becomes an ontological dynamic creating and sustaining creation itself, most notably, human beings. Moreover, Jürgen Moltmann in two pivotal works has made attempts to reveal the \textit{dynamic} nature of divine \textit{perichoresis} by considering its temporal as well as spatial qualities.\textsuperscript{40}

Recently, Colin Gunton has noted:

Because it has long been taught that to be human is to to [sic] be created in the image of God, the idea that human beings should in some way be perichoretic beings is not a difficult one to envisage. The sad truth is, however, that the notion has rarely been taken seriously, ... the individualist teaches that we are what we are in separation from our neighbour, the collectivist that we are so involved with others in society that we lose particularity.\textsuperscript{41}

This challenge has become the primary anthropological hypothesis of the study—that humans are what they "are in perichoretic reciprocity."\textsuperscript{42} In this respect, this thesis advances an 'anthropological theology', which argues that much of the traditional polemics in theology, specifically the concept of God, result from underdeveloped anthropological considerations. A renewed look at the constitutive nature of human persons as perichoretic, informed by various developments within contemporary thought, provides alternative structures for understanding divine-human interaction. The hope is that such investigation would begin to deepen our understanding of age-old problems like divine providence, human freedom and theodicy. Such an understanding of human existence will enable us to consider the feasibility and logic of a God who does not know the future before it happens, yet enables humans in time to contextually portend the future and proleptically experience in some way the reality of events yet unfulfilled, which is another way of describing the dynamic of faith (Heb 11:1).

\textsuperscript{38} (1992), p.23.
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., p.23.
\textsuperscript{40} (1981) and (1985); also, the temporal perichoretic dynamic within the Trinity is by far the most difficult aspect of \textit{perichoresis} to grasp, and I believe the failure to do so is the single most important factor in understanding Moltmann's theology.
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., p.170. Gunton argues that "there is no true freedom which does not also allow for the fact that we are passive as well as active in relation to others and the world" (170), and that human beings are a perichoretic synthesis of both "dimensions": the social (active) and the individual (passive).
Relational *perichoresis*, as suggested by James Loder’s use of Kierkegaard, suggests that all personal relationships are tripartite in nature. Though this will be a developing concept throughout the study, briefly said, it represents the irreducible relational dynamic which enables the polarities of a relationship to remain distinct entities while allowing them each to be constituted from within the forming mutuality of the relational unity itself. For Kierkegaard, says Loder, “mutuality becomes a positive third term, not obliterating but intensifying the polarities,” and furthermore, “the reality of mutuality becomes self-conscious, or aware of itself as such.” This is similarly illustrated by Bonhoeffer:

Two wills encountering one another form a structure. A third person joining them sees not just one person connected to the other; rather, the will of the structure, as a third factor, resists the newcomer with a resistance not identical with the wills of the two individuals. Sometimes this is even more powerful than that of either individual—or than the sum of all the individuals, if this is at all conceivable. Precisely this structure is objective spirit.  

For Bonhoeffer, “objective spirit” is the social structure of community, a shape of relationality.

This idea leads to the insistence by Loder and Kierkegaard of human participation in the divine ground and mutual coinherence by which it is perichoretically constituted. Therefore, though this perichoretic dynamic is only completely realized within the Godhead, it is reflected at every level of human existence. Thus, perichoretic relations instantiate the distinct selfhood of relating persons while each interpenetrates the third term of the forming relationship and are re-constituted accordingly, creating the appropriate conceptual integration of the specific relationship and each individual respectively.

In *perichoresis*, the whole of the relationship by which the entities are then co-constituted becomes greater than the sum of its constituent parts. This is an important concept that must not be confused with theories like Joseph Bracken’s social elevation of the metaphysical reality of community over the sum of its constituent persons. Rather, from within the dynamic of the relationship itself, by virtue of the Power that dynamically constitutes it, more is able to emerge than what is technically within the sum of the existing parts. Though it is the source of the relationship and the fullness each experiences from it, the dynamic of the relationship itself never obviates the spirit of the constituent persons.

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44 (1985), p.7. This is a process notion that ultimately employs the Hegelian dynamic of Absolute Spirit.
45 Cf. Bonhoeffer, “... the person is willed by God, in concrete vitality, wholeness, and uniqueness as an ultimate unity. Social relations must be understood, then, as purely interpersonal and building on the uniqueness and separateness of persons. The person cannot be overcome by a personal spirit; no ‘unity’; can negate the plurality of persons. The social basic category is the I-You relation. The You of the other person is the divine You. Thus the way to the other person’s You is the same as the way to the divine You, either through acknowledgment or rejection. The individual becomes a person ever and again through the other, in the *moment*. The other person presents us with the same challenge to our knowing as does God” (1998, pp.55,56).
**Perichoresis** is an irreducible relational dynamic that Gunton tells us “particularizes the hypostases” of the constituent parts of the relationship, sustaining “their own distinct and particular existence, by virtue of and not in face of their relationality to the other.”\(^{46}\) It facilitates the appropriate interanimation of relational meaning while coternously sustaining the distinctive personalities of each individual. From within the dynamic of the created relationship itself, each dialogical moment (cycle), comes possibility, freedom, and a new creation.

The perichoretic dynamic as a human function within language is apparent in Philip Hefner’s recent linguistic and hermeneutical defense of employing terms of one genre within another. He contends:

> It is widely acknowledged that when terms do cross boundaries, meanings are transferred from the first area of usage to the new one. . . . What is not so readily acknowledged, it seems, is that when a term crosses boundaries new meanings are contributed from the second realm. It is the interaction of all the meanings that the term can encompass that provides insight. . . . The term is given a new currency and usefulness that is identical with none of the [previous] specific usages, even though it encompasses all of them.\(^{47}\)

Within these hermeneutical and transformational phenomena we can clearly evidence the perichoretic dynamic at work. Not only in such interdisciplinary correlations does new meaning greater than that of any of the previous meanings emerge, but this dynamic instantly transforms and enriches its original meaning specific to the original genre.\(^{48}\) Furthermore, we should note that the interrelatedness of the contributing and sharing genres are likewise again enhanced by each genre’s specific enhancement. As the web of interrelations extends our experience deepens. As we increasingly correlate various linguistic elements through ongoing relational interaction, greater relational intimacy and fullness of life* develop. The goal of this study is to explicate and locate this irreducible dynamic, which is active within all relationality, but specifically in human relations and consciousness. In this respect, all creativity entails perichoresis.

I should note as well that within this thesis the dynamic of *perichoresis* is synonymous with the Christian understanding of *agape*, and thus becomes an attempt to forward a more informed structure and shape to this relational dynamic, which Jean-Luc Marion has argued


\(^{47}\) Hefner (1987), pp.123-4 (my emphasis). He supplies an example in the term *evolution*: “it appears in four phrases: ‘cosmic evolution,’ ‘biological evolution,’ ‘evolution of the individual from conception to death,’ and ‘cultural evolution.’ It is clear that the processes, as well as their mechanisms, are not the same in these four domains. Insight occurs at the point when we ask how the four uses of the term *evolution* are related and whether there is some important sense in which they constitute one wholistic process. What happens in that moment of insight is that a new valorization of the term *evolution* takes place. . . . There is no reason why the lower meanings should suppress the higher. Rather, the various meanings are conjoined,” and each specific use becomes perichoretically enriched.

\(^{48}\) Referring to the prior note: there is little doubt that the original meaning of ‘evolution’ within its specific biological use is currently much richer than it was fifty years ago.
in *God Without Being* is the fundamental dynamic of God and ultimately human meaning. Herein we will investigate the concentric interrelation of not only *perichoresis* as love, but desire and relationship. It is hoped such an investigation will bring greater coherence and clarity to a most enigmatic Christian notion—love.

**Integration of disciplines**

I attempt within this study to maintain a working conceptual integration of various forms of thought within a variety of theological disciplines. Integrative and collective efforts to work toward and within new metaphysical and paradigmatic trajectories necessitate the stretching and ultimately transforming of former language.\(^{49}\) In this respect, concepts like *perichoresis*, differentiated unity, and *analogia spiritus*\(^*\) will be employed in an expanding manner throughout a spectra of disciplines in order to reveal the significance of this dynamic for further theological development. Nevertheless, every effort is made to transition the reader as effectively as possible within the limited space given. In this respect, I beg the reader's patience and indulgence in view of my inability to present this thesis in a manner which would circumvent the inordinate concentration that is at present required by the reader to grasp its fuller meaning.

**Analogia spiritus**

How do we account for historical and personal continuity when it is becoming increasingly clear that the structure and character of change, specifically that of the human organism, is holistic? In other words, no constituent part changes without the whole changing, which in turn affects how we understand any other constituent part.\(^{50}\) This brings us to another essential concept within this thesis, *analogia spiritus*\(^*\).

The understanding of the Holy Spirit and even the generic notion of spirit are notably the most diverse and unsettled concepts in theological discourse. Until this important dimension of theology begins to take a more coherent and eminent placement within our theories of reality and practice of relationship, our theologies will flounder, especially in this pluralistic age. This study follows in the wake of this century's surmounting literature critically engaging the issue of spirit, however, with James Loder, it specifically attempts the much-needed interdisciplinary approach. Because of the unique nature of spirit, it is not

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\(^{49}\) Cf. Hefner (1987), p.123-4; and Ricoeur (1967), p.347-57. Hefner in response to criticisms about his unhealthy 'terminological hygiene'—the avoidance of "using terms or referring to concepts with meanings other than those under which they are commonly understood in ordinary parlance,"—argues that: "Unfortunately, it is impossible to abide by [these] injunctions, and in some ways even foolish to attempt to. Words and concepts are always stretching themselves beyond what common parlance understands, and they are always crossing boundaries from one domain to another—even to areas in which they are said not to belong. . . . When words assume symbolic and mythic status, seeking to relate concrete empirical data to large and primal realities, they defy the efforts of most linguistic sanitary engineers" (p.123).

\(^{50}\) Cf. Aristotle's *Politics*, Bk. 1, Chap. 13 (1260B ff.), "The virtue of a part must be determined by looking at the virtue of a whole."
only highly conceivable, but probable, that such overlapping interdisciplinary investigations will ultimately guide us to the groundbreaking insights and clues to a more coherent understanding of spirit and this important historic and biblical concept.

Spirit, as used within this study, whether divine or human, will refer to that center of a person or consciousness which opens and organizes the constituting process of the whole of that psychic and bodily\textsuperscript{51} life in relation to the respective particularity (complexity) of the world.\textsuperscript{52} It is important that the Spirit is understood as a dynamical process of awareness\* and holistic presence of the individual through which God is wholly constituted within His Trinitarian relations, and likewise His relation to Creation. Similarly, this is the process of awareness and holistic presence through which human beings become constituted as person-in-relation to the Other.

The specific notion of analogia spiritus within this thesis refers to the possibility that whole persons and their processes of being constituted whole-person-in-relationship are capable of being analogically constituted while in holistic correlation with each other. It is a process and state of becoming which cannot be reduced to, or materially associated with, the reflexive or cognitive. This happens in a mutual reciprocal process as both God and the individual pass from the dialogical process of awareness (openness) into constituted response (closure), thus personhood. The significant distinction between the two is that the human process is fundamentally constituted in spacetime relatedness, while God’s constitutional process is inter-trinitarian, inclusive of its Eternal dimension.

Because God is constituted within the Eternal dimension and because His whole being is analogically related to the whole being of human persons within the divine-human relationship, in itself it is unimaginable and mysterious, yet because it is reciprocal and interrelative with our spirit it conditions our developmental and transformative natures. Within this moment of the awareness cycle, one in which analogia spiritus makes possible, the momentary concerns of the individual enter the creative moment. The creating action is not principally our own, although the process of analogia spiritus effectively draws the person’s existential concerns into the divine process of creation itself, and therefore, optimally the individual or community themselves are drawn into the process.\textsuperscript{53} Only in this respect can we acknowledge human beings as co-creators.

\textsuperscript{51} For God this bodily orientation is Christ and His Church.
\textsuperscript{52} Cf. Gunton (1993) for a slightly different approach to the particularizing dimension of spirit.
\textsuperscript{53} Moltmann tells us: "Because God’s creative activity has no analogy, it is also unimaginable. The divine act of creation is never described in differentiated terms. Nor is it dissected into a number of different processes. It is unified and unique. This means among other things that time is excluded from the act of creation, for time always requires duration, and creation takes place suddenly, as it were—in a moment" (1985, p.73, my emphasis).
Because *analogia spiritus* is a holistic experience, humans likewise experience it in an undifferentiated manner—the *gaze* of awareness. This is a prereflexive* holistic engagement that arises when two persons intend each other in co-awareness; a created unity that creates a relational field upon which all subsequent constituted language and actions take on meaning. Within this dynamic processing, the Power that constitutes the relationship likewise influences it. Here, we experience *de-liberation**, a process by which our existential concerns are holistically set before possibility itself as we are liberated from our frozen position in time and kinetically provided with movement and choice in dynamic relations within His creative action. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2Cor 3:17), and upon this ground we are subsequently transformed (re-created) within authentic relationship. The degree of transformation* is relative to the degree relations are genuine.

It will be important to understand this immanent sustaining action of God’s Spirit within Creation before we can completely understand the action of the Holy Spirit at the personal and Trinitarian level. To this end, we will investigate the complexity of God’s action as Spirit in the work of Jürgen Moltmann.

**Moltmann’s notion of Trinity and Spirit**

In Moltmann’s understanding of the Trinity as a perichoretic, differentiated unity, he suggests the need for further articulation of our theological understanding of God’s Spirit and the Spirit’s *multidimensional* activity which is so clearly, yet enigmatically, expressed within Scripture.54 It is important we enter any such study of God’s Spirit and His diverse actions and manifestations with open and creative thinking in view of its complexity.

The *presence* of the divine Spirit in creation must be further differentiated, theologically; for we have to distinguish between his cosmic, his reconciling and his redeeming indwelling. The way the Spirit in his indwelling *acts* will have to be differentiated in each given case according to the mode of his self-manifestation as subject, as energy, or as potentiality. The *efficacy* of the Spirit can then be differentiated into his creating, his preserving, his renewing and his consummating activity.55

These distinctions can be broken down into two or three basic sets of categories, the Spirit of God as life or cosmic Spirit, *Spiritus Creator* and Person or Holy Spirit. Cosmic Spirit is the Spirit that energizes life itself, that life source which ‘returns to God upon death’.56 *Spiritus Creator* transparently creates and sustains life and all cosmic relations, specifically that

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54 Some of the manifest ways Moltmann considers the Spirit of God’s activities: the divine energy of life, cosmic Spirit, God’s presence, His Shekinah, Messianic expectations, the Spirit of Christ and the Holy Spirit of the Trinity.


56 "Theologically this Spirit must be called the Spirit of God and the presence of God in the creature he has made, But according to biblical usage, this is not the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the name given to the Spirit of redemption and sanctification . . . the Spirit of Christ" (263). It might be consider that this work of God’s Spirit within the world is what supplies in human experience the desire to perichoretically relate, the immanent force in persons and social structuring producing what Paul refers to as the conscience, “a law unto themselves.”
immanent aspect in human beings that creates personhood as a relation unto itself. The Holy Spirit refers to the Spirit as God's transcendent Personal action and will in the world. This diversity of activity is a result of both God's own inner perichoretic dynamic active within the Trinity resulting in various forms or 'modes of self-manifestation', and the specific divine action related in relevance to each spacetime event or occurrence. I suggest that Moltmann's prudent recognition of the complexity of the Bible's use of God's Spirit implores us to develop greater articulation in our understanding of His Spirit, which affects our consideration of His role in Trinitarian, personal and cosmic relatedness.

**Person as dialogically constituted: Prerflexion/reflexion in social relations**

For the purpose of explication and analysis, I wish to correlate the social dynamic of perichoresis with the social theory of Alistair McFadyen and the dialogical bipolarity he identifies within communicative action. All human communicative acts necessitate dialogical modulations of prerflexion (awareness, openness) and reflexion (response, closure). As this thesis develops these bipolar distinctions within human relational dynamics will merge as cycles within a unitive perichoretic structure (corresponding to the relationship itself).

Many contemporary streams of theological anthropology, for example, process theology, have begun to re-situate the heart of the divine-human 'point-of-contact' at more complex and immanent levels within personal and social structures. These are evident at preconscious and prereflexive level of human relations. Within this thesis, all knowledge and understanding develop upon and emerge from just such a dynamic of relationality. From birth onward, we are irresistibly drawn into a pulsation of being reflexively constituted as person-in-relation followed by a prereflexive opening of awareness back into the matrix from which we emerge. Within this cycle of openness, because of its analogical relation to the Eternal, it motivates the greatest depth of perichoretic interrelatedness possible. In fact, ultimately all desire even the desire to end one's life, issues in some way from this fundamental necessity to connect with others, the world and God in ever more intricate and holistic, and therefore, fulfilling ways.

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57 For Wolfhart Pannenberg human nature is likewise a tension between “centeredness” and “openness,” however, as we will later see, because of his Hegelian proclivities his notion of human experience and relationality fall short of our intended Kierkegaardian structures (1985). Likewise, speaking of love (eros) as a participatory relation, Moltmann tells us that “lovers are counterpart and presence for one another. . . . Counterpart and presence alternate in the rhythm of life, and must do so; for pure presence is imperceptible. In order to know one another, the lovers need not only union but detachment; not merely desire but also the setting-free; not solely the going out of the self but the withdrawal of the self too; not community alone, but also personhood” (1992, p.262).
This dynamic aspect of spirit is likewise related to the creative process that forms gestalt* and conceptual response.\(^{58}\) Within this process all the relational factors and contingencies\(^{59}\) which converge in front of, within and behind the conscious focal* meaning and intentional locus of the individual are organized and constituted into a person-in-relation.\(^{60}\) It is McFadyen’s fundamental assumption that humans are constituted as person within their respective relations to the world, and that such constitution in relation to God begins at the level of becoming spirit. For McFadyen:

It is individual spirit which is initially transformed in redemption by being placed in the context of relation with God. Such transformation effects a newly organised identity which shows itself in a new patterning of relations around the person.\(^{61}\) He notes that such an effect by God is “analogical.” In a more developed statement, he emphasizes the ‘passive’, free and analogical characteristics of God’s analogous effect upon the human spirit (analogia spiritus):

God’s communication creates the ontological possibility of freedom-in-response which includes the passive moment involved in understanding. The power of the Holy Spirit through which the transformation of faith occurs is not coercive in an heteronomous sense, but imploring, beguiling and perhaps even compulsive—but it is so internally: i.e. it appeals to, transforms, but does not destroy the identity and rationality structure of the person. . . . It does not take the form of logical, rational propositions but, paradigmati-cally, the crucifixion of the incarnate which, in appealing to human understanding, actually transforms the understanding contained in human predicates.\(^{62}\)

We do well to note the ‘paradigmatic’ and ‘transformative’ nature of God’s Spirit’s influences upon the configurative process of human spirit. Information or facts (from facere, to make) per se are not ‘injected’ into the individual, rather the human spirit is influenced in its self-organization and configurative process antecedent to its existential constitution (its linguistic structures).  

The prereflexive moment is simply that moment of intentful awareness, listening and de-liberative ‘searching’ before the other, a problem or dilemma that precedes cognition, the answer or gestalt. Philosophically, we describe this process and moment* as hypothetico-deductive thought, the emergence of theory or hypothesis where the relation between theory

\(^{58}\) Cf. McFadyen, *The Call To Personhood*, “[Personal identity or] individuality cannot be constituted by total openness but by total or partial closure” (p.122).

\(^{59}\) The term ‘relational contingencies’ refers to every factor that comes to bear upon the person at a given moment or duration of time (memory, relational patterns, others, responsibilities, the immanent or transcendent impress of God, etc.) This term also refers to those contingencies which are potentially affective but because of human relational structures are able to be avoided by individual relational posturing and disposition (suppression), e.g., the memory of what one has done to another.

\(^{60}\) Cf. McFadyen (1990), p.116; “Individual spirit is the organisational energy through which both oneself and the boundary between oneself and others are structured. Individual spirit organises the form and content of communication by regulating openness and closure.”

\(^{61}\) Ibid., p.116.

and observation is not strictly deducible. The patterned dialogical dynamic of *perichoresis* is inherent in all human relations.

**Person as perichoresis:** Self becomes spirit when it is fully related to itself and coinherent with the ground that posits self

In a chapter on human development we will investigate the feasibility of how this perichoretic dynamic within human existence is related to the source upon which it is contingent—human participation in the divine ground by which it is constituted. We will consider relational dynamics as “transformational dynamics” in the work of Piaget, James Loder and Kierkegaard. Loder argues that patterned relationship has its basis in mutual coinherence.

Opposites are coinherent in and through this relatedness, and the relatedness is coinherent with itself. Furthermore, it is evident that the self cannot be itself without its centered grounding beyond itself, but it must be a participant in that ground such that its life is preserved and its integrity as spirit is sustained by that ground. Thus, the ground also participates in the self in such a way that both ground and self are sustained as such from the standpoint of the self. In other words, there is a coinherence of the whole patterned activity of the self in and with its ground, and of the ground in and with the self. In essence, *the self is spirit when the pattern governing it is perichoretic.*

He equates this coinherence with the Pauline dynamic of “Christ in us” (Gal 2:20). This mutuality manifests itself clearly within the dialogical dynamic that is evident within the Trinitarian notion of God and human relations. It also maintains Kierkegaard’s insistence that the temporal and eternal poles of which persons are a synthesis never materially synthesize. Once again, persons are a dialogical pulsation of opening prereflexive awareness (infinite/temporal) and constituting reflexive closure (finite/eternal).

These distinctions defy reduction into material synthesis, neither are they ever substantive or universally meaningful outside of the dynamic of their immediate relationship. Rather, as components they form an existential unified whole, which is always completely and constantly transforming. According to Loder and Kierkegaard, “transition itself becomes the very matrix of existence,” rather than the Hegelian ‘synthesis’. As an aspect of relational dynamics the value of the reflexive synthesis is retained, but nevertheless, must remain in time asymmetrically related to the transformative and complementary dynamic of holistic prereflexive awareness. Therefore, though communicational codes and specific social orders (relational closed systems) always contain incommensurable paradoxes, they bear irreducible *meaningfulness* within the ongoing transition of dialogical encounter to the degree the relationships are constituted in analogical relation with the *activity* of this

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64 CUP 169-224, 346-385.
65 Loder (1992), p.304; Kierkegaard (CUP 376-385), “For there is only one thing to say: venture everything!” (382). “And after the individual has made the venture he is no longer the same individual” (379). For that which is not relative, rather, absolute, is “definable solely in terms of the mode of acquisition” (382).
instantiating Power. Identifying and characterizing such an irreducible relational dynamic within human existence will deepen our understanding of God's ways with the world.

**Interdisciplinary concerns**

Calvin begins his *Institutes* immediately acknowledging the integrative and holistic nature of theology:

> All our wisdom, if it really deserves the name of wisdom and is true and reliable, really comprehends two things: the knowledge of God and our knowledge of ourselves. These two are connected in many ways, and so it is not so easy to say which of them comes first and then itself affects the other.  

Similarly, this theological investigation into relational dynamics will draw upon work in a variety of theological interdisciplinary concerns: the philosophy of science (method), hermeneutics, social theory, human development, thermodynamics, and most notably the study of time. The aim is to explore the concept of perichoretic dynamics in relation to several disciplines of theological thought and assess its potential capacity for resolving existing dilemmas. The force of the argument is not intended to issue from any one concentrated argument in relation to a specific theological polemic, rather, from an acknowledgement that these various related polemics are in part the result of certain underlying assumptions within our thinking, and that perichoretic dynamics begins to make better sense of each respectively. The force of the argument therefore is not analytical, but comprehensive in nature, as it attempts to consider how this specific dynamic might be indicative of current paradigmatic shifts. It is simply my desire to comprehensively bring the theological notion of perichoretic relational dynamics and the common thematics within various disciplines of thought into co-conditioning relations in hope that each would ultimately enrich and expand the other. In the final chapters, I will suggest how this dynamic presents us with a theological course for understanding divine providence, human freedom and the paradoxical relationship of Christ within the complementarity of Church and culture.

**Interdisciplinary theology**

In one respect, the certainty of our knowledge results from the quality and depth of interconnections within our relations and beliefs. This is not merely an epistemological relation but inseparably an experiential one. Furthermore, to the extent we separate and consider knowledge away from the whole wealth of experience and conviction, knowledge becomes a closed system of thought (abstraction) leading to anomaly and Gödelian non-inferentials. In this respect, every sphere of life and discourse is eventually integral to theological discourse. Nancey Murphy suggests, "language cannot be static; extension of

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language into new areas is necessary if it is to be able to express growth in knowledge.\textsuperscript{67} Though interdisciplinary studies must begin with indefinite metaphorical interpenetration, which in the beginning merely suggests heuristic tools, constant use and skill within such interactions eventually develops new and appropriate language and relations within communitive structures. Such relationships eventually proffer novel facts and a progressive explanatory ability, which in turn provide for fuller experiences of life. In this respect, meaning deepens and fullness of life increases.

Murphy tells us,

\begin{quote}

even though Christian theology must begin with the Christian tradition (its revelation and the phenomena of the Christian religion), it must proceed to confirmation vis-à-vis reality external to the tradition—that is to contemporary sorts of data—if it is to fulfill its role as a science of God.\textsuperscript{68}
\end{quote}

If this is the case theology’s interaction and coherence with other disciplines of thought is not only possible, but \textit{necessary}. In an agreeable but slightly different perspective, Pannenberg expresses his approach to anthropology:

\begin{quote}
The aim is to lay theological claim to the human phenomena described in the anthropological disciplines. To this end, the secular description is accepted as simply a provisional version of the objective reality, a version that needs to be expanded and deepened by showing that the anthropological datum itself contains a further and theologically relevant dimension.\textsuperscript{69}
\end{quote}

This is the continuing goal of my thesis, to consider a “theologically relevant dimension”, or more specifically—\textit{dynamic}, within the human developmental process and within the creation of intelligence in order to proffer helpful theological insights. However, as Thiemann rightly cautions,

\begin{quote}
The employment of borrowed concepts cannot be equivocal, i.e., a concept cannot be used in a wholly different way in the Christian frame. Thus on certain occasions . . . the theologian might need to show the analogical connections between Christian and non-Christian uses of particular concepts or beliefs.\textsuperscript{70}
\end{quote}

When we integrate various disciplines within the theological program, the goal is a conceptual integration that enhances both theological theory and one’s knowledge of the world within all related disciplines of thought. Nevertheless as Thiemann rightfully concludes, theology has “no rationale independent of the first-order language of faith”.\textsuperscript{71}

\textsuperscript{67} Murphy (1987), p.283.
\textsuperscript{68} (1990), p.87. Cf. also Stoeger (Russell 1996), “The two languages of science and religion/theology, though different, are not isolated from or out of contact with one another. They continue to be in dynamic interaction in our common cultural and academic fields” (240).
\textsuperscript{70} Thiemann (1985), p.75.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid., p.75.
(although he arguably fails to maintain these distinctions methodologically). For example, we must consider that Paul’s description of love is nuanced by a host of psychological and relational tensions that condition the choice and use of terminology to communicate or create meaning within his specific community and relational context. Similarly, recent human developmental and clinical psychology have begun to deepen our understanding and meaning of love and felicitous relationships which can furthermore enrich such historical expressions. Progressively, therefore, we find psychological discourse will be adapted to theological discourse, and vise versa. With proper development, in time they will become theological. Philip Clayton argues that “if the need to argue in a reasonable manner is accepted as essential to theology, it should be acknowledged as intrinsic to theology; it should be granted a place in theology’s self-understanding.”

**Interdisciplinary method**

I would like to here briefly present James Loder’s thoughts concerning interdisciplinary method, much of which characterizes the trajectory of this thesis. In response to the just cited Pannenberg passage, Loder corroborates Pannenberg’s attempt to locate and express the irreducible religious thematic in human beings and the human sciences. He also appreciates his commitment to the co-conditioning relationship of the hermeneutical duality of interpreting theological claims through the human sciences (bottom up), and the human sciences through theology (top down). Loder, however, departs from Pannenberg in that he gives asymmetrical priority to revealed theology over natural theology in a way that leans heavily upon the Christological convictions of Karl Barth in that the “material supplies the method.” For Loder, Faith is not fundamentally a developmental phenomenon. If faith is a human response to God’s grace, it must be rooted in God and be grounded deeper in psychic bedrock than the developing ego’s foundation in a favorable balance of trust over mistrust, all of which is primarily dependent on interaction with a human environment.

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72 In other words, Paul’s description of love in 1Cor 13 could not be considered universally conclusive, rather, it is what was meaningfully descriptive and useful for expressing the meaning of love within the specific cultural milieu, language and relational situation in which Paul found himself at that time with the Corinthians.

73 I make reference here to the emergence of theological literature over the last century that incorporates psychological hermeneutics and the insights of Kierkegaard, Freud, and others, e.g., Moltmann’s *The Crucified God*, and Pannenberg’s *Anthropology in Theological Perspective*.


75 Loder (1998), p.30. Also, Loder tells us, “The natural order is not the context in which to understand God, but the natural order itself must be understood in the context of what God has revealed. By this theological paradigm shift, the sciences of the natural order, including the human sciences, must undergo a transformation by which they enter into an indissoluble, contingent relation to revealed theology, functioning as subs Sciences of its inner intelligibility and as an essential part of the empirical and theoretical claims of its interpretation of God’s action in the world” (32-33).

76 Ibid., p.31.
Loder is critical of Pannenberg’s ‘balance’ and his ultimately indivisible association between God’s Spirit and human spirit, which he believes ultimately loses theology into the humanities. For Loder the distinction is maintained within the sound use of analogy and difference; “the human spirit is to humanity what the Holy Spirit is to God (1 Cor 2:10).”

This may appear as a Christological imperialism, although Loder believes he is simply supplying

a Christological answer to the question other interdisciplinary methodologies fail to address. . . . [These] positions tacitly introduce a third theme by which theology and nontheological disciplines are held together and interrelated. Obviously, in these approaches, the ruling principle and consequent outcome are neither theology nor human science, but precisely the tertium quid.78

Therefore, all human sciences must become the subsciences through what he calls a “Christomorphic approach through transformation” in which they are reappropriated for the “concretization, illumination, or application of theological categories as they come to bear on human experience.” Moreover,

it is the relationality, the dynamism of the exchange between these fields of inquiry, that is the reality to be prized. In human science, this is to stress the critical and constructive development of the human spirit. As it joins with the Creator Spirit, there is a bipolar witness to the redemption and consummation of creation in Jesus Christ. Taken together, human spirit and Creator Spirit constitute the relational wholeness of Jesus Christ present to us and effective for us in the immediacy of experience.”79

Relational dynamics are indeed the primary focus of this thesis, and Loder’s concerns reflect the basic dynamic of this inquiry’s method. Nevertheless, I wish to maintain a workable distance from the early Barthian notions of a ‘totally other’ God. In this respect, I wish to remain open to the possibility that a patterned dynamic of perichoresis is effectively apparent in all transformative and felicitous relationality regardless the level of inquiry, and that understanding the characteristics of such an all-pervasive dynamic would indeed be analogically similar in all accounts. The differences owning to the various levels and manifestations of each respective relationship. In this respect, I wish to attempt an integrated synthesis of Loder’s methodological concerns with Moltmann’s starting point that

all relationships which are analogous to God reflect the primal, reciprocal indwelling and mutual interpenetration of the trinitarian perichoresis. . . . All living things—each in its own specific way—live in one another and with one another, from one another and for one another.80

If indeed all relationality is constituted perichoretically, all relations will assume the relational unity of the specific persons and the specific subsidiary actions of everything and every person divine or human, which are appropriate to each respective relationship. Each relational event itself is contained within, and itself contains, countless relations. If this is

77 Ibid., p.35.
78 Ibid., p.37.
79 Ibid., p.41.
the case then Moltmann’s thoughts are vital and, accordingly, God as transcendent Person can still be considered preeminently active within each relationship.

In the first chapter, we will begin by investigating the character of meaning itself through contrasting how two current research programs understand the development of meaning. Attempting to integrate the positive insights of both, we will then consider the issue in light of perichoretic dynamics. This will provide us with several suggestions affecting theological methodology and our understanding of the construction of meaning.

**Human developmental psychology**

In chapter three, I will consider a relational dynamic within theological anthropology drawing from various interdisciplinary interest, most notably human developmental psychology. The principal aim of this section will be to isolate aspects within human development and relational dynamics that might then be considered in potential correlation with God’s Eternal trinitarian and perichoretic activity.

The program of developmental psychology seeks to expound upon the transformational and developmental nature of human existence and the emergence of intelligence. Individuals like Jean Piaget and more recently theologian/developmental psychologist James Loder are of particular interest because of their interest in human developmental origins and the irreducible nature of human relations. Both these writers argue for a rational necessity of the ‘nonrational’ by revealing the irreducible elements within human nature, which are constitutive of reason itself. Within this discussion we will note that all human knowledge is by nature inherently relational, or as Wittgenstein might suggest, simply acts of interactions.

**Thermodynamics**

Consonant with the idea of perichoretic relations and a relational ontology, Prigogine and Stengers tell us:

Today physics has discovered the need to assert both the distinction and interdependence between units and relations. It now recognizes that, for an interaction to be real, the “nature” of the related things must derive from these relations, while at the same time the relations must derive from the “nature” of the things.81

Furthermore,

“creation of structures” may occur with specific non-linear kinetic laws of far-from-equilibrium conditions. The energy and matter exchanged by the system from the outside world is then really transformed into structure.82

Recent developments within the scientific inquiry into the nature and characteristics of change and interrelations within dynamic systems—thermodynamics—have presented unique claims providing new insights into all relational dynamics. The growing conviction is that structure somehow emerges both within time and in relation to teleological factors.

Though this study is unable to engage this subject in critical detail, such theories warrant appropriate mention.

**Time and Eternity: theology, philosophy and postmodern physics**

A. S. Eddington insists that in “any attempt to bridge the domains of experience belonging to the spiritual and physical sides of our nature, *time occupies the key position.*”\(^{83}\)

My thesis attempts to consider the relation of time and eternity within the divine-human relationship. Such investigations have only recently begun to assimilate the new heuristics emergent from postmodern science: Relativity theory and, more speculatively, Quantum thought. Theologians, in line with Kant, have in general rejected conceiving creation as ‘beginning’ along some starting point within an ‘eternal’ time line.\(^{84}\) More recently in Post-Kantian thought, Karl Barth attempted to express a notion of Eternality that recovers human time within a particular Christological modality.\(^{85}\) In this respect, we must never consider the ‘beginning’ as a past historical point, but as that which becomes fulfilled within the covenant event of the Christ relation. This differs from the concept of Creator *causa prima*, and furthermore, from the modern deistic notion of creation as a closed system.

In contradistinction to Barth’s self admitted over-reactive insistence in the complete otherliness of God, this project will argue that it is possible for human existence to be mutually constituted in analogical relation to such an Eternal transcendent God. “The death of God . . . is the death of separated transcendence,” writes Paul Ricoeur; “we must shed an idea of the divine as wholly other to reach the idea of the divine as spirit immanent in the community.”\(^{86}\) Therefore, the subject of time and eternity, and what it means for humans to be constituted in relation to the Eternal in time, is one of the pivotal goals of this study. In this respect, every chapter defers in interdependence to this penultimate chapter. My thesis here, simply stated, is that to *the degree all human experience is constituted in holistic relation to itself, others and God, it emerges within Creation in relation to the Eternal.*

Within the Kierkegaardian *moment* T. F. Torrance tells us, “the primary theological point to get clear, however, is the ontologically and temporally indivisible nature of the one epiphany or advent of the incarnate Son of God in whom all men and all ages are held together, without any detraction from real differences between different experiences or

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\(^{83}\) Eddington (1948), my emphasis. Prigogine and Stengers, (1984), p. 96, tell us that “only an opening, a widening of science can end the dichotomy between science and philosophy. This widening of science is possible only if we revise our conception of time.”


\(^{85}\) Karl Barth in *CD II/1*, develops a Boethius-like position of eternity as ‘pure duration’ (reine Dauer).

Within this thesis, however, this dynamic is not to be thought of as creating a universal frame of reference in which all things as similar can be mutually related (analogia entis), but rather a universal dynamic of relationality through which all things different can mutually and meaningfully relate (analogia spiritus within perichoresis).

Soren Kierkegaard: Social Theorist/Pneumatologist

Though this is not a thesis specifically on Kierkegaard, I must recognize from the beginning that his thought more than any other guides this thesis. Most often his story has been conventionalized into an anthropology, even Christological, emphasis; whereas his driving thesis was pneumatological. Throughout the study his views will be used as a catalyst for exposing the unique insights within many contemporary thinkers.

As was indicated in our earlier consideration of Kierkegaard, I wish to emphasize the misnomer that Kierkegaard’s thinking was rigidly ‘individualistic’. In a recent publication, Kierkegaard in Post/Modernity, Matuštík and Westphal tell us Kierkegaard’s individualism turns out to be the flip side of a thoroughly relational conception of the self, and is beginning to be seen as having interesting ramifications for social theory and practice. Almost all of the chapters in this volume can be read as contributions to the ongoing task of critical social theory.

For Kierkegaard, the relation and dynamic that creates the self happens in perichoretic relations to that same relation and dynamic creating the social unit, simply because of the constituting Power active within each. They cannot be separated.

Just as pivotal for Kierkegaard’s notion of personhood is the insistence of relatedness to God, and the dialogical character this dynamically maintains within human sociology.

The self is the conscious synthesis of infinitude and finitude, which relates itself to itself, whose task is to become itself, a task which can be performed only by means of a relationship to God. . . . Accordingly, the development consists in moving away from oneself infinitely by the process of infinitizing oneself, and in returning to oneself infinitely by the process of finitizing. If on the contrary the self does not become itself, it is in despair, whether it knows it or not.

88 H. Berkhof comments, “Kierkegaard’s aim was not to emphasize anthropology but pneumatology in theology, and therefore, like Barth, he considered the renewing Spirit as the true answer to the anthropocentric endeavors of the culture of the time.” (1989, p.79).
89 Matuštík (1995), p.ix. In reference to Habermas and other contributors to the edition, the editors impress that they involve “critical social theory in the narrower sense, signifying conversations in which the work of Habermas plays a central role. But in the wider sense of the term it also includes the feminist discourses addressed in several chapters and a variety of other ways in which Kierkegaard in dialogue turns out to be a social philosopher” (p.ix).
90 Similarly, Bonhoeffer tells us, “God does not desire a history of individual human beings, but the history of the human community. However, God does not want a community that absorbs the individual into itself, but a community of human beings. In God’s eyes, community and individual exists in the same moment and rest in one another. The collective unit and the individual unit have the same structure in God’s eyes. On these basic-relations rest the concepts of the religious community and the church” (1998, p. 80).
91 SUD, pp.162-3.
The 'infinitizing' of oneself out into relations is the modal and dialogical dynamic within interaction that represents what this thesis will consider holistic interaction—*analogia spiritus*. In this respect, Kierkegaard's notion of indirect knowledge is nothing more than holistic non-differentiated communication, the condition and background of all relations.
Chapter 2

Meaning as *perichoresis*: Its significance for theological method, and knowledge as the shape of desire

He is before all things, and in Him all things are held together.\(^1\)

Col 1:17

It is to the prodigals—to those who exhaust all their strength in pursuing what seems to them good and who, after their strength has failed, go on impotently desiring—that the memory of their Father’s house comes back. If the son had lived economically he would never have thought of returning.

Simone Weil, *Notebooks*

Epistemological holism vs. relational holism: A restructuring of reality

Aristotle said, ‘all men by nature desire to know’. In this chapter we will investigate the possibility of a more fundamental and comprehensive notion—‘*all humans by nature desire to relate*’. Fundamental to my overall thesis is that persons are constituted through a perichoretic desire to relate. Admittedly, knowledge, as it has come to be understood, is only part of this human equation.

The lessons we are currently discovering from the epistemological overindulgences within our modern heritage immediately raise considerations in our understanding of how meaning is created within human relations. We are fast losing the innocence of basing our knowledge and understanding in completely self-evident non-inferentials which are in direct correspondence with concept-independent reality.\(^2\) Because of the current upheaval within societal and academic reasoning, we are increasingly becoming aware of the inevitability and importance of

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\(^1\) Also Heb 1:3, “He is the radiance of His glory and the image of His reality, upholding all things by the word of His power” (my translations).

\(^2\) This understanding of foundationalism is loosely taken from Ronald Thiemann, *Revelation and Theology: the Gospel as Narrated Promise* (1985) p.158, n.20. I underscore the issue of Thiemann’s totality in respect of ‘self-evident non-inferentials’ because I believe, contra Thiemann, that there are aspects of ‘self’ or better yet relational-evidencing non-inferentials within human social dynamics, and therefore also in knowledge. What this *is* cannot be stated other than it is the immanent-transcendent dynamic by which we relate. Because this dynamic cannot be reduced to being or knowledge itself, it is nevertheless irreducibly experienced within human relations, and yet it remains a ‘non-inferential’ aspect and factor in all human knowledge. Nevertheless, I agree with Thiemann that provisionality is an inherent quality in all human knowledge.
working from within our own traditional structures toward more developmental resolutions to our quandaries and intertraditional dialogue. On the other hand, we must note the proven value of interdisciplinary efforts for provoking new questions and progressive theories within each respective discipline. Such activity creates developmental contexts in which existing forms of life evolve into more efficient explanations and fuller experiences of life.

In the Cartesian view of the mind, the subjective mind is central. Through the body, the mind receives sensory and linguistic information that then refer to developed meanings within the mind. Meaning is here the exclusive property of the mind and language becomes the sole vehicle for re-presenting one's construction of it. Descartes, however, continued to doubt not the certainty of ideas, but their veridicality to what they represented. In his reducing the philosophical project as such, the idea, the consciousness, the self*, became the indubitable perspective 'outside' of all things. From this one safe loft of certainty evolved a detached perspective, which then developed into the explicit category of the objective. Observing became the act of categorizing, and knowledge as such, episteme (theoretical knowledge), was used to reference reality. This, however, began to cut the individual and knowledge from its holistic totality and complete meaning*. The fullness and uniqueness of the moment and the immediate relationship was lost to infatuation and overindulgence with representation.

In response to the Cartesian-inspired subjectivism, postmodern ventures have begun to emerge which attempt to breach the growing isolation of the subject. These are many and diverse, but their common quality and goal is a growing attempt to understand holism* within the knowing and communicative act. In this section, we shall investigate several postmodern theories or programs in relation to theological discourse in an effort to reveal promising trajectories and dynamics that might be consequential for our understanding of the construction of meaning and subsequently for theological method. We will begin by introducing two theories within the philosophy of science and an extended evaluation of epistemological holism as developed by Nancey Murphy's recent implementation of Lakatos for theological method. Then, I will briefly consider a relational holism presented by developmental social constructivist Kenneth Gergen, John Shotter, and others, who draw from M. Bakhtin and Wittgenstein. From there, we will consider the interpretive act and the act of making and communicating meaning as an irreducible perichoretic* dynamic. This will frame an inquest into knowledge as the shape of desire, and suggest considerations for future development within theological method.

The longing for security in foundational theological beliefs

In The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative, Hans Frei reveals the modern tendency to establish hermeneutical foundations, for example, the history actually behind the text, or the existential orientation within religious awareness. These foundations became the security of
certainty beneath the text. Some non-foundational alternatives, stressing the importance of narrative, suggest that the texts speak for themselves in a holistic manner, not privileging any one criterion or locus of meaning. Though the importance of narrative is firmly supported within this thesis, it is the effective quality of narrative which is here preeminent—the dynamic within human relations that creates and meaningfully sustains narrative and holistic interpenetration. Conventionally understood, holism resists the notion that meaning emerges from any one source or loci, rather it emerges from the interpenetration of various conceptual and experiential fields into irreducible forms, meaning and interaction.

**Two recent holistic theories from philosophy of science: Kuhn & Lakatos**

There are a variety of discussions and theories being currently proposed as postmodern holistic alternatives within the philosophy of science. One such contrast exists between the respective implementation of Kuhn and Lakatos for theological method. Thomas Kuhn has emphasized the holistic dynamic in his concept of *paradigm*, which presents a deeply integrated constitution of knowledge. The entire structure of thought is arranged and dependent upon developed social constructions that guide a tradition’s thinking. This understanding calls for revolutionary gestalt*-like changes when a tradition’s explanatory and functional ability in relation to the world falls into incoherence and anomaly. Here, all beliefs and knowledge are themselves *constituted from out of the whole of the relation or relational configuration*. The perennial issues here are that paradigm shifts re-color every aspect of knowledge, and therefore, in the Modern eye, threaten diachronic continuity and inaugurate relativism. Kuhn attempts to address his critics claim of relativism, but, he never does enter any serious discussion concerning the disruptive teleological forces and practical awareness that must be active in order to effectively reveal anomaly. In other words, certain forces must be active within and upon human existence which allow us to experience* more than we focally know, and motivate the expansion of our knowing accordingly. Kuhn simply states that “discovery commences with the awareness of anomaly, in other words with the recognition that nature has somehow violated the paradigm-induced expectations that govern normal science,” and that “anomaly appears only against the background provided by the paradigm.” No concern is directly given to why humans desire to expand their theoretical comprehension.

**Epistemological holism: Lakatos, Nancey Murphy and the epistemic web—‘to know’**

In an alternative theory, the concept of a research *program* developed by Imre Lakatos for the philosophy of science has recently been considered for adaptation in theological use.

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4 The perennial issue of Plato’s *Meno*.
6 Ibid., 65.
by Nancey Murphy, Philip Clayton, and Philip Hefner. Murphy, drawing from Lakatos, describes epistemological holism as a constellation of beliefs by which rational persuasion and instantiation of one belief is accomplished by appealing to already existing beliefs in such a way as to induce, step-by-step, that belief into the constellation. No beliefs therefore are traceable to one foundational belief; rather, their convictive structures within the web of beliefs are due to their specific location and degree of interrelatedness they enjoy within the whole. She appeals heavily to the work of W. V. O. Quine, Alasdair MacIntyre and, curiously, Wittgenstein. Though her theory raises many questions, it presents a revealing point of entry into the ‘postmodern’ research program and notions of criteria.

"Explanatory function" and "wider human experience" as co-constituting elements within the construction of meaning

If all knowledge is theory dependent, then discovered anomaly between theory (as concept) and experienced phenomena within the world can always be resolved through additional ad hoc theory. This then presents the problem of discerning between ad hoc and legitimately progressive theory development. For Lakatos, the internal and public assessment of whether or not a conceptual system is adequately engaging that community in the widest experience of life and reality is how well its conceptual system allows for further prediction, discovery, and extension of its explanatory capacity, in other words, as Philip Hefner says, whether or not the tradition succeeds in “extending the explanatory function of the community’s faith into the realm of wider human experience.” When theoretical changes or ad hoc additions only patch up the incoherence but do not lead to new empirical knowledge the program becomes degenerative. There is a dialogical dynamic at work here. An increased explanatory capacity in life allegedly enhances and valuatively deepens human experience. Likewise, the wider the experience of life, the greater the ground for expanding understanding and explanatory capacities. Each in turn instantiates, enhances and draws forth the other in the ongoing development of human meaning and relations.

Simply put, the primary logic of Lakatos’ program is that critical dimensions of the program (or paradigm) be made as public as possible through auxiliary hypotheses which are designed to be testable. These complement an often times indiscernible fundamental core (‘hard core’) belief within the program, a belief that is considered universally and publicly unverifiable. The criterion for adequacy is the respective progress or disintegration of an historical tradition, discipline of thought or research program. The pivotal question however becomes: what is ‘progress’? How can we assess this criterion of growth in an ever-

7 Lakatos’s most influential works in philosophy of science was “Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes” (1970), and “History of Science and Its Rational Reconstructions” (1971).
8 Murphy (1996), pp.88-89; 94-98.
changing and transforming program—novel data? What is novel? Moreover, positively, why does progress happen (ultimately a theological question)?

For Lakatos, according to Murphy, the auxiliary hypotheses are those falsifiable beliefs and understandings drawn from the hard core. Likewise, they give the program its distinctive significance. The authority of the hard core, the general theory assumed through tradition, exhibits no direct inferential foundations, which are strictly empirical. Based upon Lakatos' assumption that various communicative and disciplinary discourses are incommensurable (all aspects of knowledge are theory dependant), he argues the progressive system producing novel facts will continue to enlarge its number of facts; a degenerating program will stagnate. Progress emerges from a program's positive heuristic, and indirectly by a negative heuristic. The latter is a plan or methodological rule, which avoids falsification of the hard core. The former is a set of suggestions or an aspect fueling and creating the progress by developing and strengthening the potentially 'refutable' auxiliary hypotheses.

Murphy offers a theological example of a hard core in the program of Pannenberg: the God of Jesus Christ is the all-determining reality. Hefner offers an example of the tripartite structure of Freud's program (id, ego, and superego) as a deteriorating program. This is evident in the declining influence of his program among current psychiatric researchers. He suggests Darwin's original program of evolution through variation, survival and selection is still a stimulating influence upon biological research, and even though it is currently

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10 My concern here is the notion of progress and the existing conventional preoccupation in philosophy's emphasis upon negative heuristics, the heuristics that reveal disintegration ('epistemological crisis') in theories, in contrast to the positive forces which motivate theory progress. Karl Popper supplanted the positivist verification theory with a criterion of falsifiability. Convinced, with Hume, that inductive generalization was unable to explain the emergence of theory, Popper argued that theory was a creative and hypothetical construction of human making, Popper (1961), p.458. Therefore, epistemological veracity was gained by the negative process of then attempting to falsify the theory through experimental methods. Those theories which were more open to such falsifiability respectively gained the greater empirical status. The point being, that epistemological development became assessed primarily by negative heuristics, its ability to withstand debilitating incoherence and anomaly.

Likewise, MacIntyre's assessment of a 'tradition' became the tradition's ability to resist "epistemological crisis." As various epistemological conflicts arise between competing traditions or as a tradition might "lapse into incoherence" from mounting phenomenological anomalies they either disintegrate or progress. Progress for MacIntyre is assessed by "an argumentative retelling of that narrative." In other words, "it enable[s] us to understand its predecessors [and competitors] in a newly intelligible way," explaining how and why they came to believe the way they did, and how and why the new development is superior (my augmentation). MacIntyre (1980), pp.62-63.

Again, this note simply forwards two understandings of how progress is assessed, and illuminates their primary developmental heuristic as predominately negative. We will re-engage this issue below, emphasizing that the issue of 'why progress' must remain a theological venture.

11 Lakatos (1970), p.34.
experiencing considerable revision, in Lakatosian terms it can still be considered progressive, and therefore, viable.

**Nancey Murphy's theological implementation of Lakatosian methodology and criteria**

Murphy's conceptual pragmatism and postmodern theology

Nancey Murphy designates a minimal doctrine of God as the hard core of the theological venture: trinitarian nature, God's holiness, and Jesus as God's revelation. Her auxiliary hypotheses are the doctrines of the church: theories concerning Christ, the Church, God, and so on. The data for theology is Scripture, tradition/history and religious and community experience. The auxiliary hypotheses are supposed to be the "consequences" of the hard core, and the data are the "consequences" of the auxiliaries. "The core theory is confirmed by the data that it (indirectly) explains." This conceptual circularity is always evident, but the criterion that adjudicates between differing programs and core theories is their respective internal progress.

Murphy's notion of a postmodern theology entails: 1) a change from a foundational to a holistic epistemology, 2) change from referential and representational emphasis in philosophy of language to language as action, and meaning as use, and 3) a renewed importance and irreducibility of the community. The language games of a community precede individual development, and therefore, the development of knowledge and practices are tradition dependent. Likewise, community consensus becomes a primary criterion in the development of knowledge and practice. In this respect, she suggests Hegel's "antifoundationalism and nonreductive sense of community" gain currency and provide resources for postmodern theology. She suggests that "doctrines of revelation no longer serve as the foundation upon which systematic theology rests ... but are instead included in the theoretical structure to explain communities' assorted ways of 'taking Scripture as authority'." All three of these revisions are laudable in what they seek to produce within current theology; however, her execution of these warrants critical assessment.

Murphy has also drawn upon the new models of language theory in Wittgenstein and Austin in order to emphasize the non-referential dynamic in language. The idea that symbols, referring to meaning in the mind, are communicated and then accordingly re-associated to meanings in the listener's mind is favorably replaced by the concept of speech-act theory and a performative notion of language. Though this is an attempt to escape the Cartesian construction of meaning and intelligence mentioned earlier, many using these

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13 Murphy (1990), p.186.
14 Ibid., p.186.
15 Ibid., p.201.
16 Ibid., p.201n.42.
17 Ibid., 209.
theories have, in the fashion of modernity, simply re-instituted such dynamics within the community, installing a disguised rationalism and empiricism into a larger community corpus. This subsumes a holistic hard core of Christianity back again into, effectively, another discipline.\(^{18}\) Though Murphy states “there is no sharp dividing line between method and content,”\(^{19}\) her description of the hard core of the theological project as second-order theological belief or hypotheses in distinction from the community’s actual faith experience is problematic. In this respect, I will consider how close her method and content really are.

Similarly, immediate concern arises when one confronts her typology of knowledge as either ‘outside-in’ or ‘in-side out’,\(^{20}\) which is related to her assimilation of Thiemann’s bifurcation of first-order faith experience or practice, emphasizing social praxis, and second-order theological language (emphasizing conceptual coherence). Such a bifurcation of meaning itself questions these theologians’ true break from the modern anthropological paradigm.

Symbol (concept) + experience = meaning: Holism

Such an epistemological holism tends to privilege a particular notion of *episteme* and the cognitive aspect of meaning by setting it apart as a language game in itself. By considering any kind of separation between faith practice and theological language such thinking has already distanced itself from a true holism, which recognizes the difficulties and impropriety of isolating knowledge from its full context\(^*\). In his book *Experience and the Creation of Meaning* Eugene Gendlin, reacting to positivism and existentialism, suggests they can be “advanced, not by changing either, but by adding a missing systematic piece between them. This piece has, of course, a broader significance than just their need for it: it is the relationship between symbolizing and preconceptual experiencing. In this relationship meaning is formed.”\(^{21}\) Philip Hefner broadens the equation by using *concept* to correspond to Gendlin’s term *symbol*, therefore, concept + experience = meaning.\(^ {22}\) In this respect, any truly holistic theory of human knowledge and meaning must take seriously both the cognitive or conceptual aspect of human existence (*episteme*), and also the nature of experience itself and the entire complexity of forces and contingencies which bear upon the making of meaning (experience being somewhat equivalent to awareness\(^*\)). H. G. Gadamer has stressed that the concept of experience is traditionally a poorly articulated concept in

\(^{18}\) Cf. Donald Bloesch’s critique of Ronald Thiemann [*Theology of Word and Spirit*, p.3].

\(^{19}\) Murphy (1990), p.183.

\(^{20}\) These categories are assumed from her former teacher Wallace Matson (1987), pp.275-6, in which all philosophical approaches are broken down into two categories “outside-in,” representing the Aristotelian trajectory, and “inside-out,” respectively the Platonic. I believe her oversight in considering the efforts of Heidegger to transcend and broaden these Greek (Socratic) categories by considering the pre-Socratics reveals her perennial appeal to Greek and neo-Kantian dualistic structures of reality. This will become more important as we progress.

\(^{21}\) (1962), my emphasis.

\(^{22}\) (1984), p.469.
philosophy (notwithstanding theological attempts). Therefore, any plausible holistic theory of knowledge must attempt to explain and factor experience within the equation of human understanding and meaning.

Since Descartes, Jürgen Moltmann notes, we began interpreting the notion of human understanding as emerging from the 'subject-object relationship' in which the entire structure of the human subject and experience were considered invariant. Therefore, objectivity was verifiable through *repeatability*. The identification of the true self (subjectivity) became the totality of consciousness which elevated the notion of reason and will above those of the senses and various tacit aspects of human experience.

We acquire most of our experiences neither through our consciousness, nor through our reason, nor as the result of any deliberate intention. It therefore seems too narrow and too 'ego-centric' to relate experience merely to 'the life of the consciousness' and 'the activity of the reason', and to exclude whatever does not belong to these contexts.

Furthermore, the complex process of experiences active during the construction and formation of our knowledge is so subtle it would be impossible to completely explain them. In the elemental experiences of life, love and death we are touched by perceptions of a sensory kind which overpower us to such a degree that we are not master of them. They mould us, and become our companions. There are events in the past which never become 'past', but are continually present to us. We repress them, we work on them, we puzzle over them and interpret them, for we have to live with them.

There is no transcendental subjectivity providing humanity with a fixed objective perspective separate from an infinitely complex ever changing relationship to the world. As creatures we are constituted within our cosmic relations with others, and "we experience ourselves in the experience of other people." This means that experience is never an 'immediate' awareness; rather, it is 'mediated'. Human beings are not in complete control of what they experience; in fact, they must eventually release control and suffer risk if they are ever truly to experience an other. If then, concept and experience produce meaning, the complexity and difficulty in establishing theological method and hermeneutical principles go without saying. This intensifies the need for a more inclusive and articulate understanding of holism within theological method and criterion.

**The example of St. Teresa vs. St. Catherine in the theological criterion of religious experience**

Murphy designates the use of religious experience as theological criteria warranted by a faith community's collective discernment and tradition development. Because of its obvious

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25 Ibid., p.20.

26 Ibid., p.20.

27 Ibid., p.24.

28 These are predominate themes in both K. Barth's concept of *imago Dei*, and Paul Ricoeur's *Oneself as Another* (1992).
holistic nature, this criterion warrants particular focus. The experiencing of the numinal* will later be paralleled with the dynamic of holistic relationships* themselves. 29

In an example of how she would apply Lakatosian method for discerning theologically viable religious experience, she contrasts the religious experiences of St. Teresa of Avila and St. Catherine of Siena. 30 She declines the experience of Teresa because Teresa verifies her experience as self-authenticating, 31 while accepting Catherine's experiences because Catherine can verify it through "observable changes in the recipient's life." The 'observable' changes, says Murphy, interrelate into a "network of other experiences and phenomena." 32 Teresa's experience, validated through its sheer 'internal' power and resolve, is for Murphy potentially psychologically and empirically indeterminate. In Catherine's experience, however, the production of "gladness," "hunger for virtue," "humility," and "charity" are 'observable' verifications of God's presence in religious experience.

In principle, this reasoning is satisfactory. Is it, however, all that simple? In other words, how might Murphy, who is a radical pacifist, 33 construe the 'gladness' and 'charity' in Christ's relation to the Pharisees, money changers, and the inter-cultural and interpersonal disruptions He forecasts (Lk 12:49-53)? Is Christ's perennial impatience and vocal disgust for the disciples' progress in faith 'charitable'? Are Paul's relations with John, Mark, or the apostles at Antioch laced with 'humility' and 'hunger for virtue'? I believe they may be. These assumed criteria are not so 'objectively' or 'observably' identified as Murphy would assume. Though self-deceptive intentions have long been acknowledged, currently growing psychological insights into our relationships are rapidly uncovering and penetrating into the motives of our 'charity': whether they are self-deceptive controlling acts of dominance, self motivated acquiescence in codependency, or genuine self givenness to another. According to Murphy's understanding of 'empirical' I suggest it is impossible to 'empirically' discern these acts with any clear certainty or universal consensus even within one's own religious community. All these possibilities among others, which produce 'charitable behavior', are primarily discerned by the therapist within each specific relationship, first through

29 By 'numinal experience' is meant the sustaining aspect within a religious experience (and in one respect all experiences) which creates and sustains the meaningful conviction of a spiritual presence, truth, concept or relatedness. Within this thesis the numinal aspect of experience is understood to happen within the personal prereflexive experience of analogia spiritus, in which both are analogically and holistically constituted as entities-in-relation. Cf. also the extended definition within the glossary.


31 "This union is above all earthly joys, above all delights, above all consolations, and still more than that... (p.339). God so places himself in the interior of the soul that when it returns to itself it can in no way doubt that it was in God and God was in it. This truth remains with it so firmly that even though years go by without God's granting that favour again, the soul can neither forget nor doubt that it was in God and God was in it" (p.339). In The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila (1980).


33 Based upon a lecture delivered at Fuller Theological Seminary during the Spring of 1992.
hypothetico-deductive reasoning (intuition), and only secondarily by reflection tested
deductively in reverse. As any therapist will concur, 'peaceful' behavior and non-disruptive
coexistence as an observable verifier in contrast to disruptive relations is never conclusive
data of 'charitable', right, felicitous or authentic* interpersonal relations. Though the
discernment process of a specific faith community might be this basic, the application of the
empirical process is much more dynamic and complex than Murphy suggests.

Murphy's 'evidential' nature of 'fruit' in theological criteria

No evidential 'fruit' of the Spirit which Paul proffers can be isolated as simple
'observable' behavior (empirical, repeatable). Without further acknowledging, identifying
and personally experiencing the full wealth of such experiences within specific relations the
notion of 'observable' becomes abstract and impotent. Such acknowledgment of theological
criteria necessitates a subjective, communal intersubjective and relational experiencing
which acknowledges a state of relations that transcend Murphy's notion of 'observability'.
This is not to claim these criteria (sanctifying actions) are not in principle empirical
(verifyable); in the holistic sense they principally are.34 My concern is merely that Murphy's
desire for a criteria of episteme (scientific knowledge) dissociated from the broader more
holistic process of phronesis35 (wisdom), which she clearly attempts in the above
methodological example, is insufficient for establishing religious experience as theological
data. Murphy assumes there are intracommunal criteria which can be 'observably'
designated diachronically; a privileged 'observable' outside the developmental and
transformative dynamic within the tradition which produces its progress. At this point, she
tends to reify the epistemic away from the process of phronesis.

Is there not, however, a christological factor within the Christian criteria of religious
experience? For example, because of the unique nature of Jesus' claim (His unique
relationship with the Father), when Jesus says "I am the way, the truth and the life," this
"living utterance of the Living Word, cannot be severed from the Living Presence whence it
is spoken."36 Murphy weakens her concept of holism by differentiating and prioritizing her
notion of the 'public' ('observable') from the religious experience itself as a first step
second-order theological move. Only secondarily, is this 'verifiable' account of experience
set before the tribunal of community consensus, which entails the numinal discerning
'yea/nay' of the community.37 The theological consideration of religious experience,

34 Gadamer (1975), pp.283-289.
35 Phronesis will be elaborated later in the chapter, but in short, I understand it to mean a practical
knowledge, a wisdom in which something universal is applied within a relative situation in a way that
is always unique to the situation.
36 Cited from a conference paper submitted by Ashok Gangadean, "Universal Grammar, Natural
Reason and Religious Discourse," Thirteenth Annual Philosophy of Religion Conference, April 3,
1992, The Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, California.
37 Murphy (1990), chp. 5.
however, must entail irreducibly the theologian's openness to and, to some degree, engagement with the numinal affect by which such experiences and propositions express their full meaning.

The 'fruit', which the Christ relationship produces, is non-reducible to any simple notion of episteme. Paul wrote his epistles within a particular communal context and relationship, and their meaning will be specific to those relationships. Only in action of phronesis are historical continuity and the universal within Paul's writing given meaning relative to each new use (reading). As mentioned, however, phronesis is empirical in a more complex sense in which certain complex sets of relations are holistically and diachronically associated (analogously) with later sets of relations. Because each relational occurrence is different and Christ's full character as known within the Church is still in development, the criterion of 'fruit' must remain in experiential and developmental flux. This is not to suggest that one period's criterion of 'fruit' will be replaced with the next, but simply allows for the deepening and appropriate reconfiguring of our understanding and experience of it (all with appropriate cause).

The establishment of any such related theological criteria is by nature no less contingent, whether personally subjective or communal. Clayton claims that the "nature of the social phenomenon necessitates that explanations make reference to the semantic synthesizing function of the individual self, as well as to the interplay between individual worlds and shared social worlds." Though the individual is developmentally dependent and sustained within community, the communitive level of discernment and explanations are no more objective in character than the personal level; they are simply more comprehensive. Piaget and others claim the dynamics of personal reflection and social dialogue are indistinguishable to the point that neither can be shown developmentally to precede the other. There is no principle difference in their basic dynamic structuring. The origins and development of self (reflection) and community (dialogue) are both distinct and yet interconnected events in themselves.

Therefore, it is methodologically naive to set apart particular 'observable' data as distinctly different in their performative dynamic than the convictive nature of the 'subjective', and more precisely, that there are specific convictive forces (possibly spurious) which are subjectively active within the individual that are absent or circumvented within the shared social worlds, in other words, 'self-inducement' is just as present within the lives of whole cultures ('cultural-inducement'). As Richard Swinburne said in a recent BBC interview, the holocaust was not the product of one madman deceiving an entire culture, but

38 Ibid., p.99.
39 Piaget (1967), p.40. Likewise, the work of Vygotsky, Bakhtin and others argue that internal reflections indeed are internalized discourse.
a communitve development proceeding from thousands of communitve decisions made
over the hundred years leading up to it which instituted the ‘cultural-inducement’.

In this respect, Jesus explicitly and socially gave to his disciples all the data technically
needed to identify who He was within their contextual orientation. He insisted, however,
that the final theoretical gestalt of recognition emerge personally and subjectively from
within their own relations and personal reflections in an indirect identifying of Himself that
was dependent upon some level of immediate relation with God which transcended and
transformed, but did not obviate, their social elements. In other words, only through the
prerflexive* play of analogia spiritus*, are we able to felicitously acknowledge Christ’s
divinity. Such knowledge is experienced through community but cannot be fully equated
with it. Though socially conditioned and transmitted, He insisted His identity be
hypothetico-deductively derived and known through a qualitative leap transcending normal
human social relations (through no ‘flesh’, Mt 16:17). No inductive or deductive source of
socialized ‘empirical’ verification could provide the proper configuration to the whole puzzle
(Kierkegaard). Likewise, according to John and Paul, this activity of the Holy Spirit
interpenetrates and transcends, but does not obviate, the social contingencies of normal
human and community relations (1Cor2; 1Jn2). Recognition, as such, became the
establishing rock of Christianity. In this respect, the what and how of Christ’s identity
became mysteriously synonymous. Murphy does not implement this aspect of believing,
experiencing and doing theology emphatically enough. For her, the Spirit’s activity in
theology primarily lies within the process of communitve verification of ‘objectifiable’
criteria. In contrast, the Spirit’s presence must become an existent condition and interactive
dynamic necessary for producing the appropriate theological/faith meaning within
theological reflection and discourse. With Kuhn and Wittgenstein, Lindbeck himself thinks,

the norms of reasonableness are too rich and subtle to be adequately specified in any general
tory of reason or knowledge.... Thus reasonableness in religion and theology, as in other
domains, has something of that aesthetic character, that quality of unformalizable skill.

Lindbeck is extremely aware of the depth, integration and complexity of theological
knowledge. Murphy’s relational logic (reasoning), in this respect, becomes too linear and
must be further dimensionalized into a fuller holism, as does her notion of religious
experience as theological criteria.

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40 Murphy acknowledges that her Lakatosian program takes account of the Plantinga ‘presupposition’
and the Barth/T. F. Torrance demand that ‘the nature of the object of focus determines the proper
method of inquiry’ (1990, p.195), however, she fails to realize fully the radical epistemological
dynamic (“inversion” or divine contingency) which these individuals consider must facilitate our
human inquiry into the activity and knowledge of an Eternal God.
Critical investigation of Murphy

As Murphy tells us, Lakatos argues that degenerating programs can sometimes be 'sleepers' and with time may emerge as progressive programs.\(^{42}\) Feyerabend, however, rightly argues that such an open contingency without time restraints fatally damages the Lakatosian notion of progress.\(^{43}\) In agreement with Feyerabend, I now wish to investigate Murphy's implementation of Lakatosian method for theology and assess its potential merits and deficiency. The eventual goal is to adjust the Lakatosian program within a more comprehensive theological-anthropological paradigm in an effort to address Feyerabend's concern.\(^{44}\)

At this point I would like to suggest four basic areas of inquiry into Murphy's method: 1) her selective use of Wittgenstein and language as predominately non-referential, 2) the empirical notions of 'observability', 'belief', and episteme, 3) the criterion of progress and the unseen universal component, 4) the lack of intellectual virtue and phronesis within her conceptual holism (person and relationship as good, rather than act as good). All four of these, I believe, result from bifurcating the experiential and the cognitive/conceptual in an effort to produce 'empirical' criteria. Polanyi, whose categories will be used within this thesis, similarly presents this separation as focal and tacit awareness within knowledge and meaning construction. Ultimately, I believe Murphy circumvents the arduous journey of expanding the historical notions of the empirical.

1) Theology, language as non-referential, and the doctrine of Incarnation

In a recent critique of Nicholas Wolterstorff, a colleague of mine at the University of Edinburgh questioned Wolterstorff's understanding and use of Searle, Austin and Wittgenstein's notion of speech-act and language games. "Speech-act theorists do indeed distinguish between locution and illocution, but they do so in order to describe different aspects of the same speech-act, and not, as Wolterstorff does, in order to set up two entirely different kinds of act."\(^{45}\) I believe Murphy has executed a similar move in her use and understanding of Wittgenstein to argue the predominance of language use as non-referential. First she calls for a non-referential emphasis in language theory in order to escape the abuses of Modernity, then, she divides first level faith practice and second level theological

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\(^{43}\) Feyerabend (1970). Also, van Huyssteen tells us, "because theological programs have been shown not to function at all like scientific research programs in Murphy's model, Lakatos's criterion of relative empirical progress could hardly be used to adjudicate between competing theological theories or schools." (1997), p.86.

\(^{44}\) The response to Feyerabend's temporal consideration, however, takes final shape only within the penultimate chapter of this thesis.

\(^{45}\) From an unpublished paper "Making Meaningful the Claim that God Speaks" by Tim Ward (1997), p.3.
language concerning that practice. Is this an appropriate implementation of Wittgensteinian language use?

The force of Paul's message, for Murphy, comes through the "just enough" 'observable' evidence in which to believe reasonably in the testimony. Her focus here is strictly the 'observability' of the evidence within the second-level language game of theology. She has left the language of theology with no aspect of reference to divine presence and associative history. No consideration is given to the personal and corporate perceiving and condition of the Holy Spirit's influences within theology. In this respect, one wonders indeed, how associative her method and content really are.

Philip Clayton tells us that, among other things, "the nature of assertions is to refer to extralinguistic states of affairs." Any thought to the contrary significantly removes the notion of ontological reference and materially alters the entire theological program, most notably, I would add, the notion of the hard core. This reduces the content of the hard core to mere episteme. Such implementation of language theory by many of the 'postmoderns' fails to transcend the Cartesian dilemma into a functional holism. Such notions of holism recognize the complexity of belief structure, but fail to draw properly into theological method the full wealth of human convictional forces in theological discourse. Such forces directly creating theological knowledge and experience are, among other things, emotions, intellectual and relational dispositions and virtues, the experience of the numinal. Each aspect plays an eminent role in developing and sustaining theological knowledge. "It seems strange," says Clayton, "for theologians to rush in to reduce their own discipline to another." Therefore, for him, theological methodology should include "the question of [theology's] objective truth within the theological endeavor itself." Theological method must derive and remain within the theological event of discourse inclusive of a "Living Word" and the full wealth of predications and communicative faith practices which give rise to Christian theology. Because of Murphy's construal of non-referential language, she forces theology's 'objectivity' into that of her first acquired discipline, philosophy of science.

Wittgenstein's holism: the unity of language, 'reason' and experience

Though Wittgenstein would object to reducing Christianity, human life, or metaphysics into one 'arrogant' unitary theory, or base them upon any foundational claim, he has as much

47 Fergus Kerr tells us (1986. pp.102-4) that Wittgenstein is not suggesting we do not grasp the object of assertions, which is the referential aspect of language, but simply "denying that one is able to get hold of anything independently of one's being initiated into certain common practices."
49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
as any other shown us that knowledge and 'reason' irreducibly exist as communitive interaction (meaning as use or action). Language as use implies that it is used for something, and therefore this theory concentrically equates with the idea that all knowledge is relational. Though Wittgenstein's work may only be of limited theological value, his transcending the modern concept of the subject is incisive. That Murphy has critically adopted him for use in theological method makes him an even more suitable dialogue partner for this current discussion.

I have argued that the designation of criteria for 'intrasystematic' or 'second-level' use based upon 'rational' or 'empirically' defined standards risks underdetermining various supporting or unseen aspects of 'grammar' (actions) which make up and are contributive to our communications. These fundamental developments within our relations and practices become for Wittgenstein the unseen 'familiar' foundations upon which various language games and 'rational thought' are constructed. In respect of the intrasystematic notion of truth* and 'reason', Wittgenstein thinks, says Fergus Kerr,

the meanings that establish the house of reason are not inside our individual minds. They are out in the open, constituting the space, wherever two or three gather to exchange gifts or threats or stories and songs... The claim of reason is so exorbitant in our metaphysically inflated self-understanding that it is hard for us to acknowledge what is obvious: the phenomena, including the language games that give rise to the possibility of rational thought in the first place. All rational and intrasystematic 'truths' are merely relational meanings, constituted within the relationship itself, manifested within the transaction, and are contingent upon a host of developed skills (language games) and uniquely occurring elements. Many of these skills are 'hidden' phenomena within the relationship. Wittgenstein notes,

the aspects of things that are most important for us are hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity. (One is unable to notice something—because it is always before one's eyes.) The real foundations of his inquiry do not strike a man at all. Unless that fact has at some time struck him.—And this means: we fail to be struck by what, once seen, is most striking and most powerful.

Concerning such 'hidden' 'foundations' (of 'reason') of which Wittgenstein wrote, Kerr points to a "natural order that pervades and sustains our culture," a relatedness to the world which underlies all human 'perception', 'cognitive construction', 'knowledge' and 'interest'. For him any concept of reason (understood as 'causal' relatedness) as other than or separable from the whole of active human relatedness to the world is the illusion of the idealist, who is

for Wittgenstein, the man who has to have a reason for accepting the existence even of his own hands. All that we do and say has to rest upon some assumption or hypothesis, some

53 Wittgenstein (1953), p.50e.
view or belief, or more generally, some web of beliefs. Our relation to the world, on this account, is essentially cognitive. What is primary and foundational, according to Wittgenstein, is, however, neither ideas nor beliefs nor any other class of mental events, but human beings in a multiplicity of transactions with one another. Therefore, if Wittgenstein and Kerr are right, and I believe in this respect they are, then the intrasystematic order of adequacy becomes incomplete and immediately distorted when it is cognitively differentiated in any way from the full dynamic of the interaction. The temptation by some postliberals to bifurcate first- and second-order language games within various forms of discourse comes from the failure to realize the holistic unity of the ‘conceptual’ and ‘experiential’ within meaning and the desire to create and control our own continuity of relations. We are tempted to devise two levels within meaning (discourse and experience) when that which is most fundamental, most powerful, and most important becomes lost from view, tacit within our ‘reasonings.’ This is like the fish in respect to water, who, oblivious to the existence of water, never ceases to experience the force and presence of this basic phenomenon. We cannot separate these phenomena within the irreducibility of meaning and relationship. Our expressions and actions toward one another are developed complexities of synthesized experiences which are socially organized into whole acts of meaningful communication or more correctly, relational interactions. Such countless elements and complexities lie inherent within all communications. It would be tragic to segregate various aspects of language (e.g., ‘explanatory’, ‘rational’, ‘empirical’, or ‘observable’) for theological use as a language game itself functionally distinct from the faith practice it attempts to explain or provide reasoning for, as Murphy and Thiemann have done. All language contains all sorts of ‘unseen phenomena’, and in this respect faith, which inhabits or vitiates our ‘theological’ expressions. Nevertheless, the whole movement within human transactions is all there (nothing lies outside the transaction itself), in other words, in this respect, there is never just a shared or communicated ‘belief’. There is more, there is a shared or communicated believing. In a Kierkegaardian manner, one does not refer to a God as much as the whole transaction communicating one’s own believing in a God, then refers to a God.

Wittgenstein and rational criteria

The pertinent Wittgensteinian principle for this discussion is not to assume that the unseen phenomena are any less real or ultimately less verifiable than what is considered ‘empirical’ within the personal or social constructions of reason. Furthermore, we must acknowledge the complexity of every transaction in its struggle for unitive alignment and understanding amid the unique unseen phenomena of each one’s specific language

55 Ibid., p.119 (my emphasis).
56 As the old philosopher said, “I don’t know who discovered water, but I’m certain it wasn’t a fish.”
57 For example in CUP, Kierkegaard sharply emphasizes the how of belief over the what of belief, i.e. it is not the word that refers, but the entire action of one’s belief that refers.
development. Though they are ‘unseen’, there are many “living” forces implicit and tacit within the existing transaction. Therefore, we must resist the temptation that we are methodologically able to designate clear rational constructions or ‘intrasystematic’ notions of criteria away from such ‘marginalized’ aspects of the phenomena. To this extent, theology becomes detached from the fullness of the transaction or relationship. 58

The deep structure of theological knowledge appears when we consider the early theologizing and later reversals of many academically successful theologians (e.g., pre-1914 Karl Barth, early John Hick, or early Eta Linnemann). The radical and sometimes almost instant theological reversals powerfully suggest that these theologian’s earlier ‘theological’ structures were insufficiently developed within the full wealth of what was convictional in their experience and therefore ‘theology’, simply because the reversals as stated were not motivated through ‘theological discourse’. 59 More fundamental aspects within the ‘theologically unseen’ sociological and interpersonal world of transactions motivated these particular radical gestalt shifts.

Whether any religious considerations are commensurate with Wittgenstein’s notion of the natural phenomena of relations is irrelevant; the structure of Wittgenstein’s thinking is that the more “important” and more “powerful” phenomena within human relations are tacitly or unconsciously most effective, and therefore, recessively implicit within our ‘reasoning’. Wittgenstein, for example, generally considers the greater pretension of ‘reason’ and moral absolutes as the hidden phenomena of the will to power. 60 These radical ‘theological’ shifts, however, reveal that their earlier ratiocination and ‘internal coherence’ were methodologically flawed and subsequently subverted by non-‘theological’ phenomena. Their former theologies had become reductions separated from the full wealth of experience and human relations. We cannot wean theology proper in any way from the total ‘discipline’ of human religious experience without bastardizing it.

In a similarly manner my argument here is likewise consonant with Ricoeur’s conviction that more lies within the actor or discipline’s language and action than the focal intention of the author. Clayton informs us, “Ricoeur denies that ascertaining what the

58 Similarly, the Marxist critique is here relevant: “One of the most difficult tasks confronting philosophers is to descend from the world of thought to the actual world.” “The philosophers have only to dissolve their language into the ordinary language, form which it is abstracted, in order to recognize it as the distorted language of the actual world, and to realize that neither thoughts nor language in themselves form a realm of their own, that they are only manifestations of actual life.” From K. Marx and F. Engels, Collected Works, v.5 (London: Lawrence & Wishart 1976), pp.446,447
59 If certain ‘extra-theological’ data (German theologians supporting the war policy of Wilhelm II) create a violent shift in one’s theological position; then that former position was never merely ‘theological’. Barth’s primal ‘unseen’ theological convictions had never changed; he knew the minute he was informed about his former mentors that there was something seriously wrong with their theology. Barth (1960), p.14.
actors meant by their actions is all we aim for in trying to understand them.” The intended meaning is not the whole story we engage. “Explanations in social science [as well as theology] need not be tied to the self-understandings of the agents involved.”61 In this respect, we can never exclusively constitute meaning solely by or within ourselves or solely within the author, but by and within the immediate relationship and transaction. This also implies that more is in the text than what the author focally intends within the immediate relationship of their writing or speaking, simply because of the infinite algorithms of meaning which emerge within each new reading.62 A reader from outside the immediate community might later learn things from the text that explicitly eluded the original author yet those things were implicitly tacit within the author’s tacit awareness. Each new relationship (reading) creates the possibility and necessity of specifically appropriate knowledge and meaning.63 Moreover, in this respect, Barth is right when he says that every significant theological author of the past is ‘alive’ within the current conversation.64 Each new progressive relationship (communitative reading) draws out more of what was formerly tacit within the author’s ‘intended’ (focal) meaning. In this respect, authors and texts may experience revolving historical episodes of honor and villainization.

62 Yes, there is an intended meaning in the author, but it specifically dies with the moment of writing to be constantly resurrected and incarnated with each new reading, each new relationship. Because of the infinite algorithms of potential interactions from each new relationship, new meaning constantly arises in an act of phronesis and yet never conflicts with the infinite possibilities of former and other felicitous readings, even when the perceived and evolving ‘intent’ has long since left the original focal meaning and situation of the author.
63 For example: [please allow me this play] A classic written by an old fish was read centuries later by flying fish who had since developed focal awareness and knowledge of water (because they discovered air—différance—and thus water). The flyers, nevertheless, still learned much about water from the old one’s writings simply because the logic of water played an obvious though tacit role in the author’s experience and narrative. Though he had no focal knowledge of water, nor was it properly within the sensus literalis of his text, it was, nevertheless, within his tacit and practical experience, which backgrounds his focal awareness and knowledge. If, however, we object by claiming that the tacit is indeed implicit within the sensus literalis, and that we, the flyers, have felicitous connection with that sensus literalis (compositus), then what are we to say of the future fuller interpretations of the ‘walkers’ in relation to the flyer’s meaning? What is the literal sense—the authorial intention—when a thousand various cultures in one age of humanity might exegete the Scriptures with a thousand slightly different ‘literal’ meanings, all of them potentially right, all of them potentially implicit within the original communicational occurrence, and none conflicting? In this sense, if all of what was ‘literally’ contained within the authorial intent of Scriptures ‘were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written’. Cf. also Marion (1991), p. 156. This in no way negates the possibility of wrong interpretation, nor that the author is without distinct intent, merely that we must recognize “the task in infinite.” The latter minor citation from Schleiermacher (1977), p. 246, n. 12.
64 Barth (1972).
The unseen universal: the bifurcation of human meaning leads to the loss of the universal component within human experience and theological criteria.

According to Kerr, Wittgenstein thinks it is illusory to consider truth as established simply by *reasoned causal connections* and a networking web of interconnected or reasoned beliefs. It is an irreducible quality of the whole 'transaction with one another'. In this manner intrasystematic truth claims must give way to the precedence of meaning itself. All grammar, whether seen or unseen, is performative, and in this respect, only separable as either focal or tacit (seen and unseen) *aspects* of a greater performative or relational usage.

Regardless of what one may conclude concerning Wittgenstein’s theological usefulness, his imperative to recognize the simple *phenomena* underneath the ‘metaphysical’ determinations is critical. Therefore, we must strive to identify and include as much as possible of such unseen common grammar within the theological explanatory equation and act of theological interaction. Moreover, we must never establish such phenomena as conclusive sets of criteria; rather they must remain open ended, open ever again for plural employment and deeper revision. Likewise, any ‘Wittgensteinian’ critique of the method supported by this study, with its implementation of Murphy’s concerns for the *appropriate* necessity and function of the explanatory and rational capacity, fails to acknowledge the attempts herewith to legitimate Wittgenstein’s insistence upon *difference*.  

Returning again to the unitary (yet dipolar) structure of meaning, I shall argue that all intrasystematic adequacy or reasoning as such ultimately falls into intrasystematic paradox (Quine’s notion of antinomical paradox66) which, in itself, is not ‘coherent’ or ‘reasonable’. Furthermore, with J. Wentzel van Huyssteen, I believe Murphy’s positive heuristic of public ‘observability’ and notion of the “criterion of empirical progress,”67 as she defines it, reveals a ‘cryptic foundationalism’ of a late modern character despite her noted intentions otherwise.68 I level this same indictment full force at Thiemann, but *not* at Lindbeck.69

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65 Wittgenstein reported to his friend M. O’C. Drury he considered using as a motto for *Investigations* what he remembered as a quotation from King Lear—“I’ll teach you differences.” In Ludwig Wittgenstein: *The Man and His Philosophy*, ed. K. T. Fann (New York, Dell 1967), p.69. In the end, he used the motto from Nestroy. Fergus Kerr suggests this was probably due to the eventuality that the quote was ‘misremembered’ from *King Lear*, and he was forced to abandon the intention (from private conversation with Fergus Kerr). In a theologically lucid attempt, Colin Gunton’s *The One, The Three, and The Many* similarly emphasizes the necessity and possibility of *difference*, and argues this as a relational logic of spirit.


67 Murphy (1990), p.204.


69 Though Murphy speaks as if Lindbeck affirms the functional distinction between intrasystematic and ontological truth statement and practice, she has mistaked his appropriation of such dual-aspect language which he uses in order to engage modern discourse (Lindbeck, p.64-66) for his actual methodological appropriation. Murphy points out that “in Lindbeck’s work . . . the question of truth arises” in the “consistency or coherence of each part of the system with the rest—first-order *propositions*” and “second-order theological and doctrinal *statements*, and *practices* of the
this respect, Lindbeck is fully consonant with the corresponding views of Wittgenstein and John Milbank. The natural sciences are not as critically affected by the more complex personal and relational issues of theology and the human sciences.\textsuperscript{70} These less complex methodological features within the natural sciences, however, become the most prominent and fundamental features within Murphy’s theological implementation of Lakatosian method. Van Huyssteen also cautions whether or not such an implementation can “adequately cope with the broader and more complex problem of meaning as highlighted by the social sciences.”\textsuperscript{71} Clayton’s insightful consideration of Lakatosian method for theological use, however, “mandates the employment in the human sciences [and eventually theology] of methods not applicable in natural science”.\textsuperscript{72} This does not necessitates an evacuation of the Lakatosian scheme, but a more comprehensive and appropriate understanding of how it must be theoretically implemented.

For Lindbeck, there exists a holistic criterion for adjudication between differing cultural-linguistic systems of similar competence through the broad criterion of “performance.” This clearly acknowledges and factors that transcommunal performances between various cultural-linguistic systems are somehow comparable, and therefore, some universal or teleological force within and upon human experience creates or provides the ‘performative’ criterion. By splitting the wholeness within method and privileging the intrasystematic dialectic (‘reason’, \textit{episteme}) Murphy and Thiemann lose touch with the one conclusive indicator we have—desire and the fullness of life*. Nevertheless, though Lindbeck refrains from specifying any \textit{modus significandi} or \textit{universalia}, there is most emphatically for him a universal (non-relativistic) component, which lies inherent within human interactions.\textsuperscript{73}

Later within the chapter I will attempt to consider all communication as both referential and non-referential when properly understood within the relational paradigm of meaning as community” (Murphy, 1990, p.203; my emphasis). Lindbeck argues for “intrasystematic” or “ontological truth” aspects of ‘statements’, ‘propositions’ or ‘practices’, not distinct types of statements or actions (p.64). Lindbeck goes on to say: “Just as grammar by itself affirms nothing either true or false regarding the world in which language is used, but only about language, so theology and doctrine, to the extent that they are second-order activities, assert nothing either true or false about God and his relation to creatures, but only speak about assertions. These assertions, in turn, cannot be made except when speaking religiously, i.e., when seeking to align oneself and others performatively with what one takes to be most important” (69).

\textsuperscript{70} Clayton (1989).

\textsuperscript{71} (1997), p.87.

\textsuperscript{72} (1989), p.73. In his Gifford Lectures (1990), Ian Barbour pointed out this similar understanding of Clayton.

\textsuperscript{73} This is because Lindbeck, (1984), p.134, recognizes and identifies “the ultimate test in this as in other areas is performance,” and refuses to functionally bifurcate the “intrasystematic” and “ontological” aspect of truth statements (p.64) for methodological purposes. Intended or not, he points to a universal operator within the criterion of “performance.”
perichoresis. Nevertheless, the loss of referential language altogether, or the overemphasis of it in reaction to Modernity, ultimately hastens the loss of the self.

2) The inadequacy of separating concept and experience within theological methodology (Murphy): 'observability', episteme and the compromise of holism.

Ronald Thiemann distinguishes between the first-order discourse of faith experience and practice, and second order theological discourse concerning that experience. George Lindbeck speaks of the intrasystematic and ontological truth aspects of statements (note the qualification). Nancey Murphy draws upon these distinctions but, moreover, contends they are functionally distinctive in their theological use, as does Thiemann, but not Lindbeck. Though both Thiemann and Murphy attempt to hold some connection of second-order discourse with first-order faith practice, the distinction is nonetheless maintained. This conflicts with, for example, the direction of Moltmann's theological method, which seeks a more ambitious holism in an attempt to transcend these distinctions. In response to Murphy's brand of epistemological holism, van Huyssteen is convinced she "lacks a well-developed theory of experience."

Murphy basically argues that transcendental or correspondent notions of truth must give way to coherentists methodologies of 'intrasystematic' adequacy or second-order language whose primary criteria is internal coherence. Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger and Derrida, each in their own way, effectively argue that internal 'coherence', in itself, is illusory. Kierkegaard, for example, argues that the truth of any religious knowledge is always objectively paradoxical (ultimately non-coherent). Truth and meaning are to be associated first with the "mode" and felicitous nature of the relationship itself that constitutes the individual. The relationship in which the individual is most fully constituted and of one mind is the one with the greater truth and meaning. Such an understanding suggests that

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74 Refer to the earlier discussion of Moltmann's critique.
75 (1997), p.84. For Murphy's response to van Huyssteen cf. (1988 & 1993). In the latter article she simply accuses him of being only a partial postmodernist and therefore unable to understand postmodernity in its essence (p.335). More importantly, her reasons why she is not a foundationalist and bears no universal criterion of rationality are ultimately unsatisfying in light of van Huyssteen's later cited critiques. As far as I know, she has never answered to the charge that she "lacks a well-developed theory of experience."
76 CUP 178ff. "The objective accent falls on WHAT is said, the subjective accent on HOW it is said. This distinction ... receives definite expression in the principle that what is in itself true may in the mouth of such and such a person become untrue" (181). "But the eternal essential truth is by no means in itself a paradox; but it becomes paradoxical by virtue of its relationship to an existing individual" (183). In this respect [from Training in Christianity], "Truth in its very being is not the duplication of being in terms of thought. . . . For knowing the truth is something which follows as a matter of course from being the truth [and] . . . it becomes untrue when knowing the truth is separated from being the truth" (201).
77 Cf. Kierkegaard, Purity of the Heart is to Will One Thing.
78 "When the question of the truth is raised subjectively, reflection is directed subjectively to the nature of the individual's relationship; if only the mode of this relationship is in the truth, the
truth is a quality of the relationship itself, which incorporates but is not reducible to the factors of coherence, reason, communitive consensus, progress, and nature of experience.

This course of action suggested by Kierkegaard, however, does not completely set aside the project of modernity which I believe echoes quite resoundingly in the thinking of Murphy and Thiemann, but suggests its completion or proper institution within a more adequate paradigm of meaning construction. Human meaning ultimately finds no complete rest in the subject of late-modernity, or in the postmodern irreducibility of community. It was the powerfully stated project of Kierkegaard which halted the arrogance of the reified System, and the biting critique of Derrida and others today, which stand in irony against the 'rational' and will to power endemic within the pretense of internal coherence alone. The nonrational given of a tradition and the internal coherence of the intrasystematic (closed system) soon degenerate into the irrational (internally incoherent) before the feet of such deconstructionists who use each system's own 'internal logic' to mock it. Nevertheless, the aspect of 'internal coherence' is useful and necessary within any methodology as a valuable criterion of conceptual adequacy within true holism, but as a conceptually isolated criterion, it becomes disintegrative.

Conceptual coherence cannot be a theological factor outside its existential integration with experience into meaning. In other words, holism cannot be merely 'conceptual'; it must be, rather, the whole of the person in existence (relationship). Otherwise, we fall back into the excesses of Modernity. A truly pragmatic program of research should emerge from the whole of experience, and the whole of all human experience contains universal aspects of what it is to experience as human. (In later chapters we will consider developmentalist attempts to isolate some of those universal structures and dynamics fundamental to being human.) Mere 'conceptual progress' and 'novel fact (facere) cannot judge relational adequacy (though these are certainly necessary aspects). The conceptual and the experiential together create an irreducible holistic performative meaning—and with it a level of fullness in life. This irreducible value (meaning itself) reflects the quality and level of relationship, what will later be explained as the degree of perichoresis experienced within relationships. It is the basic intent of Murphy, and Lindbeck for example, to acknowledge this more holistic aesthetic quality within theory development and assessment. Murphy's hard core and overall program, however, entails a treatment of theory as interrelated beliefs which

individual is in the truth even if he should happen to be thus related to what is not true (CUP 178)," i.e., contrary to the notion that “truth is understanding [and] knowledge, ... in primitive Christianity all expressions were constructed with a view to truth as a form of being” (TC 202). This mode was the ongoing relational openness needed in order to be constituted felicitously in existential relations to the other. Because humans know in existence only in part, truth is never the objects representation, but the degree of felicitous relations the individual has with the object, even if that immediate knowing of the object is not as full 'perspective' as the next individual. Again, Christ is invariant, never ourselves or our conceptual understanding of Him.
emphasize episteme (scientific or theoretical knowledge) and techne (skillful knowledge) in relative exclusion to what Gadamer includes as phronesis—knowledge that guides practical human activity, in other words, a kind of insight into what is right in a given situation or action. \(^{79}\) Ironically Murphy, a conceptual pragmatist, \(^{80}\) only minimally attains any degree of phronesis (practical knowledge in application) because of her functional distinction between the conceptual and experiential, and her failure to forward an adequate theory of experience. She, in effect, subordinates experience to knowledge (episteme/techne) within theological discourse. This critique is also consonant with Paul Feyerabend’s, and others, criticism that Lakatos and all current trends in philosophy of science still remain within a rationalist tradition which has been alienated from the whole of practical life. \(^{81}\)

**Holism compromised?**

Is there not something in the experience of the community’s faith experience, which interpenetrates all theory in a manner that defies the distillation of theological discourse from the communitive faith experience? The use of core belief, and belief in general, as only or primarily episteme and techne is what draws immediate concern. In all actuality it seems, at this point, Murphy’s offering of an epistemological holism falls short of what is needed in a truly holistic theology which necessitates, as in Moltmann, that all knowledge be inextricably rooted in experience and application. In a similar critique of Murphy, according to van Huyssteen,

> a holistic epistemology implies more than communal discernment and communal consensus for contemporary theological reflection: it also demands a broader intersubjective coherence that goes beyond the parameters of the experience and reflection of the believing community. . . . The very distinction between “hard core beliefs” and others that can be regarded as auxiliary hypotheses within an attempt at a holistic postmodern theology invariably raises the spectre of a Plantiganian, weak form of foundationalism. \(^{82}\)

Because of the nature of theological knowledge (knowledge of a God who is the all-determining reality), the theological hard core must be more than a ‘belief’. In theology, the hard core would necessitate an experiencing of the immanent-transcendent analogical forces both given and gift, natural and revealed, which come to bear upon the individual in relation to a disclosing God. If our theological discourse is to be meaningful, this aspect of the divine-human relation must be inclusively active within such discourse and reflection. Therefore, within the Lakatosian research program we cannot segregate functionally or technically the theological core from sustaining aspects of experience within the communitive faith experience.

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\(^{80}\) Murphy (1993), p.351.

\(^{81}\) Feyerabend (1975); Kulka (1977); and Suppe (1977), p.659-70.

The problem of Murphy’s functional bifurcation results in part from her superimposition of the Quinian web of beliefs (with its outer circle of experience, intermittent content of networking beliefs, and an inner core of consecrated beliefs) upon the Lakatosian model. This effectively divorces the full wealth of experience from the Lakatosian hard core of the research project. As she says, a theological hard core should be a “judgment” concerning what “Christianity is basically all about.” However, are authentic judgments ever mere conceptualizations, theories and knowledge, which take place in the person without the person re-constituting either imaginatively, in practice, or in dialogue the primary experience about which the judgment is being made? I think not, but how does that immediate ‘theological’ experience take place in relation to the former faith experiencing of the community? God must be experientially active within the experience (analogia spiritus).

Again, Murphy’s conviction that knowledge develops either ‘outside-in’ or ‘inside-out’ should warrant our caution, especially in theological discourse. In relation to Quine’s notion of outer experience and inward a priori established core beliefs that are untouchables by experience, she has established only these two options, of which she favors ‘outside-in’. Therefore, a belt of auxiliary hypothesis and outer beliefs that are closer to experience protects inner core beliefs, but they (the core beliefs) are not directly verifiable by any form of experience. In agreement with van Huyssteen, I believe this emphasis on ‘beliefs’ alone within the hard core of a theological research program is tantamount to foundationalism (which is not strictly the case in the natural sciences). However, within the holistic dipolar-aspect understanding of human meaning presented within this thesis (concept + experience), I wish to argue with Kierkegaard that knowledge is developed and maintained both ‘outside-in’ and ‘inside-out’. If spirit* is that holistic configurative activity of both divine and human existence, which constitutes every relationship, then the Lakatosian program as implemented by Murphy for theological use must be adjusted. Theological knowledge and theory associated with the hard core must be existentially constituted upon the active immanent-transcendent interaction of human spirit and divine Spirit as well as one’s contextual and relative moorings. Experience shapes this configurative process both a) through the ‘outside’ world of sensory, cultural, linguistic structures already familiar to the individual, and b) through the ‘inward’ disposition of the self analogically and holistically

84 This is equivalent to Linda Zagzebski’s characterizing the current and primary controversy of epistemological studies as divided between the internalist and the externalist theories of knowledge. Virtues of the Mind (1996).
85 We shall later discuss the consonant Kierkegaardian categories that humans are a synthesis of both time and eternity, the finite and the infinite.
86 As has been briefly argued and will be discussed later in more detail, knowledge of God unlike knowledge of the natural sciences entail the study of something whose nature exceeds the capacity of human ability to know it without the configurative and transformative action of God’s self-disclosure.
thrust into *analogia spiritus*, which is organized by an individual’s established relational sedimentation* and style, and a culture’s developed mode (or ‘mood’) of wholly being-in-relation. For Kierkegaard, this latter dimension of holistic relating potentially takes place in relation to the Eternal*. Any explicit attempt to express the incursion of the Eternal into history must be existentially constituted in the immediate relationship with others and to the Eternal. As we shall see in the penultimate chapter, there are ways to theorize how Eternal and relative forces can affect each other; and that the Eternal can reciprocatively enter our process of conceptualization and human meaning (history). Such a dynamic, however, must always remain the property of the immediate relationship.

William Stoeger remarks that the “extraordinary and pervasive relationship of creatures with the divine, in which we ourselves participate, occurs at the very core of our beings and is hidden from our eyes.”

87 This is not to negate the specific personal aspect of one’s relationship to God. Therefore, the hard core of a research program must contain a more holistic experiential contingency than that for which a social conceptual pragmatism (structured *episteme* and *techne*) or a reliabilist theory can account. *Analogia spiritus* and the experiencing of the numinal not only happens from ‘inside-out’ correlationally* configuring data from the ‘outside-in’ into personal and socially meaningful and revelatory relations with God, it is active as such only to the extent the person is desirous of open and full relations with the world and God (authentic relations).

3) The criterion of progress and the unseen universal component

In Murphy and Lakatos internal progress ultimately becomes the criterion for adjudicating between intercommunal systems of thought. Murphy uses Alasdair MacIntyre’s argument that an authority internal to the tradition, endemic only within the tradition (socially), maintains its own integrity. This moves the authority from within the individual to the community, shifting the issue from the subjective to the intersubjective. Either way, this alone helps little in developing a method for positively comparing and associating various claims between differing traditions, let alone explaining how intrasystematic change is properly assessed. MacIntyre, in his Gifford lectures, argues that seemingly incommensurate traditions are comparable in their respective abilities to transcend internal epistemological crises, in other words, each tradition bears the possibility through time that an internal crisis will render itself impotent in its explanatory power. This however, is a

87 Stoeger (Russell 1996), p.252 (my emphasis).
88 The former creates the possibility of the latter.
90 Murphy adopts MacIntyre’s thesis that between disparate and incommensurable traditions “one party can emerge as undoubtedly rationally superior. . . . A tradition fails on its own terms when a solution to an epistemological crisis cannot be found . . . that measures up to the tradition’s own internal standards of rationality.” (1996), p.106f.
negative account of human epistemic development (assessment by default), which is similar to entropy, the second law of thermodynamics, in other words, who can stave off the unsettling character of the world's disclosure and development (an open system) upon their respective epistemic structures (a closed system) the longest. Such theories ultimately fail to supply an adequate positive heuristic of why the world continues to produce irreducible emergent properties and developmental progression to higher states of organization (in epistemic or pragmatic structures).

The problem of theorizing any such positive heuristic in the absence of "self-evident non-inferentials" upon which to establish knowledge arises because Murphy and MacIntyre infer all aspects of knowledge and understanding are theory dependent. Basing our knowledge and understanding upon completely self-evident non-inferentials which are in direct correspondence with concept-independent reality is, indeed, dubious. That every aspect and dynamic, however, that constitutes human understanding and meaning is "relative" or inferential to each particular human situation is just as dubious. Knowledge, understanding and meaning may indeed be contextually relative, but these are constituted from the human situation which I believe bears at least one universal aspect or dynamic regardless of context.

Universals and 'fruitfulness'

One of the Lakatosian terms for progress is 'fruitfulness', which generally means the coherent extension of an explanatory capacity into a fuller experience of the world. If indeed progress is inherently a criterion within all traditions, are we not then implying a universal dynamic and criterion within the notion of 'fruitfulness'? This must of course be a universal dynamic within the holistic character and dynamic of human relationship, one which must inevitably be tied to meaning itself.

Lindbeck within the cultural-linguistic hermeneutical approach recognizes no immediate intelligible rationales by which intersystematic dialogue can authentically transpire. As noted, however, there is an implicit methodological acknowledgment and retention of universal aspects within his understanding of human existence as a whole. Similarly, as a conceptual pragmatist Murphy (in association with Thiemann and MacIntyre) argues "we can still make transcommunal judgments about the relative epistemic worth of competing explanations,"92 based upon their respective "progress." She too, like Lindbeck, refrains from naming universalia, yet unlike Lindbeck, she proffers a methodological program of epistemological rationality by which she believes we can valuatively contrast "transcommunal judgments." Such a program cryptically relies on universal forces or elements in human existence, which ultimately adjudicates and establishes such judgments:

‘somehow I know my progress is greater than yours.’ In this respect, the epistemic incommensurability must obviously be an aspect of an even greater commensurable reality (relation), and likewise only has meaning, any meaning, in direct relation to that reality. This suggests an ‘analogy of wholes’ active within any such adjudicating procedures, whether or not one fails to acknowledge or understand it.

It is not yet clear within such a method how we can justify comparisons between one system’s internal fruitfulness with that of another. Might not Murphy’s notion of successful epistemological development be another system’s notion of failure? *Why is explanatory proliferation to be desired* over the simple sustaining of wonder (Wittgenstein’s ‘rain dance’), or the child’s innocent and perennial wonder which seems to dissipate with each explanation received? Any attempt to answer why human flourishing must seek explanatory expansion or progress infers indubitable first principles, characterizes human existence as a whole, and therefore, immediately plants the seeds of metaphysics. Mere epistemic rationality alone could be a sign of industry or the will to power rather than a signification of truthfulness. Murphy holds to the incommensurability of intrasystematic systems and yet with MacIntyre argues their assessability transcommunally through a criterion of progress. One questions at this point how she can leverage the utilization of progress within cultural and religious spheres. Here Murphy’s program struggles with internal incoherence. The methodological bifurcation of the intrasystematic from the ontological aspect of human existence leaves her with no criteria to make the adjudicating leap between the various transcommunal notions of progress, yet she makes it anyway. Even if we merely reduce progress to a tradition’s survival, we have named an ontological factor—survival.

We must still admit that most traditions willingly die or refuse to resurrect because of the presence of, or an evolving into, another tradition (contrast). In other words, there is always the presence of an adjudicating *universalia within our interactions, our contrasting, our relating of any two things*. In this respect, we will later entertain the possibility of a universal dynamic that exists within the dynamic of interaction itself. One tradition dies (never to be resurrected) always because another in contrast simply provides greater *fullness of life*. Nevertheless, her method here again begins to reflect the character of Modernity as she transcommunally *imposes* her intrasystematic notion of ‘progress’.

How do we rationally arrive at the meaning of “charity,” “gladness,” “hunger for virtue,” and “humility?” Are any of these criteria not constantly born of ‘self-evident’ relational (social) use and performance within the individual’s reflections and communitive transactions? *What Murphy first criticized as unstable within the ‘self-evidencing’ dynamic of the individual, has in effect, merely become what we know to be the instability of the ‘community-evidencing’ dynamic of the community.* The non-inferentials of the individual simply succumb to the non-inferentials of the community. The community, rather than the
individual, now decides what to prejudice as ‘observable’. French Poststructuralism, notwithstanding, Nazi Germany effectively cautions the value of such theorizing when it is simply left as such.

In the end, to have any notion of progress and fruitfulness, which my thesis heartily supports, implies the existence of ontological or teleological universals active within the whole of human existence. In Hefner (as well as Pannenberg), the concept of the empirical is more inclusive and holistic. Hefner disagrees with those who deny that universal statements concerning human beings are possible. So-called postmodern perspectives, including relativistic or cultural-linguistic hermeneutic approaches to local communities, refuse to engage in discussion of cross-cultural, universal ideas. To this objection, I argue that the denial of universals is itself an example of a careless universal statement.93

Conversely, Murphy has critically asked, if a universal human experience that serves as the ground of theology does not (necessarily or generally) involve the empirical claim that there is an experience phenomenologically the same in all cultures and traditions, ... [then] how can one know with the requisite foundational certainty that there is such a universal grounding beneath the varied manifestations or religious sensibilities?94 Whether one like David Tracy, Paul Ricoeur or Hefner would be satisfied with the question as stated is a moot point. The answer to her question of how we can “know with the requisite foundational certainty that there is such a grounding” is her own notion of progress, and the desire for progress, in other words for the same reason she, with Lakatos and Lindbeck, believes that progress and performance ultimately factor in some way as a criteria in cultural evolution and intercommunal adjudication. Furthermore, ‘fruitfulness’ is a criterion with a teleological component even if that component is mysteriously open-ended. Whether negatively or positively assessed this implies that a universal component of some sort is as active within all human and cultural development; the naming of which is irrelevant, the empirical reality of which, indirectly according to Murphy and Lakatos would seem, irrefutable.

4) Lack of epistemic humility and intellectual virtue

Any discursive methodology which includes instituting a specifically ‘epistemological’ holism, the incommensurability of various communicative discourses, an intercommunal criterion of internal progress, and yet remains reticent in attempting to theorize why such progress and program growth can be comparable, has in no uncertain terms fallen into epistemic arrogance.95 Such methodological structuring refuses to consider the possibility of

95 Thiselton tells us, “If each competing group, class, ethnic tradition, gender, guild, or party produces its own internal criteria of supposed rationality in order to serve its own power-interests, rational debate collapses not only into mere rhetoric, but soon also into accusation, blame, corporate self-righteousness and conflict.” (1995), p.134. Though I choose the word ‘arrogance’ because is implies
authentic transformative relationships between disparate traditions, and that the reason for such limited historical success has to do with wholesale epistemological entrenchment. This entrenchment is immediately noticeable in the reticence of such methodologically framed traditions to enter the struggle of transcommunal relations in an effort to learn and expand their own epistemic horizons. Murphy's method fails to account seriously for the personal factor of relational closedness—the unwillingness to seek or account for common ground, and engage the other. I believe the suppression of such activity is ultimately the primary cause of sustained disagreement and 'incommensurability' within theological and interdisciplinary dialogue.

Scripture warns us that the quality of our personal relation to God is equivalent to the quality of our relationship with others. Until the cautions of Kierkegaard, the development of Enlightenment epistemic virtue was minimal. There was little methodological concern given to the character of one's epistemic posturing, and the need for a willingness to be reconstituted fully within authentic relationships. Such willingness, on the other hand, in no way obligates blind subservience to the 'other'; rather, it targets a refusal to enter fully into the relationship—the open engagement of well-intended others or data proffered in corresponding epistemic humility. The growing amount of literature concerned with this issue in epistemological and methodological discussions corroborates this charge. Linda Zagzebski and others have effectively argued that in virtue theory “the primary object of evaluation is persons rather than acts.”

Justified beliefs are like right acts. Intellectual virtues, on the other hand, is a quality of persons which I believe cannot be reduced to a disposition to have justified beliefs any more than moral virtue can be reduced to a disposition to perform right acts. ... knowledge is true belief arising from acts of intellectual virtue.

This places Zagzebski in contrast to Murphy. If we understand the constituting dynamic of persons as relationship, Zagzebski's general position is admirable. Though virtuous quality in a person cannot be reduced to “a disposition” to have “justified belief” or “perform right acts,” I suggest virtue can be reduced to a disposition or willingness to be constituted wholly within authentic relationship. If we consider the dynamic of relationship as fundamental, appropriate understandings of both persons and beliefs/acts become qualitative valuations of a willful disposition that has most often becomes a subconscious sediment within our epistemic posture, I likewise suggest that this is a quality of relations that none completely escape.

86 Given that humanity has only been able to communicate and travel in mass over the last fifty years, the necessity for cross-cultural dialogue, adjudication and tolerance has just recently begun to emerge in earnest.

87 1John, passim; cf. also Bonhoeffer (1963), p.48: "Man's whole spirituality becomes evident only along with others: the essence of spirit is that the self is through being in the other."

88 L. Zagzebski, Virtues of the Mind; and J. Montmarquet, Epistemic Virtue and Doxastic Responsibility, to name a few.

relationships accordingly. Though specific development in this direction is not feasible within this thesis, the primary point is that intellectual virtue must become an explicit methodological factor, especially in theology.

Inappropriate relational aspects affecting theological research are many: overdetermined* unwillingness by another to disclose self, malicious attempts to control or instrumentalize knowledge for ulterior motives. Moltmann insists authentic relationships of any kind necessitate a degree of “risk” and even “suffering.” We authentically relate when we are willing to traverse the internal disruption and struggle within our own lives, and take on the epistemic risk and effort of reconfiguration, which is necessary to engage authentic relations.

In order to see how critical it is to give precedence of virtue as persons (relations) over virtue as actions (relations) let me further develop upon an example of Linda Zagzebski. She presents the example of a nosey woman who snoops on her neighbor out of sexual envy. When she spies an unknown man leaving the neighbor’s house she will tend to jump to conclusions prematurely, assuming that the neighbor is sexually involved with him. Just as with an epistemically prideful scholar, she compromises her fact gathering reliability and development of hypothesis. Zagzebski concludes that “beliefs formed out of vices are not reliable,” and though they may fit well within the individual or community’s web of beliefs, “each of them will go wrong somewhere in his doxastic structure, even if he is epistemically successful in the particular case.” In other words, the woman may have witnessed just “enough evidence to be able reasonably to” believe she was sexually involved. In fact, even after the woman has admitted to adultery, can we confirm the neighbor’s claim to correct knowledge considering the doxastic structuring of her knowing? In light of how the neighbor now knows the ‘truth’, does she in fact know the truth? A friend and counselor of the woman, on the other hand, may literally weep over the woman’s failure to develop a meaningful enough relationship with her husband. For the counselor adultery is a desperate and feeble attempt to reach for authentic connection instead of risking the acknowledgement and marital disruption it takes to obtain it. The neighbor understands the adulterous act as evil in light of her own ‘goodness’ which is vitiated with unconscious sexual envy. The counselor sees the act as a desperate longing for intimate connection with another and either ignorant or evil in its refusal to appropriate the necessary changes to destabilize the existing

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* By overdetermined I mean the necessary penetration into the developed relational patterns within each individual, much of which is condoned by culture in various social contracts, and the appropriate exposing of destructive behavior that is limiting our entrance into the fuller life relations we all desire (Lk 12:49-53). Dan Allender tells us that “bold love will unnerve, offend, hurt, disturb, and compel the one who is loved to deal with the internal disease that is robbing him and others of joy.” (1992), p.208.
marital quagmire needed to transform the individuals and marriage accordingly. The ignorance or evilness of the act is indicated by the willingness of the person to transform in authentic relationship. The point being, the 'act of adultery' does not mean the same thing to either observer. Can we say the neighbor has correctly assessed the truth of the situation? Moreover, could her knowledge of adultery, without the removal of her sexual envy, ever be doxastically felicitous? When the neighbor says the woman is an adulterer she is wrong in contrast to the counselor's knowledge. The woman is something, but she is not what the neighbor thinks. The meaning, the act, the pejorative concept of 'adultery' for the neighbor is incongruous with the full reality of the woman.

Murphy, holism, and supervenience: theological adjustment

Recently, the subject of holism has arisen in a variety of ways within most forms of discourse. Philosophy has instituted the concept of supervenience* in its struggle to express the top-down causality and transfer of information between seemingly disparate levels of interacting dynamics within systems.103 For example, in the mind's supervenient relation to the body, we are able to assume that the supervenient properties and qualities depend upon the activity of the mind. Murphy's interest in this dynamic is an attempt to express a fuller holism than merely epistemological holism. For her, this dynamic—"that whole systems and their parts mutually condition one another"104—alludes to but does not completely express the dynamic quality of perichoresis as developed within this study. As a philosopher of science and philosophical theologian, Murphy uses this dynamic to expand her causal structuring.

I agree with her philosophical conviction that higher level organizations are supervenient over lower level systems. Only the logic within the higher level(s) can fully explain the lower level logic of an activity. This means that there is a "surplus of meaning in the higher-level terms, relating to context, to larger causal systems, that cannot be captured by means of the lower-level language."105 In this respect, she begins to clear space for the development of theological integration into the various natural and human sciences.

However, I wish to emphasize, in addition to Murphy, that perichoretically the logic of the higher level is implicitly active and, in the case of humanity, experientially resident within the lower level logic and activity (as in God to humanity). For example, I would imagine most forms of fish have no explicit or focal consciousness of water. They do experience water and its experiential play within the internal logic (action) of their relations, however, water as humans know it is a higher level order of 'knowledge' and experience

103 Antony Flew tells us that supervenient characteristics are "properties or qualities that depend on some other property or quality." A Dictionary of Philosophy (1985), p.345.
which is superveniently present within the lower level logic of the fish’s thought and action. Murphy herself theorizes\textsuperscript{106} that personal consciousness and action (human or divine) are probable factors and contingencies that superveniently effect the physical through quantum level indeterminacy. In this same respect, the higher level of mental consciousness in human nature is supervenient to the lower level ‘biological’ functions of bodily movement. In other words, even the logic \textit{within} the lower level systems displays an unexplained indeterminacy, an incompleteness (which in the reductionist discourse of physics includes quantum dynamics). It is the conviction of Murphy and others that this indeterminacy plays an important role as the causal nexus of the higher level \textit{within} the lower. As T. F. Torrance alludes, the closed logic of any lower level system is either incomplete or indeterminate, and ultimately incoherent within its formal logic.\textsuperscript{107} And, though the higher system and logic always has asymmetrical influence, any ‘closed’ inquiry through a lower system and logic will reveal indeterminate points within itself which refer to the higher system logic implicitly resident \textit{within} its own lower structuring experience. Therefore, a full methodological discussion in theology must seek to understand how the higher-level relational logic of God integrates into the lower-level logic of faith and theology proper.

If God relates in any way with humanity, then we might expect human existence (and knowledge) would take shape in some relation to God’s supervenience and higher logic. We must attempt to explore how the higher-level logic relates within the lower-level logics in our search for theological criteria.\textsuperscript{108} That which creates the possibility of the whole to be greater than the sum of the parts is what must be ventured (verily, experienced, in theology). As already defined, this is experiencing as spirit, holistically in both human according to human nature, and divine to divine nature. Furthermore, its logic must be inherent within all structures of knowledge and human experience, and likewise, it must be a dynamic with unifying and organizing qualities, as well as, instantiating difference.

This temporarily ends our assessment of Murphy’s theological method, to which we will later return, and brings us to the more radical trajectory of the social constructivist theory of human development. In transition, I would like to reassert that as humans we desire to relate authentically with the Other. As sinners, unwilling to enter the suffering, shame and relational disruption needed for authentic relations, we \textit{all} develop relational patterns which 1) often fantasize or 2) ‘force’ relationship, or 3) entomb to some degree the


\textsuperscript{107} Torrance (1976), pp.179-193.

desire to genuinely relate. This eventually taints the doxastic structure of all our knowledge, and this I believe has ultimately lead many developmentalist into a social relativism.

Social Constructivist theory—‘to relate’

Recently, social constructivist and communication theorists have begun to dislodge the processes formerly understood as happening solely within the Cartesianism ‘psyche’, and furthermore recognize its dependency upon the greater dynamic of relationship itself. As insights in this area grow we are becoming more and more aware that knowledge and meaning are somehow the emergent property of the immediate and specific relationship; in this respect, metaphysics is slowly being pushed toward a relational ontology. I wish briefly to introduce and use this developing literature, which posits relationship as the matrix of reality, in order to present an important aspect of the perichoretic dynamic. These developments present alternative scholarly trajectories in relational theories, which support and argue for aspects inherent within the theory of perichoretic relations.

Developmentalist Kenneth Gergen is convinced that this new literature, which he feels continues the spirit of Wittgenstein, increasingly places the "locus of meaning within the process of interaction itself. That is, individual subjectivity is abandoned as the primary site on which meaning is originated or understanding completely takes place; attention moves from the within to the between." Though he expresses that this genre of literature as yet presents no comprehensive account of how this is fully to be understood, it is becoming increasingly obvious that "the enormously rich language we have for depicting inner states is itself not a product of such [mental] states but of relational coordination. The language does not thus 'depict,' so much as it constructs what we take to be the character of subjectivity." He goes on to say:

109 These categories of inauthentic relations might be represented respectively by 1) those who allow themselves to be perennially overdetermined by the other (e.g., co-dependent wife), 2) those who constantly overdetermine the other (e.g., the solicitation of prostitutes), and 3) individuals who passively suppress the immanent desire for fullness of relations (the ‘passionless’).

110 Gergen tells us: "If we can grant the preeminence of relationship in fostering human intelligibility, we are positioned to reconsider the foundational assumptions within the humanist tradition." Such a thrust attempts "to reconceptualize these concepts in terms of a relational ontology.” From “Social Theory in Context: Relational Humanism.”


112 “When Relationships Generate Realities,” p.4.

113 Ibid., p.6.
Each new form of “saying” is simultaneously a new form of relating, and with potentially different consequences. ... Relying on the work of Vygotsky and Bakhtin, many developmentalists have begun to reconceptualize thought as internal language. On this account, cognitive processes are not the possessions of single individuals so much as their relationships speaking through them. ... We may conceptualize emotions as elements within relational scenarios, actions that gain their intelligibility and necessity from patterns of interchange. Here it is possible to view anger or depression not as a personal event, but as a constituent of a particular relational dance. \[114\]

Meaning itself is realized only within the supplemental action of the other to one’s speech. In this respect, meaning is not constituted within the lone mind or utterance (or text), nor does it technically lie within the speech-act (Searle, Austin); the hermeneutical dynamic and the making of meaning emerge from within the term or unity of the emerging relationship. In fact, citing research on the evolving structure and focus of women’s magazine articles from the 1950s to the 1980s, Gergen notes a move from “taking care of either the relational partner or the self” to a new vision “found in which ‘the relationship’ is created as an object for the readers.”\[115\]

*The individual alone can never “mean” anything.* Without the required supplemental action of another-in-response, the act is reduced to nonsense. This involves two distinct living worlds coming into dialogical contact. “At this moment,” says John Shotter, when a speaker in one world turns from addressing those in another and invites their creative bridging of the gap thus created in their responsive rejoinders, a new world is created between them, with influences from both worlds at work in it. ... The special unity or wholeness that emerges when two or more different worlds, or different “freedoms” (Steiner) meet, exists only in the fleeting moment of their meeting. It is in their sustained focus on, and their articulation of, the details of the present moment, of what occurs in fleeting interactive or dialogical moments—without the need to step out of such moments as if to observe and to describe them from a distance—that is so special in their approach.\[116\]

Unlike the development of Cartesian subjectivism, placing meaning solely within the subjective consciousness, here the point of convergence and meaning is upon an emergent world that is created by the respective dynamics, elements, responses and expectations from which the immediate relationship is constructed. It is as if a whole new creation or mediational background emerges when any two or more persons begin to relate or intend one another.

To Shotter, this displays specific characteristics. The first is that “we cannot not be responsive to each other.”\[117\] The force within us to relate is greater than we can resist. When addressed, we must consider even our effort to ignore as an active response *in relationship*. In normal relations, the listener always assumes an active and dynamic “responsive attitude” toward the speaker. Bakhtin tells us the listener “adopts this

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114 Ibid., p.7.
117 Ibid., p.5.
responsive attitude for the entire duration of the process of listening and understanding.”

On the other side,

[the speaker] does not expect passive understanding that, so to speak, only duplicates his or her own idea in someone else’s mind (as in Saussure’s model of linguistic communication . . . ). Rather, the speaker talks with an expectation of a response, agreement, sympathy, objection, execution, and so forth.

This suggests more of a *relational-responsive* communicative dynamic in contrast to the *representational-referential* Cartesian understanding. In this respect, we are offended when the “response attitude” of the listener is not open and spontaneously and authentically constituted in relation to our speech. “Here,” Bakhtin suggests, “in a component of non-rational impulsiveness—not only tolerated but actually demanded—we find an important way in which the interactional order differs from other kinds of social order.” The speaker expects an open “response attitude,” which does not predetermine or overdetermine the meaning.

Shotter tells us such spontaneous openness in response is “very different from either naturally *caused* activity, or from actions done by individuals for a *reason*. It is activity, so to speak, *distributed* between us; it is *joint action* in the sense that it is action we do as a group, as a collective, as a ‘we’ or an ‘us’.” Though “response attitude” takes place within a particular social background and is a culturally structured activity, the complexity of influences which produce the *entire* communicative activity warrant that such a dynamic of awareness remain open and spontaneous. This demands no foundational ‘reason’ that is not authentically re-constituted from out of the immediate relationship. “The performed act,” says Bakhtin,

concentrates, correlates, and resolves within a unitary and unique and, this time, final context both the sense and the fact, the universal and the individual, the real and the ideal, for everything enters into the composition of its answerable motivation. The performed act constitutes a going out once and for all from within the possibility as such into what is once-occurrent.

Therefore, though the listener’s “response attitude” must be open and spontaneous, the eventual response is not relative among many possibilities. Rather, it is the response, in *that* moment, *all* things considered.

Shotter goes on finally to characterize the *dialogical structure* of this complex active confluence as having a “dynamic, continually changing, oscillating, pulsating character, such that its structure at any one moment is very different from its structure at another.” Bakhtin describes this dialogical structure as constituting us a “plurality of unmerged

119 Ibid., p.69,91.
120 Ibid., p.115.
consciousnesses." Shotter further describes this dialogical dynamic (not necessarily just linguistic) as a pulsation between unity and plurality within the relationship.

It is only in each unique interactive moment, as one individual ceases to address him- or herself to the others and becomes him- or herself an addressee, that a unity is formed. In each uncertain once-occurrent event of Being, in which we encounter others radically different and distinct from ourselves, they call out from us responses which we are incapable of calling out from ourselves. But it is in these moments also, that we are joined with them and present to each other as the distinct individuals we are.

If I begin to read aloud a paper I have been working on to a friend for constructive comment, I never cease to be amazed how poorly it reads in their presence despite the countless hours I might have spent alone on it beforehand. Direct personal relationship constitutes us more intensely and responsibly than when we are merely in relation to our internal social audience. Here, we are caught up into an activity bigger than the sum of each. Something is going on both inside and between us. "Even if I know a given person thoroughly," says Bakhtin, "and I also know myself, I still have to grasp the truth of our interrelationship, the truth of the unitary and unique event that links us and in which we are participants." These descriptions present many of the dynamic characteristics of the perichoretic communicative dynamic, and point to a substantial shift needed in our understanding of how meaning is constructed and transformed within relations. This affects our understanding of both knowledge and methodology.

**Personal reflection and knowledge as relationship**

These theoreticians have suggested, like Piaget before them, that whether soliloquy of personal reflection or active social relations, all human consciousness is constituted in the activity of an immediate relationship. Volosinov tells us:

> Each person’s inner world and thought has its stabilized social audience that comprises the environment in which reasons, motives, values, and so on are fashioned. . . . Orientation of the word toward the addressee has an extremely high significance. In point of fact, word is a two-sided act. It is determined equally by whose word it is and for whom it is meant. . . . Each and every word expresses the ‘one’ in relation to the ‘other’.

In this way, our responsive reason, desire, motive, memory and even personal reflection is never completely ‘our own’. It is a complex momentary juxtaposing of influences from many directions, past, present and future (as desire, expectation and possibility), constituting and conditioning our experience and the relationship according to our own unique character of organizing, but always within the immediate dynamic of relationship. Nevertheless, it is this personal style and manner of how we allow such constituting to take place that presents

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125 "Life Inside", p.7.
126 This transcends even Heidegger’s "attunement" (Gestimmtheit) or "mood" (Stimmung), in (1967), p.311.
us uniquely to the other as the person we are. Likewise, language, experience and even knowledge are relationships, never the sole property of the individual proper (even in soliloquy). They are shapes or forms of the immediate relationship, never completely representing the past, nor demanding universal or literal expectation of its present meaning upon the future.

Convinced of needed change, these social constructivists are suggesting we radically reconfigure metaphysics toward a relational ontology by which human existence is constituted not within the self, but within relationship. In this respect, the relational dynamic itself in someway becomes the primordial ‘essence’.

**Methodological considerations**

Such radical maneuvers, however, have grievous consequences for our consideration of method. “Traditionally,” Shotter suggests,

we have always been concerned with patterns and order, with what is stable and repeatable, with what can be calculated and measured, with understanding things by finding the hidden laws or principles determining their nature. We are quite unused to the idea that the events of importance to us in our investigations, are unique, novel, unmeasurable events, not repetitions. 129

If then the certainty of re-presentation, as postmoderns view it, has begun to erode, how are we eventually to assess the continuity, equity and morality of relationship? I will briefly present two trajectories currently offered within this movement.

**“Relational sublime”**

Gergen questions the effectiveness of “continuous renegotiation of meaning” which dialectically transpires in most narrative accounts, bouncing back and forth between individuals and communities. There is also the limited range of discourses such activity is able to include; and finally, consideration must be given to the ability of such communicative theories to function effectively in ever-changing structures of relationship. 130 Therefore, he suggests we begin to reconsider an ancient concept, which he resurrects as the “relational sublime.” We must move “beyond narrative as the center of our interest to the relational matrix from which narrative understandings emerge.” 131 We can envision this condition as “pure relatedness.” Similar to an ocean,

all the individual waves are given form by each other, and we must recognize with awe the potential of a singular movement of the entirety. . . . We cannot articulate the character of the sublime, for our languages are themselves only local manifestations of the whole. 132

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130 This reflects Piaget and Loder’s concern that due attention be given to the transformational matrix which operates between the morphological structures, which is so often the focus within narrative accounts (this will be referenced in an upcoming chapter).

131 “Generate Realities,” p.10.

132 Ibid., p.10.
He simply seeks to "resuscitate" and "re-signify" this Western idea which has existed for eighteen centuries. He begins this resurrection by summoning forth the first century writings of Greek critic Dionysus Longinus who acknowledges a source in the "great writings" which bring "power and irresistible might to bear" in the written word, a power which Gergen traces to nature's blessing for the "inward greatness of the soul." He traces its presence in history through Edmund Burke, Kant, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Schiller on to Emerson. They present us with something beyond our words that give them their force, "something beyond reason which causes reason to leap up." Though we cannot articulate it, it can be appreciated. It is the "primordial processes of relationship—the pulsing coordination."

It's not the "inward greatness of the soul," ... but the process of relatedness which enable such passages to carry us with them. Likewise the source of "awe," "inspiration," or "terror" is not to be found in nature (with Wordsworth), or in the person (with Emerson), but within unfathomable processes of relatedness which make meaning possible. The capacity to give life to words, and thus to transform culture, is not usefully traced to internal resources, but to relatedness—which serves as the source of all articulation, and which simultaneously remains beyond its reach. This radically suggests a relational ontology, and the "relational sublime" as its qualitative criterion of relationship, and therefore progress (in contrasting things). This relational dynamic is the source of all human existence. The relational sublime inhabits every relationship to the degree of constitution in association with the inherent and dynamic nature of that force which creates it. When Aristotle says 'all men by nature desire to know', I believe he acknowledges such a sublime within the act of knowledge itself. Such a dynamic and criterion is not only what ultimately establishes the structure of good relationship, but the sense of rightness and the source of goodness and virtue we experience within its logic.

"Social poetics"

Shotter, on the other hand, suggests a form of "social poetics." Utilizing Bakhtin and George Steiner he presents a dynamic in human occurrences, a movement which is beyond the collective sums, which takes up the moment or event and presents it in its own time, in a 'new' way. Speaking of the artistic or poetic moment 'happening to us', Steiner observes:

That which comes to call on us—that idiom, we saw, connotes visitation and summons—will very often do so unbidden. Even when there is a readiness, as in the concert hall, in the museum, in the moment of chosen reading, the true entrance into us will not occur by an act of will. . . . But each and everyone of us, however bounded our sensibility, will have known such unbidden, unexpected entrances by irrevocable guests.

This poetic dynamic, which is to some degree resident within all discourse and dialogical activity, 'strikes' and 'arrests' us from pre-patterned response to engage responsively the freedom of the other. This is necessary for an authentic "meeting between freedoms."

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Methodologically, social poetics is a process by which we are first ‘arrested’ by the moment into openness. Next, we search for appropriate ways of talking, structurally generating what we can to provide an ‘inner relational landscape’. Then, through contrast (relation), we allow the “creative understanding” to give rise. The order within things and activities become manifest in active tension to other things and actions, in other words when in relationship. 136 No ordering, knowledge, nuance or historical event rendering remains the same when it is analogically ‘called up’ for immediate service; our method, says Shotter, must never lead “to a final, fixed account of what something ‘really’ means.” Reflecting our earlier discussion of Wittgenstein, Bakhtin tells us,

At any moment in the development of the dialogue there are immense, boundless masses of forgotten contextual meanings, but at certain moments . . . they are recalled and invigorated in renewed form (in a new context). Nothing is absolutely dead: every meaning will have its homecoming festival. 137

Therefore, social poetics, which are to some degree inherent in all human relatedness creates in each relationship its own logic which is holistically (whole as an event) synchronous with that of the rest of the reality. It is important, however, to note that social poetics takes place in the transitional moment from awareness to cognition. Bakhtin says:

When I experience an object actually, I thereby carry out something in relation to it; the object enters into relation with that which is to-be-achieved, grows in it—within my relationship to that object. Pure givenness cannot be experienced actually. Insofar as I am actually experiencing an object, even if I do so by thinking of it, it becomes a changing moment in the ongoing event of my experiencing (thinking) it, i.e., it assumes the character of something-yet-to-be-achieved. Or, to be exact, it is given to me within a certain event-unity. 138

Within such “event-unity” all existing structures, knowledge, memory, and so forth resurrect and incarnate into “a certain, living, concrete, and palpable (intuitable) once-occurrent whole—an event.” 139 Therefore, Shotter indirectly presents us with two basic aspects and criteria of relationship, which parallel our earlier categories of awareness/experience and the conception/explanatory capacity. The first is that expedient and progressive relationships (relationality) provide us with greater awareness or experience of life. Secondly, they “articulate our language entwined activities more clearly to ourselves, so that we can come, not to a theoretical, but to a more elaborate and refined practical grasp of how to make sense

136 Steiner tells us: “Creative understanding does not renounce itself, its own place in time, its own culture; and it forgets nothing. . . . In the realm of culture, outsideness is a most powerful factor in understanding. It is only in the eyes of another culture that foreign culture reveals itself fully and profoundly. . . . A meaning only reveals its depths once it has encountered and come into contact with another, foreign meaning: they engage in a kind of dialogue, which surmounts the closeness and one-sidedness of these particular meanings, these cultures. We raise new questions for a foreign culture, ones that it did not raise itself; we seek answers to our questions to it; and the foreign culture responds to us by revealing to us its new aspects and new semantic depths.” (1989), p.7.


139 Ibid., p.32.
of them,"\(^{140}\) in other words greater explanatory capacity. Here, explanatory capacity means an existential practical configuring of all the relational elements, rather than the complete imposition of pre-established theory upon 'what already is'.

**The silent and irreducible structure of relationship according to Bakhtin, and its methodological implications**

Social constructivism, therefore, emphasizes the need for ongoing openness in relations, and places a premium on increasing the frequency and diversity of interrelations. These theorists suggest a universal relational dynamic, beyond articulation, that enables the collating of the relative aspects of all things and events into any number of other possible relational event-unities. This dynamic capably interrelates all things through time and enables change. All knowledge springs forth from within this dynamic and its value is assessed not by 'reason', but that upon which 'reason' is built, that dynamic which creates 'relational sublime' and 'social poetics'. This allows us to live, change and genuinely relate within structure, rather than structure oppressing us (imposition of past theory upon the possible). However, with many of these theorists, it seems the self is in danger of being completely sacrificed into a Hegelian sea in which the self dissolves into an ontology of the community. If one listens carefully, however, to certain intonations within this literature, a specific and redeemable dialogical pattern begins to emerge.

This literature begins to present us with not only the relational sublime but also a shape of felicitous relationship. In a description of Dostoevsky's writing, Bakhtin adventitiously provides us with his structure to social reality, "a plurality of consciousnesses, with equal rights and each with its own world, combine but are not merged in the unity of the event."\(^{141}\) This suggests an irreducible shape to relationship in which consciousnesses are able somehow to interpenetrate without losing personal identity. The ground (background) upon which these consciousnesses "combine" and the dynamic itself is as yet unclear within Bakhtin and these others, however, their description of this dynamic closely reflects that which has struggled for full expression over the last seventeen centuries in the Christian relational dynamic of *perichoresis*. In this respect, the relational dynamics of the social constructivist is similar to the 'logic of spirit' which has likewise progressively emerged within the Christian tradition.\(^{142}\) Within this dynamic, in which all things seem both to be immersed and constituted, we are able to be effectively transformed within the intersubjectivity of the communicative act without losing our personhood into a sea of Single consciousness—Absolute Spirit.

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\(^{140}\) Ibid., p.15.
Within such a configuration, the human social and relational dynamic must be analogically and mutually related to that same configurative dynamic inherent in what Gergen refers to as the 'sacred'—that dynamic itself which is the establishing source of all relationships, that which creates the ‘world’ of the relationship outside and between ourselves. If there is to be any continuity in human epistemological development, some level of synergy must exist between the most primal levels of these respective dynamics, and this synergy must be active at the holistic levels of existence for each respectively.

Broadly speaking, Murphy and the social constructivist conjoin at the point of the sacred—the relational sublime and the corporate notion of spiritual worship and discernment. In the end, I believe the basic trajectory of each program forms a complementarity, which again, I believe, suggestively integrates within the concept of perichoresis.

Perichoresis

We have briefly considered two approaches to the formation of human intelligence with many similarities and differences between them. Murphy presents an epistemological holism, which emphasizes the irreducibility of the communitive consensus and internal epistemological coherence. She offers an epistemological notion of progress as the criterion of program adequacy. Because of the incommensurability between diverse communities, her incorporation of empirical falsifiability and epistemological crisis, and the important role of tradition in her methodology, her position facilitates a capacity for a significant degree of passion and conviction in one’s beliefs. However, the incommensurable nature of cross-tradition discourse balks the community’s effort to engage fully and authentically the foreign community. There is simply little room in this method to motivate heartfelt relationship with the foreign, and such positions ultimately assume a sectarian position within a pluralistic world.

The social constructivists, on the other hand, acknowledge the illusive certainty of epistemologically heavy methodologies, therefore encouraging epistemic humility, and present a relational holism and the corresponding criteria such as the relational sublime and social poetics. Likewise, because meaning emerges forever new and reconstituted from out of the relationship itself, such methodologies encourage our full venturing for re-constitution from out of authentic relations. The reality, however, is that such relativity within epistemic structures tends to exchange conviction and passion for epistemological ambivalence. Distinctiveness is lost, just as such approaches often discount the fruitful aspects of Modernity, such as the transcendent character of the individual-in-relation.

143 "Generate Realities," p.10.
I wish at this point to investigate the relational dynamic of *perichoresis* as a paradigm which incorporates the *positive* thrust of both approaches warranting both convictive *beliefs* and the ability to be *transformed in genuine relations*. Furthermore, through a specifically theological paradigm, I wish to consider the possibility that some form of this irreducible dynamic is primordially constitutive of all reality. Though I wish to endorse the trajectory of the social constructivist, the feasibility of a relational ontology hangs upon a specific irreducible understanding of relationality itself as gracefully provided by and analogically mutual (correspondent) to the relational activity of the Trinity. This structurally Kierkegaardian dynamic and method engenders *full conviction* in one’s existing epistemic and communicative *beliefs*, while at the same time paradoxically supporting the dynamic ability to be *reconstituted fully* (changed, enriched) out of *genuine relations*.\(^{144}\)

**The dialogical characteristic—pulsation (openness and closure)—of perichoretic relations**

*Again, the irreducible perichoretic dynamic enables the polarities of a relationship to remain distinct entities while each is constituted respectively from within the emerging mutuality of the relational unity itself.* The relationship itself as the once-occurring event becomes the distinct positive third term, not obliterating but intensifying the polarities. This dynamic is the transitional matrix out of which greater may emerge than the sum of the relating parts. Within human relations, the ‘parts’, or aspects, would consist of all that each person is able to bring into the relationship (both focal and tacit), as well as those within the existing situation. The greater is that Power which creates relationship (space and time), its possibilities, and the configurative source of metaphor from which we respectively construct meaning through an irreducible differentiated unity. This is similar to the social constructivist position, except that the notion of *perichoresis* goes one step further within the irreducibility of the dynamic by maintaining the continued integrity and identity of the self (the “I”) throughout the changes and transformations resulting from the relationship. As we shall see in later chapters, however, this is impossible without the entities themselves analogically participating in the ground of this transitional matrix, in other words persons are able to become whole persons (spirit) in analogical and reciprocal relation to the wholeness of others *and* the Source which creates and dynamically mediates the relationship. Moreover, if compliant to genuine transformation*, each individual is constituted in an appropriate manner relative to the existing possibilities from out of the instantaneous and dynamic source (creation) of the relationship. It must be remembered here, that though the

\(^{144}\) This, I believe, represents the basic thrust of *Concluding Unscientific Postscripts*, noted specifically on pp.518-9, and represents the epistemic posture of “*a relationship of open resolve and not one locked up within itself*” suggested by Heidegger. (1967), p.314.
relationship itself actively constitutes the transformation, the individual's desires and concerns become themselves dynamic aspects within the relational mix.

Shotter suggests a similar understanding of a "new world"—the relationship—which is "created between" the "worlds" of the relatants, and the "special unity or wholeness" which emerges when any two meet. In this respect, he alludes to a tripartite structure in relationships, yet most social constructivists understand this third aspect of the relationship as completely encompassing the relatants within itself. I wish to emphasize a Kierkegaardian-like irreducible perichoretic dynamic in which a definitive mediating third term of the relationship Gracefully creates the medium through which whole spirits (individuals) can be analogically and dynamically constituted in relation to other whole spirits. The nature and presence of this dynamic itself constitutes (provides) the moral tendons both guiding and facilitating relative relations. In this respect, the "special unity or wholeness" which Shotter expresses, which seems closer to Hegel's Absolute Spirit, is here adjusted to a tripartite perichoretic paradigm entailing analogia spiritus. This allows for a more nuanced moral variable within the individual's willingness (or not) to wholly relate to the Other.

The dialogical aspects and nature of human existence reveals this perichoretic dynamic. One aspect is the mode of prereflexive awareness in which the person opens to and enters relationship. The other is the reflexive constituting of the self-in-relation from within the existing socialized background. This dialogical dynamic takes the form of reciprocating pulses of openness and closure within dialogical relations. Most important, however, I want to emphasize that the holistic functioning of human experience takes place during the prereflexive process of awareness in which the individual seeks to understand, scan, apprehend, and reflect. This is equivalent to Bakhtin's moment which concentrates, correlates, and resolves within a unitary and unique and, this time, final context both the sense and the fact, the universal and the individual, the real and the ideal, for everything enters into the composition of its answerable motivation. When this passive yet active, configurative process is prereflexively opened individuality is personally relaxed and ideally attempts to become wholly related to the world. It is here that analogia spiritus takes place. This is the infinite, eternal mode of human being of which Kierkegaard speaks. Here, persons holistically register their concerns into the infinite depth and complexity of the relationship and then decisively leap to a cognitive action within it; from such a prereflexive venturing comes forth that which never was.

145 Shotter, ("Life Inside"), p.4-5.
147 Heidegger tells us: "The whole behaviour of historical man, . . . whether understood or not, is tuned and by this attunement [Gestimmtheit] raised up to the plane of what-is-in-totality. The manifest character of what-is-in-totality is not identical with the sum of known actualities. . . . Man's behaviour is attuned to the manifest character of what-is-in-totality. But this "in-totality" appears, in the field of
Human beings for Kierkegaard are a synthesis between the infinite and finite, the
temporal and the Eternal, however, these distinctions are qualitatively different and cannot
be materially synthesized. They can only be perichoretically and dialogically synthesized,
mediated by a momentary synthesis outside or between the relatants themselves. By virtue
of this third term each relatant respectively shares a degree of “dynamic mutual reciprocity,
interpenetration and interanimation.”

In deference to Gergen and others who tend to sacrifice the subject into a social holism
(a dualism or monism in contrast to an irreducible differentiated unity), the perichoretic
moment instantiates the person as individual-in-relation. Here the person through social
interaction attains to something greater than the existing collective sum within the
community, and therefore, creative possibility (in contrast to determinate). How does this
greater come from the emerging properties within open and free interaction? My argument
at this point is simply by emergence—God’s creative activity. From within the
communicative discourse of physics Einstein emerges with (identifies) properties that could
not have come from the sum total of existing physics, yet these properties come forth into
existence through his attempts to express it in community, if even from the ‘stabilized social
audience’ of his reflective soliloquies. This, however, compels us to consider the
Kierkegaardian notion that human being is a relationship unto itself from which, somehow,
someway, solitary prophets continue to arise among the ashes of entrenched traditions to
produce explanatory and pragmatic progress. From the Christian understanding of
Christ’s claim of being Word, that in which all things consist (are held together), Jean-Luc
Marion tells us “in him coincide—or rather commune—the sign, the locutor, and the
referent . . . And hence the Word, the Said, finally says nothing; he lets people speak, he lets
view of our daily calculations and activities, as something incalculable and incomprehensible. It
cannot be understood in terms of what manifestly “is,” whether this be part of nature or of history.
Although itself ceaselessly determining all things, this “in-totality” nevertheless remains something
indeterminate and indeterminate, and is thus generally confused with what is readiest at hand and
most easily thought of. At the same time this determining factor is not just nothing: it is a
concealment of what-is-in-totality. Precisely because “letting be” always, in each case, lets each thing
be in its proper relationship and thus reveals it, it immediately conceals what-is in totality” (1967),
p.311-2. This reveals the relational logic of spirit within our thought, as Heidegger beautifully alludes
to the perichoretic dynamic and its Gracious constituting of persons as they are in their “proper
relationship.” The attunement entails an analogical relation between the person’s “what-is-in-
totality”, and that which is “not identical with the sum,” “the manifest character of what-is-in-
totality.” Moreover, the “what-is-in-totality” stands tacit beneath all our focal knowledge.

These characteristics of ‘indwelling’ within perichoresis are borrowed from Gunton (1993), p.163,
and parallel Loder’s ‘logic of spirit’ which we shall investigate in an upcoming chapter.

This force and sequence within cultural evolution is presented by Anthony F. C. Wallace, in
“Revitalization Movements,” (1958), as 1) a person has a vision, 2) communication of revelation, 3)
converts are made, 4) cultural transformation, 5) re-shaping of all society, and 6) revitalization is
attained. Such transformations do not happen until one individual enters a cultures existing struggles
and anomalies with sufficient personal penetration and intensity, and emerges with a redemptive
gestalt and strategy.
people talk, 'Jesus gave him no answer' (John 19:19 = Luke 23:9)." 150 From the Power and
dynamic which posits self as a relationship unto itself, instantiating the person-in-relation,
individuals transcend, but do not obviate, their social construction.

In this respect, Kierkegaard's enigmatic structuring allows the individual to exist both
fully open to authentic relations and respectfully engenders full closure within each
relational occurrence. These dialogical modalities, however, force us to consider a
mediating dynamic of the relationship itself as the transitional matrix, the moment of
transition cyclically from awareness to conceptualization, from conceptualization back to
awareness. Theologically, we might consider these moments of transition as mediated by the
Irenaean two hands of God—Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. 151 When we are drawn from
constituted-being into awareness the Spirit of God both mediates and influences (analogia
spiritus); when we pass from awareness into being constituted person-in-relation we are
christologically in Grace mediated and constituted ('held-together', Col 1:17). To the extent
we are willing to offer ourselves to be reconstituted fully within authentic relationship (Mk
8:35, 10:15, 29-30) our mode of relating becomes compatible with that Power which
constitutes all relationships, and therefore, we are constituted respectively from within the
emerging mutuality of the relational unity itself. We, in compliance with a relational
dynamic—perichoresis—to that degree become active in the world as co-creators
(ἐν ἔκωσθε; Mk 11:23-26). When we consider such an active influence within relationality
itself, we can begin to understand how it is that progress, novelty and truth emerge from and
abide only within the social interaction and relationship itself ('in the midst of two or
more')—the “once-occurrent event.” In this respect, truth is right relationship, and only
from within each specific relational moment can one stand in truth. Only to the extent we
give ourselves wholly to each relation will the appropriate doxastic structures be constituted
from each relational moment to the next (however, this we never completely do, which is
sin). Foremost, knowledge as such is constituted relationship. Ideally, we are confronted
with a dynamic in which we must be willing to be completely reconstituted in authentic
relationship during our prereflexive entrance into relationship, and yet fully able and willing
to stand passionately certain within the reflexive constitution.

Perichoretic dynamics suggest a methodological development that broadly includes
both earlier methodological considerations, and one in which strongly held beliefs are
possible. At the same time, this dynamic indentures a freedom for change or transformation
with expanding contexts due to ongoing and proliferating interactions. We will first consider
a possible methodological structure in relation to perichoretic dynamics and then discuss

150 (1991), p.140 [my emphasis].
151 This basic Irenaean trajectory within the dynamic of perichoresis is found in Gunton (1991),
particular aspects of this dynamic as functional criteria in contrast to our earlier discussion of religious experience.

A Theological method of complementarity: a) dialogical bipolarity as the criteria within specific occurrence, and b) fullness of life as dialogical criterion within transcommunal occurrence

Meaning and value: Fullness of life

As discussed earlier, concept and experience arise together in human relations to produce meaning. Furthermore, it is my methodological concern and hypothesis that meaning itself is never reducible to either just the cognitive or experiential, and that meaning in its relational irreducibility is ultimately qualitative and valutative of relational adequacy. This valutative and irreducible criterion of meaning and relational quality—fullness of life—is, I will argue, transcommunitative. 152 Fullness of life* is the synthesis of both the semantic/conceptual articulation and the depth of experiencing. As such, it presents itself as the final theological criterion which emerges holistically from the dialogical synthesis of these two floating153 variables, the conceptual and experiential, which never remain stable within relationship.

Higher levels of meaning through increased explanatory function and wider experiences of the world

Again, the level of meaning (relational authenticity) is the perichoretic product of both the degree of diversity and integration of the explanatory and semantic capacities (conceptual development) and the depth of experience (awareness or presence). These two aspects of personal existence dialogically synthesize in relationship to create the person-in-relation. Accordingly, I would suggest, individuals and societies that have greater explanatory capacities are capable of greater meaning within their interactions. This is noticeable in both cultural evolution and biological strata. For example, I want to argue that the level of intimacy* and fullness of life that primitive cultures experience during filial and sexual relations or in experiencing beauty and awe are lower than is possible in contrast to societies with greater explanatory capacities. 154

152 Transcommunitive simply signifies that which is able to be passed, communicated or evaluated between various communities, traditions, and cultures.
153 I use the adjective ‘floating’ in reference to ‘variables’, ‘aspects’ and ‘criterion’ in an effort to emphasize, not their ‘provisional’, but their contextual, developmental and relation specific nature. It is my hope such a term will disturbingly remind the reader of Kierkegaard’s insistence that humans are constituted in time, therefore inferring they are in contextual flux, CUP, pp.180-89.
154 Fullness of life in no way represents the capacity of an individual to become spirit, wholly constituted. Primitive societies are not lacking in their capacity to experience significant amounts of awe and mystery, “Eternity in their hearts.” What I am suggesting is that the degree of conceptual articulation and explanatory capability (linguistic development) incorporates a capacity for a wider scope of experience that provides for greater perichoretic interanimation of that awe and beauty within our natural and immanent experience. In a telling novel by naturalist and explorer Peter Matthiessen of impotent missionary efforts into South America, At Play in the Fields of the Lord, he effectively reveals how individuals within an ‘advanced’ culture, 20th century American Christian
On the experiential side, Kierkegaard presents a powerful point in his contrasting of two men praying. One prays with a more informed conceptual orientation, another with an inferior one. However, because the latter prays with the "passion of the infinite," more wholly constituted and with greater awareness and experiential depth (presence), his prayer is more meaningful. Likewise, the New Testament writers went to great extents to reveal an authority (ἐξουσία) in Jesus' call to the disciples which transcended the 'rational' and linguistic norms of their immediate social structures. A simple "follow me" highlights the meaningfulness and quality of the relationship that emerges from Jesus' sheer presence within the relationship (Mk 2:14). Nevertheless, meaning and fullness of life is not sheer presence or passion but the synthesis and product of our two dialogical aspects in relation to that constituting Power. In the following paragraphs, fullness of life will be further clarified.

Therefore, though the conceptual and experiential aspects contribute to the construction of meaning, meaning is an irreducible product of the perichoretic dynamic within relationship. And, because immediate experience is an aspect of that irreducible product, meaning is never exactly the same twice. This presents us with two types of criteria for methodological consideration. First, a critical approach can be contextually attained using the floating (cyclical) dialogical criteria by: 1) verifying systems of explanatory (conceptual) capacity through their ability to produce wider experiences of life, and reciprocally, 2) verifying wider frames of experience through their ability to stimulate more diverse explanatory functions—progress. This methodological dynamic and associating criteria are fundamentalism, can effectively reduce its potential for fullness of life by systematic closure to depths of experience, and conversely, how primitive cultures are unable to manifest higher levels of fullness of life. He presents the primitive's sexual activity as being treated within their culture as similar to the matter-of-factness of eating. As they went into the bushes for such activity, others stood by and watched. The Eternal and infinite implications of their actions, and their perichoretic purview and development of the finite and the infinite, I would argue, still lie partially within their 'Garden's innocence'. This does not delimit the passion potential experienced within such activity, but it limits the culture's potential for fullness of life.

Meaning as quality of relationship is the demand of Kierkegaard. This is illustrated by his well-known contrasting of two prayers: One from a 'Christian' who goes up to the house of the true God, with a true conception of that God, having once experienced God, and then prays in a closed spirit (limited selective awareness of the appropriate relational contingencies). His relational disposition is not truly open and the quality of relationship itself is qualitatively low, although the conceptual articulation is extensive. The other is 'one who lives in an idolatrous community and prays with the entire passion of the infinite, setting his eyes upon the image of an idol', i.e. with full abandon risking all that he is to be reconstituted by the relationship itself. Climacus (Kierkegaard) concludes: "The one prays in truth to God though he worships an idol; the other prays falsely to the true God, and hence worships in fact an idol." The obvious difference is the integrity and quality of the relationship itself. Though the higher conceptual and experiential development enhances the potential quality of the relationship, the ultimate meaningfulness of the relationship is asymmetrically dependent upon the relational disposition of the individual. Kant's distinction of fact/value is ultimately unable to articulate what these Kierkegaardian distinctions can. This will become more explicit in our human developmental sections. CUP 179f.
similar to Lakatos' in that this dialogical process is bound solely within traditions. I wish, however, to expand the 'observable' stricture in criteria of Murphy's notion of theological 'empirical' criteria to perceivable. By removing the 'visual' metaphor prominent within natural scientific experiencing and broadening our purview within the human sciences and theology, we can more holistically consider our conceptual and experiential dialectic. Even so, these dialectical criteria stand only within the contextual moment of occurrence, and its full doxastic character is dependent and develop upon a more primordial level of existence.

This primordial dynamic is both the ground and product of the aforementioned dialogical cycles, the perichoretic dynamic creating meaning itself. The criterion fullness of life irreducibly emerges from within relationship (contrast). Such a criterion ultimately transcends incomensurabilities. This aspect of human existence is similar to Gergen's "relational sublime" and as such is ultimately unarticulatable. In this respect, I wish to affirm that meaning is not specifically located in 'beliefs' or 'knowledge', but is the property of relations themselves. Gergen argues that the locus of meaning fundamentally lies "within the process of interaction itself." Again, this criterion does not abrogate but instantiates and incorporates the categories of 'dialectics'.

An example of this more conclusive holistic dynamic appears in the faith of Paul. Nicholas Wolterstorff comments:

Paul seems to have come to believe in the resurrection at the same time that he came to have faith in Jesus; he did not go out first to conduct elaborate historical investigations. One gets the impression that Paul would have believed in the resurrection even if all the historical evidence were against it.

There was obviously a quality within Paul's numinal experience, a configurative force within his epistemic structuring which superseded or reconfigured (even subverted) his previous understandings. Something happened instantly in that once-occurrent experience which paradigmatically reconfigured all his knowledge, convictions and behavior. Because of the subject, theological knowledge necessitates, as T. F. Torrance says, an open epistemology.

157 This parallel's a discussion between Fr Henri Bouillard and T. F. Torrance (Barth) in which Bouillard, says Torrance, legitimizes the 'methodological abstraction' of natural theology, "provided we do not simply rest in it." Torrance, however, believes such 'abstractions' are useless in presenting God if they "detach the structure of natural theology from any ground in the being of God as he really is." Torrance (1985), p.301. We will revisit this discussion in the penultimate chapter.
158 "Generate Realities", p.4.
159 Wolterstorff (1964) p.27.
160 "It is scientifically false to begin with epistemology. On the other hand it must be admitted that we operate with an inchoate epistemology as soon as we begin to engage in theological inquiry, that is with a tacit understanding of how we know God, although it can yield a proper epistemology only as we advance in the knowledge of God and submit our actual knowing to criticism and control in accordance with the nature of the object of our knowledge. This means that all the way through theological inquiry we must operate with an open epistemology in which we allow the way of our
This requires an epistemic posturing in which we constantly submit our entire epistemic structuring open in *metanoia* (repentance) for holistic reconstitution within genuine relationship. This requires the continued willingness to allow our ‘observable’ criterion to remain under the asymmetrical control and conditioning of the analogical relation between the whole existence (spirit) of the person and the Whole existence (Spirit) of God. Such relational posturing prioritizes the deeper structure of *analogia spiritus* within the asymmetrical complementarity that guides the configurative dynamic within our empirical (experiential) verification and historical continuity.

**St. Teresa and St. Catherine: phronesis over episteme**

Is it not conceivable, for example, that Teresa’s book, *The Interior Castle*, has had a greater sanctifying influence upon more readers over the centuries than Catherine’s *Divine Dialogues* (both ‘fruitfully’ and theologically)? Moreover, is it not conceivable that despite Catherine’s supposed balance between the inner and outer life within her writings, Teresa’s *The Interior Castle* has gone on to effect more transformative changes in readers than Catherine’s, even perceivable, verifiable change? Such writings, like Teresa’s, by simply presenting their personal narrative, relational disposition, and subsequent experience of God are often able to reproduce (re-create) the necessary openness within the reader and thereby create the dispositional ground through which God can non-coercively and similarly move in perichoretic rather than impositional relations. Ultimately this experience should be sociologically perceivable within the dynamic of *phronesis* (of which Murphy rightfully seeks, but prematurely disengages). Likewise, the assessment of such experiences must eventually transcend the perceptive operators used in the theory development of the natural sciences (‘observability’). This is not to say there are no appropriate empirically perceivable data or criteria, but that such criteria will be perceivable in a more holistic and personally applicable manner.

What is it that inevitably informs us that ‘charitable’ actions are indeed charitable rather than the selfish deferring of potentially disruptive relations (co-dependency)? Much of what former Christian communities categorized as ‘charitable’, contemporary psychology has uncovered as selfish. Such criteria (charity) must operate at the level of *phronesis* which transcends the typical structures of *episteme*. Simple behavior as mere ‘intended’ repeatable action cannot be normatively designated diachronically outside an immediate relationship.

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11 Many more copies of this classic are sold than St. Catherine’s.

162 For example, a wife, who completely knowledgeable of her husband’s sexual philandering, in ‘love’ refuses to confront the issue. However, if she really believes sexual fidelity to be a virtue, she selfishly refrains from confronting the husband for his own good, rather than risk the consequences of his action when confronted.
Religious experience will produce fruit that contains historical continuity, however, relative to and appropriately within each relational situation.\(^{163}\) To assume any more than this demands the imposition of a teleological finality outside of existence; what Paul would consider ‘bringing Christ down from above’ (Rm 10:6). God’s presence and movement will influence behavior appropriately within the relationship, in correlation with all His previous actions (Scriptures). However, the continuity of each spontaneous and novel response in contrast to former ‘observably’ socialized patterns is perceivable only in the context of action as *phronesis*. The ‘observable’ behavior is only an *aspect* of verification of the religious experience; as ‘evidence of the whole, it is inconclusive. Therefore, the stronger aspect of verification is the action or writing’s ability to pass on analogically the whole of the former context-specific meaning and experience to the new context-specific relationship. *Only after the transformation (leap) will we perceive the conceptual, explanatory, and ‘observable’ continuity to traditional and historical coordinates.* Otherwise, are we to believe that St. Catherine’s (late 1300s) conceptual understanding and experiencing of love is the same as, for example, Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendel’s today?\(^{164}\)

Therefore, such criteria as Murphy has narrowly defined it is in principle inconclusive *for theology* according to what Lakatos designates as a positive heuristic—a program which holistically considers all relevant data within the complex rationale of that community’s *structures of meaning*. In attempting to do theology according to Hume’s categories, Murphy has merely incorporated the empiricism of modernity (*via* W. V. O. Quine) as her positive heuristic, and installed the un-‘empirical’ logic of Christianity (community discernment) as her negative heuristic (which protects the hard core ‘belief’). An alternative necessitates the hard work of broadening the methodological intent of Lakatos into a truer holism for theological explanation that entails the full wealth of knowledge, experience and meaning exhibited in theology. As Moltmann insists, we must cease the modern practice of bifurcating knowledge, feeling and experience.\(^{165}\) If the above consideration of Teresa is possible, her experience and writings assume the possibility of communitively perceiving the ‘invisible’ (the numinal), and she linguistically provides the structure of the faith experience

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\(^{163}\) For Kierkegaard continuity is experienced holistically, however, conceptually ‘observable’ or assessable only in reverse. Referring to qualitative changes in knowledge and experience (the most poignant example being paradox, paradigm and gestalt shift) “continuity is lacking, or at any rate it has continuity only in reverse, that is, at the beginning it does not manifest itself as continuity.” Hong, *Journals and Papers*, 3/pp.399-400.

\(^{164}\) I make reference to her paper “Does Nothing Good Dwell in My Flesh?,” in *The Future of Theology*, because I believe it exhibits a maturity, quality and insight not found in St. Catherine, yet consonant within St. Teresa, that could only have emerged in one whose theological method and criterion are truly and fully holistic in the sense that I am attempting to elaborate.

\(^{165}\) “Reason has to be woven into the fabric of the feelings, and consciousness has to be assimilated into the experiences of the body,” Moltmann (1992), p.173. Cf. also Jaggar (1989) and Zagzebski (1996).
for those who want to make this move but do not know how. That which her writings communicate (her existing narrative, relational disposition and resultant experience) is obviously socially transmittable and ultimately socially verifiable, however, only because it is emergent in *phronesis*. This however will forever remain outside Hume's categorical distinctions of what is empirically verifiable.

Again, this is not to negate the empirical notion in theological methodology that Murphy and Hefner seek to appropriate, but merely attempts to fill-out or dimensionalize the concept, and caution against its degeneration into less than holistic or theological use. Though the notion of the empirical (that which is 'repeatable' and 'falsifiable') contains both conceptual and experiential elements, it cannot be reduced to either, nor can it be exactly 'repeated' outside the phronetic dynamic of *perichoresis* within the act of relation.

I believe Kierkegaard pointed to a relational dynamic by which we might principally attain existential certainty. This perichoretic synthesis which Kierkegaard develops presents us with the possibility that the proper human pathos in relations can optimally insure our existential truth or felicitous relations to *all things known in that moment*. From childhood on, this open disposition—our willingness to engage ourself fully within the process of awareness—soon becomes systematically modified with suppressive mechanisms resisting threats to our existing level or hope of relationships. Though appropriately functional within each social domain, such mechanisms and relational guards (personal and socially established laws) likewise contain a disposition of openness (or not) to the possibility of greater authenticity within relations. Such a disposition has little to do with our specific history, but represents a willingness for greater authentic relatedness (*perichoresis*) when it calls. This willingness may lie dormant when the individual exists within an extremely harsh relational context. In the moment of entrance into each relational event, Grace immediately shocks us with a freedom and purview of the beauty, truth and presence within the relation. Instantly, however, our relational disposition and sedimentation just as quickly texture our holistic presence into the event-unity, and our all too often patterned responses begin to flow. A lack of willingness to be constituted appropriately within greater perichoretic authenticity distorts analogia spiritus limiting the “energy,” “earnestness,” and “pathos,” by which we are constituted as whole persons-in-relations. Such selective closure ultimately compromises our potential existential certainty in the immediate relational occurrence. To the degree we enter analogia spiritus we appropriate *phronesis*.

At this point I wish to mention two integral aspects of relationship as likely conditions that create and embody truth conducive relationships. The first is the recent scientific

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166 Kierkegaard, *CUP* 516-19.
insights within thermodynamics which suggest that fluctuations (dynamics) within open systems create irreversible processes of higher organization.\textsuperscript{167} We might consider desire itself as the fundamental source motivating perichoretic relations (fluctuations), and as a possible criterion revealing the quality of perichoretic relations. Secondly, because "knowledge is a state whose value is holistic"\textsuperscript{168} the doxastic structure of all knowledge warrants that epistemic humility be given ample integration into method itself. Doing theology, or any discipline, is a moral act. Both these conditions are imperative for the holistic perception of fullness of life within our meaning (and knowledge). Furthermore, only by this terminal criterion of fullness of life do we encounter a degree of certainty and faith within our beliefs and relations (assessed holistically within an open system—\textit{the analogical relation of the whole self to the Eternal}). Nevertheless, though such a criterion is to some degree perceivable within our relations, the claim is that meaning itself irreducibly reflects the quality of relationship, and this is perceivably (not 'observably') transcommunal. From a broadened Lakatosian trajectory, it appears theological criteria for 'progress' must entail, not only some aspect of conceptual (linguistic) and pragmatic extension and coherence, and also the additional 'widening of human experience', but the unity (synthesis) of the two within the respective relationship itself, the irreducible factor of meaning itself—fullness of life.\textsuperscript{169}

\textbf{The perichoretic logic of a universal criterion of fullness of life}

The shape of the theological project and its criteria are themselves always undergoing conceptual and experiential change as its development in history in relation to God, tradition and Scriptures changes. Moltmann contends, even in history, the messianic becoming-human of the human being remains incomplete and uncompletable. It is only the eschatological annihilation of death, the redemption of the body on a new earth and under a new heaven, which will consummate the 'becoming' process of human beings, thereby fulfilling their creaturely destiny.\textsuperscript{170}

It is never, for example, the case that something other than charity and our other traditional criteria of religious experience would be the verifying criteria, but an attempt, however, to ossify diachronically its meaning or 'observability' would be tragic.\textsuperscript{171} Charity cannot become a prescribed set of 'observable' behaviors, but simply refers to right relationship;

\textsuperscript{167} For example, Prigogine and Stengers', \textit{Order Out of Chaos} (1984).

\textsuperscript{168} Zagzebski (1996), p.316.

\textsuperscript{169} This eventually calls into question the Kantian fact/value distinction, and replaces it with the Kierkegaardian notion that ultimately both fact and value irreducibly and unitively exist within the immediate relationship.

\textsuperscript{170} (1985), p.227. Also, Moltmann refers us to Dilthey’s assumption that “human being is not fixed by nature,” and must be understood as such because of an open history. Cf. M. Landmann, \textit{Philosophische Anthropologie}, Berlin 1955, pp.251ff.

\textsuperscript{171} This is presently evident in forms of religious fundamentalism which insist upon anachronistically defining love as a set of social behaviors, rather than allowing our growing knowledge of human relations to enrich our articulation, explanation and action of authentic (felicitous) relationship.
and our conceptual and experiential rendering of right relationship is still evolving and developing. This is the same for theological knowledge and doctrine. As we learn and experience more about the world and ourselves in relation to God's Openness (Spirit, open system), irreversible properties will continue to emerge and further enrich our meanings. Though charity is always charity within the larger changing Christian context, its meaning and use as a criterion are likewise constantly in social and conceptual development. Though we can never suggest an 'observable' static concept of love, we can always holistically perceive its diachronic continuity as an article or dynamic within the respective analogical contexts as a whole to the extent we relate as whole persons.

This is not relativism, nor does it necessitate diachronic discontinuity during relational kinesis and transitions. The perichoretic dynamic within relationality itself Gracefully supports the individual appropriately and transformatively throughout relational movement. Participation within the relationship will be felicitous to the degree human participation interanimates and attunes (abgestimmt) its mode of relationality to the nature of the constituting dynamic within relationship. Likewise, every relational form or style developed within various families and cultures with the greatest degree of perichoretic form will immediately (holistically) and eventually (conceptually) reveal its respective fullness of life in contrast to others. The suitable conceptual developments can then be expected to deepen rather than fundamentally change within the perichoretic continuity as the whole self becomes ever more coherent and the redemptive process of God continues.

Both Barth and Moltmann express a perichoretic-like social constitution of self from which meaning uniquely emerges. Moltmann suggests:

Social experience stands in the same correlation to experience of God as experience of the self. It was one-sided and had fateful consequences when, from Augustine onwards, the West related the knowledge of God solely to knowledge of the self. . . . The person who knows God, knows himself. The person who knows himself, knows God. This applies to one's neighbour equally [e.g., see Mt 25:31f]. . . . In experiencing the affection of others we experience God. In being loved we sense the nearness of God, in hate we feel God's remoteness.

Moltmann here deepens Calvin's earlier cited consideration with a more psychologically and sociologically informed understanding. Though theology is a distinctive discourse

McFadyen tells us such designations “take contingent form. They are a part of God's history with God’s People and do not destroy the past but transform its interpretation and therefore the way in which it is present” (1990), p.56, which he places in direct contrast to Bultmann's “dehistoricisation” (n.27).

The idea of the continuity of parts through their placement within the whole in analogical relation to the same at another period of time will be taken up in a forthcoming chapter on social theory.


Calvin, Institutes I, 1, 1, “. . . the knowledge of God and our knowledge of ourselves. These two are connected in many ways, and so it is not so easy to say which of them comes first and then itself affects the other.”
dependent upon God and His Word, it is not easy within theological knowledge 'to say
which of them comes first and then itself affects the other' (Calvin), divine, personal or social
knowledge. Therefore, our theological development is in part verifiable by its ability to
produce fullness of life within its communitive transactions. If we can begin to understand
and identify the shape of authentic (perichoretic) relations, in this case the character of both
the dialogical cycles of openness and closure, we can hasten theological development.

The possibility of a hybrid hard core theory from theology and human
developmental psychology/sociology

We might expect that the data and patterns within the observations of human
developmental psychology, specifically those that pertain to transformative relational
dynamics themselves, should eventually be capable of integration into a theological
paradigm. A hybrid theological program integrating human developmental psychology
would eventually verify itself through its ability to deepen human meaning and fullness of
life. Furthermore, such a program would become evident by both diversifying the
explanatory function and increasing the experience of the world within the respective mother
disciplines.

In this respect Philip Hefner argues that the teleonomic development (purpose and
meaning) of human existence is derived within natural processes, and that "nature is the
medium through which the world, including human beings, receives knowledge, as well as grace." 
Therefore, there are no "religious concepts of human meaning and purpose
[which] derive from otherworldly sources of revelation rather than from within nature
itself." This is a strongly unitive position that is predicated upon an enhanced
understanding of divine-human mutuality; and yet if understood appropriately, does not
negate the 'immanent', 'transcendent', Eternal, and preeminent activity of a differentiated
Personal God who speaks to humanity. This unique and mysterious relationship between
'nature' and Christ is an important methodological factor. In this respect, all nature is
constituted (Col 1: 17) within the relational logic of spirit/Spirit (Eternal). Moltmann
similarly stipulates:

As far as the dimension of theology is concerned . . . we can discover transcendence in every
experience, not merely in experience of the self. For this, the term immanent transcendence
offers itself. Every experience that happens to us or that we have, can possess a
transcendent, inward side, The experience of God's Spirit is . . . also a constitutive element
in the experience of the 'Thou', in the experience of sociality, and in the experience of
nature. . . If experiences of God embrace experiences of life, then—seen in reverse—
experiences of life can also embrace experiences of God . . . . To experience God in all things
presupposes that there is a transcendence which is immanent in things and which can be
inductively discovered. It is the infinite in the finite, the eternal in the temporal, and the

177 Hefner (1992), p.57 (my emphasis).
178 Ibid., p.58.
enduring in the transitory. . . . If we can call what for us is nature, 'God's creation', we have already invoked its immanent transcendence. 179

In this respect, theology is potentially integrative of every experience and every discipline of thought. Likewise, every experience and discipline of thought reveals elements of grace. We must begin to expand our understanding of experiencing God and the natural within a more unified expression of relational dynamics than what former theological languages could explicitly express.

Therefore, with Hefner, I wish to affirm the empirical and pragmatic nature of the theological program. However, concerning the 'natural' and the 'evidential', "we must learn how to discern the dimension of ultimacy in nature's processes and how to conceptualize them." 180 By ultimacy Hefner refers to "the meaning of God" and "the dimension of the holy in human existence." 181 Furthermore, he insists that we be "concerned with the way things are in the profoundest dimension, that of ultimacy." 182 Hefner considers the human experiencing of the ultimate as immanently active and inherent (supervenient) within the natural processes. Failure to understand (and experience) this phenomenon within the natural processes will necessarily eschew our understanding and explanation of the whole, as well as the parts. In this respect, this study justifies and qualifies its use of developmental psychology and in a more limited fashion postmodern theoretical physics, into a hybrid theological program.

Reflections on knowledge as the shape of desire

In this section we shall consider the possibility that, if all desire comes from God's sustaining relation to us, this by association to the nature of God Himself, and, if indeed the most fundamental aspect of humanity is to relate authentically (perichoretically; Jn 17:11,21), then all knowledge must itself be built and established upon such a force. In this respect, knowledge is the shape of relationship, moreover, knowledge is the shaping of all our desires. The perichoretic dynamic motivates everything to ever-greater differentiation (objectification), while correspondingly within unified re-integrative interpenetration. In the following section, we shall investigate the various plays of desire, and consider desire as the life of all meaning and the dynamic source within all knowledge. If this is so, we would then in some fashion have to consider the broad claim that that which is most desirable, and therefore most relationally satisfying, and expedient is genuine relations, and genuine relations to the greatest felicitous integrative unity of all things with that force and Power by which all things relate, the Trinitarian God.

181 Ibid., p.32.
182 Ibid., p.33.
Relational triangulation and its perichoretic redemption

In the Gospel of John, Jesus asks the Father to create within His followers the ability to relate with each other and Them as They relate. Christian worship, the sacraments, and all religious actions, for the Church in relation to Judaism, were broadened and transformed into more intimate communitive actions deepening the interrelations of the individuals within the whole of the community. The plethora of laws were expanded into an all pervasive charge to simply relate in genuineness, love. This involved progressively transforming the existing conceptual and revealed understanding of right relationship, the law, into a growing holistic spirit within all interactions. The what of relationship is being subsumed into the growing and developing how of relationship, providing ever greater freedom. In other words, what was once motivated through the ‘revealed’ covenant relationship to God (patriarchal), and a pragmatic necessity for socialized order (egalitarian) is continually interpenetrating into the individual and community’s own intrinsic desire (heart) within their immediate relations. Such an evolutionary understanding of divine-human interactive development is at the heart and core of this research program, and in no way diminishes, but enhances, the existing relationship of a community to a personal transcendent God. This process can be described as a relational de-triangulation, developing and integrating desires and passions intrinsically within the appropriate dynamics of our transactions. It is a condensing of competing desires into singleness of mind. This transforms disciplined behavior—that which is done for another reason than intrinsically desiring to do so—into impassioned action.

Due to both the perichoretic drive within all relationality and the ongoing relational fluctuations, the chaotic web of currently confused and contrasting desires in individuals and cultures, are being systematically organized and transformed (redeemed) into a dynamic and coherent differentiated unity. This is a process bringing the ‘law’ into our hearts, in other words ‘legal’ motivations progressively transforming into intrinsically desired ‘natural’ actions. To the degree such actions are not the intrinsic and holistic desire of the individual confuses the internal doxastic structure within relations, thus lessening the degree of meaning and fullness of life experienced within them. In human development, the increasing categorizing of life, which emerges through ongoing interactions, increases the complexity of our tacit background supporting social action. This augments the experiential and holistic penetration within our focal awareness, which then creates deeper, more intimate, and meaningful relations; in short, emerging levels of higher consciousness. As such our

183 In other words, synchronizing our own intrinsic desires, our desire for doing what is most expedient for felicitous relations, and our desire to relate genuinely with God, into one unified interaction of desires.

184 This is the obvious trajectory of Jesus' statement in Mt 5:17-6:34; the law is not fulfilled until we intrinsically and fully desire what the law (right relationship) entails. My wife prefers not to be loved by me because of God's love for me (though this is what enables and frees me to understand and love her), but because I am deeply attracted to and love what is intrinsically her.
doxastic structures become felicitously expanded within relations. The future of human relational progress and redemption will increasingly become that free agency which itself as co-creator in relation to God brings about the future development of Creation. 185

The criterion of desire

Before going on, it is important to confront the obvious objection to the consideration of desire itself as a primary criterion for a research program, let alone its role as the fundamental ‘natural’ aspect in human existence. Moltmann tells us that “love is a desire,” and that God is the most desirable. 186 Milbank points to the primary goodness of all desire in its infinite longing. My thesis is that the fundamental human drive is to relate authentically (perichoretically). All desires are ultimately recognizable and foundationally situate upon this one expedient desire.

If all desire is emergent upon an infinite and good desire, how can we consider the actions of rape and murder as emerging from the good? Developmental and social theorists have just begun to reveal how the multitude of decisions and transactions historically shape this foundational and infinite good desire into a personal and cultural dynamic that uniquely missshapes relationship, what is created good. 187 Various suppressive forces self-encoded into our sedimentation and “response attitude” toward the Other distort the authentic call to personhood and our entrance into and constitution from out of the very third term of our relationships. For example, why do tyrants and murderers kill? Why would they distort that very thing they supposedly and fundamentally desire? They do it simply because they believe it will insure and/or deepen relationship elsewhere, or, they resist authenticity because it reveals their currently inauthentic relationships, which are self-deceptively considered authentic. Does the tyrant kill for power? If so, it is because he recognizes power as an attribute that insures or increases relational potential (though he errs in segregating this attribute from the full spectrum of characteristics that create desirable and full relations). Do they do it in anger? If so, it is because they realize or fear the loss of genuine relationship or its possibility. All motives are prereflexively constructed, and reducible to this one original desire which initiates and begins all prereflexive awareness—

185 This thesis never places the creative act within the sole act of humanity, only God creates. Nevertheless, my penultimate chapter on the perichoresis of time and Eternity will attempt to reveal how Eternity has been perichoretically placed in relation to Time so that we must come to understand Creation, not with a deistic beginning, but currently and always ongoing. This transpires in such a way that humanity, because it is drawn in relation to the Eternal, is able to so affect that Eternal Creating activity of God. God creates. Christ, and through Him all humanity, are given the dominion (collectively have an affect) on how God Creates, each moment.
187 This is Calvin’s basic assumption, that the evil within culture was simply perverted good (H. Richard Niebuhr (1951), p.195-197).
we long to connect genuinely with the Other.\textsuperscript{188} The cultural and personal sedimentation, which shapes desire through the selective and ‘active’ suppression of this full primordial desire, is the true moral issue, not desire itself. Therefore, desire and its most complete satisfaction within the constituting drive of each specific relationship is the deconstructing and reconstructional forces of all personal and cultural development. It must be this irreducible force within relational dynamics, which directs our developmental trajectory and evolving methods. \textit{All} desire is the irresistible pull of perichoretic relations.\textsuperscript{189}

A person in well intended relations becoming aware of relationally destructive behavior only comes to recognize such behavior as destructive because of this one preeminent infinite and primordial desire. This is a conditioning force within individual and social relations that emerges strictly from within the dynamic of the relationship itself, though in human society and culture it is distorted. Knowledge is a set of relations. Therefore, the integrity of knowledge is established by what is ultimately most desirable and satisfying. The \textit{infinite} more fundamental desire ultimately usurps a \textit{shortened} desire through its ongoing analogical call to more genuine relations, and only \textit{then}, in retrospection, do we observe or identify the faulty structures of a shortened passion. In this same way, even a theological program must be drawn, directed and sustained.

\textbf{Desire and relations in Lakatos}

Research programs, like languages, are developed and established by their functional adaptability, increasing knowledge and extension of explanatory capacity within human existence. The primal operator driving such communitive interaction and eventual development is desire itself, the ‘analogy of the infinite’, which constantly draws the individual into ever increasing relational intimacy and meaning.\textsuperscript{190} The primordial nature of desire itself demands that “we cannot not be responsive to each other.”\textsuperscript{191} It defies the stolid

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\textsuperscript{188} Similarly, on the subject of once-bonded relationships and the Covenant of God, Ray Anderson tells us: “The very concept of betrayal requires that there be something to betray. And in betrayal, love is both source and object. We betray when we feel that our own love is betrayed by the failure of others. . . . The sin of betrayal is already contextualized by the greater fact of the relationship. Betrayal is the negative evidence that the relationship is real. For without the reality of the relation, betrayal is not possible. The positive evidence of the relation continues to exist as an actuality bound up in the personhood of the one betrayed” (1991), pp.36,81.

\textsuperscript{189} In a parallel dynamic, Heidegger tells us “untruth must derive from the essence of truth. Only because truth and untruth are not \textit{in essence} indifferent to one another, can a true proposition contrast so sharply with its correspondingly untrue proposition.” (1967), p.310.

\textsuperscript{190} Lévinas tells us “that the relation to the Infinite is not a knowledge, but a Desire. . . . Desire cannot be satisfied; that Desire in some way nourishes itself on its own hungers and is augmented by its satisfaction; that Desire is like a thought which thinks more than it thinks, or more than what it thinks. It is a paradoxical structure, without doubt, but one which is no more so than this presence of the Infinite in a finite act.” From Lévinas (1985), p.92.

\textsuperscript{191} Shotter (“Life Inside”), p.5.
\end{flushright}
existence of non-interaction and status quo. Even in the passive focus of the contemplative there is active relatedness to that which is beyond and yet within the conceptual. Desire in human nature is equivalent to the source of fluctuations in thermodynamics, that which keeps the system active (the dynamic complementarity between mass/gravity/fusion and wave/energy/diffusion). This desire in humans for perichoretic relationship is the same force that fuels the criterion of progress in Lakatosian methodology. Irreducibly implicit within this criterion is the reciprocating dialogical desire of both the depth and wonder of experience and the explanatory force of the conceptual, each reciprocally (perichoretically) stimulating the other.

This desire, which stimulates the progress within Lakatosian theory, is an attempt to make explicit what is, for example, already implicit within MacIntyre’s thesis. By implicit I mean the active dynamic within his theory not explicitly acknowledged. We might consider for a moment why an intracommunal epistemic crisis arises within a tradition. It is either: 1) because that tradition a) begins to somehow experience the world in a manner beyond its linguistic and explanatory capability, or b) somehow perceives that a contrasting tradition enjoys a greater explanatory capacity and greater meaning in life, or 2) from an ‘immanent’ internal source within the human condition (a relationship unto itself) they become dissatisfied with the existing state of existence and simply long for more. In each possible scenario, the valuative operator is active within the dynamic of relationship, contrast. Ideally, human beings are constantly drawn into increasing interrelations with the world while paradoxically experiencing both personal identity and change.

The ‘immanent’ impress is evident within what Marion refers to as boredom:

boredom becomes disinterested in everything, . . . withdraws from every interest that would make it enter among beings. It disengages itself from them, leaves its place among them empty. . . . Boredom withdraws from being and from its stakes . . . for the Being that speaks in it no longer manages “to make itself interesting.”

Similarly, Michael Gelven sees this same balancing dynamic within our experience of disgust. Whether in our deepest ‘scarlet debauchery’ or in our most harmoniously fulfilling moments, there is always, somehow, more. Even after our greatest experiences of ecstasy, there follows the inevitable cry of disgust: the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. As Gelven offers, “perhaps spirit begins right there, with disgust.”

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192 Non-relation, non-activity, is meaninglessness. “Man finds nothing so intolerable as to be in a state of absolute rest, without exercising any passions, being unemployed, having no diversion, and living without any effort. It is then that he thinks he faces emptiness, loneliness, a sense of inadequacy, feeling dependent, helpless, and living a meaningless life.” Pascal (1989), p.73, my emphasis.
195 Gelven (1990), p.5.
Similarly, Colin Gunton notes this analogy of the infinite, which is active within our awareness, in Coleridge's notion of *idea*: "the profundity and dynamic inexhaustibility of the ideas, for they give rise, as the mind interacts with reality, to possibilities for ever deeper involvement in the truth of things." Coleridge's notion of the idea is expressive of what a concept is when irreducibly held in tension with experience—dynamic meaning. Within every idea is always much more.

The point is, joint forces seem to press from both within and without the individual (and/or tradition), motivating the gaze or interest 'beyond'. Whether negative or positive, both sets of forces ('immanent' or 'transcendent') are at play inducing this complementarity of desire within perichoretic relations. This positive dynamic which forwards the progress and the oft needed adjudication between disparate traditions must ultimately emerge 'immanently' from within, and yet 'transcendently' from outside the totality of what is self and the existing tradition or traditions from which it is constituted. The human quest is simply a search for *meaning*, the irreducible synthesis that is relationship.

Therefore, the desire to relate as the fundamental constitutive force within human nature is broadly consonant with Lakatos' notion of progress for research programs. The pervasiveness of this constitutive force and desire begins to reveal an identifiable dynamic within theological discourse, which may eventually be empirically helpful (falsifiable/public). If indeed such a desire is universally fundamental, and our knowledge, understanding and identification of such authenticity within relations are increasing (e.g., psychology), then the quality of our knowledge in every way would improve in all sectors. Furthermore, if these same patterns and understandings of relationships can be related to commensurate notions of Christian faith and practice, it would obviously deepen our understanding and, eventually, experience of Christian faith. Because this same possibility is open to all religions and traditions, it conditions our methods and provides hope toward peaceful confluence, drawing us collectively into deeper, more informed and meaningful experiences with the world, ourselves, and the Sacred.

**The universal criterion of desire and holistic relational satisfaction**

Lindbeck has followed Austin in arguing for the criterion of performance, while Murphy and Hefner following Lakatos have argued progress (novel facts) and fruitfulness respectively. In diverse ways these are helpful, yet the process of progress and performance

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196 Gunton (1993), p.144. This 'metaphysical' notion of ideas concerning 'reality' and 'things', though 'inexhaustible', is contrary to the non-metaphysical formations of Wittgenstein and Milbank, yet it attempts to express, contra Wittgenstein, that explanation never destroys wonder but endlessly incites it and opens ground for its deepening. For Gunton, Coleridge, Hefner, Moltmann, et al., the eschatological ultimacy exists both within (immanently) and 'parallel' to (transcendently) the natural reality of things. For Wittgenstein the destruction of wonder through explanation (which is not to be confused with the ‘believe’ and ‘know’ of Kierkegaard's *Postscripts* (p.189)) seemed to result from his assumption that all desire for explanatory grip and reason was maniacal.
among the traditions takes place at the deepest level of human meaning, far beyond the static immediacy of categories of harmony, form and order, and the semblance of internal cohesion. The immediacy and safety of constant epistemic structuring must give way to some notion of performatives and *phronesis*,\(^{197}\) in which valuative assessment *emerges from within the relationship and relational context itself*. Again, "the norms of reasonableness are too rich and subtle to be specified adequately in any general theory of reason or knowledge,"\(^{198}\) therefore, the "ultimate test" is whether the new ideas are "conceptually powerful and practically useful" within relationships,\(^{199}\) or simply put, provide greater satisfaction within our interactions.

Such a criterion within relationships corresponds to the irreversibility of emergent properties and higher organizations in open systems within thermodynamic theory. This simply means that within open systems of natural relations increasingly higher states of organization emerge out of chaotic and chance fluctuations that are irreversible, outweighing the dynamic of entropy.\(^{200}\) With the institution of any kind of closed system, furthermore fixed in time (e.g., imposed conceptualization), entropy and distortion immediately sets in. Similarly, when relationships are pre- or overdetermined by pre-fixed rational structures and beliefs that are not open to appropriate transformation, the relationship or cultural system will begin to diminish in satisfaction. The system eventually suffers anomaly rather than transformative development.

In this respect, all knowledge existentially emerges as socio-cultural shapes of desire, or desire to relate, *within the specific relationship*. Though these communicative connections generally emerge in socially recognizable patterns, they always begin with an inherent desire to relate (awareness) and literally emerge into the meaningful (social) structures we call knowledge, all in one irreducible dynamic. All knowledge expresses the dynamic equation of differentiated unity and *perichoresis*. The degree of both differentiation and unity one experiences within the perichoretic cycles and tension of relationship produces the irreducible quality of fullness of life—that which ultimately most satisfies human desire, yielding the greatest meaning in life. Fullness of life is the criterion by which one assesses 'progress', and distinguishes 'performance'. Our idea of re-presentation and repetition in method must mature. John Milbank believes: "'The way' is not theoretically known but must be constituted through judgment in the repeated construction and recognition of


\(^{198}\) Lindbeck (1984), p.130.

\(^{199}\) Ibid., 134.

"examples', which cannot be literally copied if they are to be genuinely 'repeated'."

"Desire shapes truth beyond the imminent implications of any logical order, so rendering the Christian logos a continuous product as well as a process of 'art'. Therefore, the coherent and empirical ('repeatable') quality of knowledge sought within a theological discourse (closed system) must never be considered without the holistic criterion and performative of fullness of life (open system). In other words, methodologically, a theological understanding within its well-suited contextual home should provide the optimum fullness of life in contrast to known alternatives.

In this respect I take my preliminary comprehensive, as well as theological, cue for criteria from Wittgenstein (and Gunton). In the broadest but most important sense possible, we perceive, construct, and experience simply what interests us, and any performative status of our experiences is determined only within the active relationship (contrast). A Trinitarian explanation of this dynamic of knowledge as the shape of desire is given by Milbank:

The human mind does not 'correspond' to reality, but arises within a process which gives rise to 'effects of meaning'. It is a particularly intense network of such effects. Our bodily energies and drives (for Augustine . . . which images the power of the divine Father) are made 'present' and articulate (so alone constituted and sustained) through the happening of linguistic 'meaning', which is also the event of a 'truth' which cannot 'correspond'. For Augustine this second moment is the cultural training of the artist's ingenium; it is also that active memory by which we constantly learn through repeating our individual and collective biographies. Knowledge 'surfaces' as the process of learning, which is true if divinely 'illumined'—it is not a knowledge of an object outside that process (God being this process, in its infinite plenitude). . . . The mind is only illumined by the divine Logos, if also our 'preceding' energies, and our 'emergent' desires, correspond to the Father and the Spirit, respectively. We know what we want to know, and although all desiring is an 'informed' desiring, desire shapes truth beyond the imminent implications of any logical order, so rendering the Christian logos a continuous product as well as a process of 'art'. Moreover, if all that 'is' is good and true, then no positive reality can be false as a 'mistake', or as 'non-correspondence', but only false as deficient presence, embodying the short-fall of an inadequate desire. Now desire, not Greek 'knowledge', mediates to us reality. . . . All desire is good so long as it is a restless desire (a more-desiring desire) which is moved by infinite lack, the pull of the 'goal'.

In other words, the final universal criterion of 'fruitfulness' between various research programs, theological or otherwise, will inevitably be in the broad and natural sense what is most desirable—that which, in the end, is most wholly and relationally satisfying in relationship. This does not obviate a proper understanding of reason, but expresses what in fact empowers it. For Milbank, the correspondence of truth is never a re-presentation of reality (strictly a socio-cultural training), but a dynamic primordial correlation that happens within the construction of meaning. A 'novel fact' and a progressive program will

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202 Ibid., p.234.
203 Cf. the Hegelian notion of praxis developed by Peter Hodgson (1989).
inevitably be those expanding ideas, traditions, knowledge, insights, and ‘rationales’ that are most relationally satisfying. This broad criterion of holistic satisfaction (fullness of life) does not negate but entails coherence, synthesis, balance, reference, and learned action within all relations; however, it is never something we impose upon the relations but a quality that emerges from within it. The very nature of what constitutes all relationships, which is ‘always already’ within the relationship, affects and reveals the relational adequacy (truth) even though this is socially constructed. Our failure to perceive and experience this fully within the relationship is a matter of socialized and personalized structures of relational suppression. Milbank calls it “deficient presence, embodying the shortfall of an inadequate desire.” In this respect, desire is never wrong, merely inadequate, limited and therefore distorted. Moral turpitude is simply a question of suppressing presence within relationship and therefore suppressing transcendent desire.205

Marion, in the spirit of Kierkegaard, argues that even our image as well as knowledge of ‘God’ is shortened and partially represents an idol falling short of its referent. In similar consideration Milbank then suggests that ‘knowledge’, as the sole property of the subject, fails to be appropriate methodological currency. Rather, it is the extent to which one opens to the ground of desire, perichoretically and dynamically co-inherent within the immediate occurrence. This is a desire that refuses to stop at the visible eidolon (eido, video), a dynamic that not only reflects the quality of the analogia spiritus but iconically (eikon, eoi(o)ka) brings the person into perichoretic relations as such.

Desire, then, not only opens but announces the ground for the relationship. Only through ‘selective inattention’ (both conscious and subconscious) do we suppress the immanent-transcendent call for relationship where all knowledge is existentially constituted. This restricts our entrance into analogia spiritus. Not only does the relationship itself provide the truth of knowledge, but it is itself the truth. It is always unique, it cannot be wrong, but it can be suppressed and distorted.

Heidegger points out that truth is not principally constructed or developed by Dasein, but uncovered.206 It is a gift of the relationship itself set before us; that which was created

205 Because our shortened structures are unable to definitively express perfect relatedness (full ‘presence’), is sin inevitable in our efforts to expand those structures as desire and the call for fuller life beckon? Does each “degree” of “transformation” into His likeness (2Cor 3:18) entail an element of arbitrary action taking leave of previous structure? Within each relational context and stage of development, by virtue of analogia spiritus, we are able from within the relationship to determine some shape to felicitous relations, even though we may not know how to adequately theorize our actions. If we act in innocence, regardless of the action, it is not sin. Herein lies our sin, when we shorten our presence within the relationship through retracting certain existing relational structures and full openness from entrance into the third term of the relationship itself and potential transformation, from which the appropriate freedom and redeemed action emerges. Simply put, it is a refusal to become spirit, from whence comes the call to “Sin boldly.”

out of the two or more coming together. All that exists before the creative moment including our kinetic awareness (prereflexion) went into the moment. Here, within the third term of the relationship, we holistically and dynamically perceive creative possibility, an eternal dynamic from which all meaning emerges. This analogical awareness, as whole, as spirit, becomes articulated (conceptualized) within us as we relate. However, because we are constituted as spirit—a relationship unto ourselves—personal and cultural forms (‘moods’) of relating condition and often suppress the truth, diminishing the transcendent (relational) ground within our knowledge and longing.

Therefore, within open relations, in which the individual is constituted from out of the fullness of the relationship, the more meaningful ‘forms of life’ create the greatest relational satisfaction. All reason, belief, and the integrity of knowledge is ultimately reducible to this one fundamental claim. The web of knowledge and linguistic ‘meaning’ do not ultimately ‘correspond’ to anything other than the “‘preceding’ energies” and “‘emergent’ desires” which dialogically emanate from within the “multiplicity of transactions with one another” which, for Milbank, are constituted in relation to the Trinity.

Various reflections on epistemic humility and analogia spiritus: Gadamer and Aristotle on phronesis

Hans-Georg Gadamer in Truth and Method uses Aristotle to argue that the hermeneutical problem entails a unified process of not only understanding and interpretation, but also application. If these aspects are inseparable in their emergence, and if application is uniquely contingent upon the specific relationship, then all transactions “must be understood at every moment, in every particular situation, in a new and different way. Understanding here is always application... [and] is, then, a particular case of the application of something universal to a particular situation.” Unlike the Aristotelian notion of episteme (theoretical knowledge), he introduces phronesis as an aspect of knowledge which “does not

207 For example, the University of California system is currently inundated with young Japanese students many of whom either attempt to remain in the country after school or upon returning refuse to re-assimilate fully back into the established Japanese culture (This information published by the Riverside Press-Enterprise (1994) results from a University of California study). This phenomenon has created great alarm among the Japanese establishment, and in some situations much is being done to suppress this re-culturalization. A reverse migration among Westerners to Japan is virtually nonexistent. Similarly, American Christian Fundamentalism experiences the same phenomenon when its youth attend secular universities. In either example this in no way confirms the value of every aspect of one meaning frame over that of another, but suggests the possibility, that despite the contrasting complexity of developing values, one generally supports greater fullness of life. In the end, each will to some degree effectively transform the other. Such a thesis and research program which effectively institutes the universalia of the desire for authentic relationship (love) as a fundamental criterion, as well as the cyclical and supplemental criteria of dialectics, begins to employ a positive heuristic in which to begin understanding these social migrations and the trans-cultural criteria of progress.

209 Ibid., p.278.
seek to establish what exists,” but seeks to relate responsibly with that which is ever changing. *Phronesis* is a moral knowledge, which characterizes felicitous relationship. This is a self-knowledge that must come from within “oneself” in relation to a particular situation. Unlike *episteme* and *techne*, *phronesis* emerges and remains with each unique occurrence. “Aristotle says in general that *phronesis* is concerned with the means (ta pros to *telos*) and not with the *telos* itself.” In this sense, Kierkegaard’s notion of *inwardness* discussed earlier is consonant with Aristotle. By proffering the whole self through one’s “inner infinity” the individual is attempting to open toward and consider all relational elements and contingencies. In seeking “the whole inwardness of his personality, his nature is purified and he himself brought into immediate relation to the external Power whose omnipresence interpenetrates the whole of existence.” This, Kierkegaard insists, is what allows for the dynamic by which ‘something universal’ applies itself within ‘a particular situation’.

Gadamer is here presenting the hermeneutical task, even the ‘empirical’ one, as much more multi-faceted than assumed by Modernist presuppositions. Even empirical knowledge is not outside the dynamic of *phronesis*. Gadamer argues that even Aristotle “does not regard a system of laws as true law, in an absolute sense, but considers the concept of equity as a necessary adjunct to law.” In this respect, all knowledge is personal and relational and, therefore, morally contingent upon the individual’s or the program’s openness to the Other. This necessitates a moral prerequisite for meaningfulness in knowledge and relationship.

*Phronesis*, according to Aristotle, is contingent upon, first, the notion of *sunesis* which entails a “concern, not about myself, but about the other person,” in other words for *phronesis* to occur one must submit oneself to the possibility of revision in relation to the Other. Secondly, in a commitment to what is right, and entertaining all relevant contingencies, one must seek to unite with the other in mutual interest and must within the reciprocating special bond of openness think through the situation and issue together. In this respect, Aristotle’s notion of *phronesis* might be consider as a dynamic of *perichoresis*. Aristotle’s consideration of *phronesis* relaxes self-concern for that of the other; however, within perichoretic dynamics the self is constituted, *not in total givenness to the other*, but in total givenness to the emergent third term—the relationship itself. In this way the qualitative leap needed for the emergence of a felicitous horizon is mutually accomplished, actually.

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210 Ibid., p.280.
211 Ibid., p.282.
212 Ibid., p.525, n.225.
213 (EO2), p.141.
215 Ibid., p.288.
created. Aristotle’s ‘concern, not about oneself, but about the other person’, is here adjusted into a concern about the entire relationship. This is an irreducible dynamic, which incorporates and integrates concern for the other and the self within the context of Christ’s grace and presence within the relationship. This better reflects Gadamer’s concern for ‘mutual interest’ and thinking through the issue together.

To the extent we meet these relational conditions, phronesis becomes an active quality of our knowledge maintained within an open system of active development and open relations (forgiveness). It is this open relational disposition (acknowledged dependence upon the Other, in other words ongoing epistemological ‘repentance’) which brings about the possibility of true empirical knowledge (continuity) and the irreducible properties which emerge from within creation, as well as providing their specific moral and teleological force for proper doxastic structuring. We must consider, however, these aspects of knowledge all-inclusive within any notion of empirical knowledge and indeed capable of social discernment even in categories as seemingly allusive as religious experience. Where some emphasize epistemological rationale and ‘empirical’ behavior (episteme or techne) as criteria for authentic numinal experiences to guard against psychological ‘self-inducement’, we must go further, and insist upon emphasizing phronesis. Are there ways to expose our self-induced counterfeits and overdeterminations to a phronetic process by which a perichoretic quality is identifiable within our interactions? I believe so.

Epistemic humility: ‘non-inferentials’ in relation rather than reaction

The history of theological progress is characterized by constant change, cycling between stable periods of developing internal coherence and community consensus on the one hand, and more significant and disruptive paradigmatic shifts on the other. Either cycle always mandating change. The sad case of affairs is that all significant change in the past has largely been constituted by generational cycles. One generation simply dies off as the next is more free to institute new changes. Modern communications are now making it necessary to accelerate this process within generations, and thus the urgent need to methodologically develop and implement greater concern for epistemic humility. Theologically we need to learn to die young; we need to venture into various areas of our

216 When Christ calls us to die to self, he is not calling us to simply resign ourselves completely to the desires of others! In such an act we are de-humanized, our desires simply become the desires of others and we soon find our relations no longer satisfying to them (we become to this extent non-entities). Christ calls us to give ourselves and others up for Him (Mk10:29-30); He in whom all things are “held-together” in love and righteousness (Col 1:17), He in whom all relationships are equitably created in genuineness, thus truth.

217 For example, though often needed for a season within developmental growth, one should not in principle remain open to the overdetermination of oneself by another; to do so mandates closedness to the forces which have revealed the true character of that behavior to you. Once known, to allow such behavior to go unacknowledged (though not unforgiven) is a sin against the Other, and holds him or her in bondage to a life less relationally satisfying.
own personal concerns with others that were previously considered unrelated to the
discourse of theology. Accountability mechanisms exposing reactive rather than relational
discourse need to be instituted.

As discussed earlier all traditions and programs of knowledge are established through
certain networks of authorities unique to each tradition, some of these forces are more
conscious than others. Many, however, bear a ‘non-inferential’ character within our
convictions, and these are the forces that both birth new ideas, good and bad, as well as
stultify growth. ‘Non-inferential’ forces and aspects within our convictions are numerous; 1)
in-process emergence of language and categories not yet fully developed, 2) relational
configurations holistically grasped that are far too complex for cognitive or focal articulation
(some emotions), 3) aspects and dynamics so basic and primary they have been ‘invisibly’
integrated into our responses, 4) relational patterns of suppression developed into
subconscious styles of relating, and 5) numinal influences, to name a few. All these
‘unseen’ motivations create pockets of ‘non-inferential’ aspects within our convictions. The
reactive happens when some of these motivations unconsciously inhibit genuine interactions
imbuing our theological assertions with clouded meanings. It is naive to think the
suppressed anger, envy or ambition of a theologian or tradition does not condition and
doxtastically inhabit the meaning of their theological assertions. Even the simplest and
seemingly clearest theological expressions, propositions or narratives are significantly
transformed by such ‘unseen’ living histories and ‘non-inferential’ elements. None of us go
untouched.

In this respect, rational dialectic reaction must shift to open relatedness. The notion of
perichoresis is here again preeminent, in which the fullness of each (individuals, programs,
or concepts) prereflexively engage within the forming mutuality of the relationship itself
allowing each to be personally and appropriately constituted. But none of this is possible
without the willingness to be transformed within genuine relations, while at the same time
standing for what we believe. As we shall see later, these are alternating modalities within
our dialogical relations, each respectively maintained with the infiniteness of our soul, full
openness within our awareness, and full closure within the decisiveness of our action.218

218 A similar perspective is presented by John M. Templeton, in The Humble Approach, “Religion will
grow not in union but through freedom and competition. Originality and discovery derive from
variety, not uniformity. . . . If our concepts are divine truths, then they will not suffer in competition
with other concepts. . . . By spirited and loving competition, the truth will be purified and
strengthened. Progress comes from competition and this is what churches need most. . . . The true
religions should welcome competition because then they are put to the test, and if they are true, they
will survive. Only an inferior religion needs to prevent competition, lest its inferiority should be
exposed. Tolerance is a divine virtue but can become a vehicle for apathy. Millions of people are
thoroughly tolerant toward diverse religions; but rarely do such people go down in history as creators
or benefactors or leaders of any religion. The use of tolerance is mainly to keep us humble so that we
emerging mutuality which is the positive third term—the relationship itself—should not obliterate but intensify the fullness of those represented. In any matter this necessitates both epistemic humility and decisive action.

This immediately suggests two primary methodological considerations. One, that all knowledge remain open to meaningful revision (growth) in a posture of epistemic humility.\(^{219}\)

Secondly, there must be an ongoing methodological resolve to develop method and criteria disclosing all the forces active within theological research, let alone religious experience. Zagzebski argues that theology and theologians as people cannot be separated, and therefore theology does well to incorporate the corroborative findings of the human sciences which produce better theologians (persons) revealing all hidden ‘affections’—relations.

In another respect, theology itself necessitates some degree of experiencing grace and the numinal factor of God’s influences within our transactions. To maintain such influences, Jean-Luc Marion suggests suffering, an openness to transcend the restfulness of epistemic certainty, and living within a theological place always beyond our immediate grasp.

the teacher becomes a theologian by aiming in the text at the referent, he must have an anticipated understanding of the referent, for lack of which he will not be able to spot its effects of meaning in the text. There are many exegetes or theologians who commit massive misinterpretations of texts, . . . not for want of knowledge, but out of ignorance of what is in question, of the thing itself. . . . He who claims to go beyond the text as far as the Word must therefore know whereof he speaks: to know, by experience, charity, in short, “to have learned from what he suffered” (Heb. 5:8) like Christ . . . here is the qualification, extrascientific but essential, that makes the theologian: the referent is not taught, since it is encountered by mystical union.\(^{220}\)

Here is a clear distinction between the closed system of theology and the open system of theology. The latter is engaged through open and authentic transactions which dimensionalizes and maintains (iconically illuminates) the closed system that is emergent and maintained with openness. Therefore, only to the extent theologians both understand and experience this relational logic of the spirit in perichoresis will our theology progress.

Theological thought undoubtedly never experienced in such an imperative way the duty of formulating its own radically theological logic (which especially does not mean “dialectical theology,” etc.); undoubtedly its responsibility never appeared as great with respect to all thought in expectation of a “new beginning”; but theological thought undoubtedly never stole away with so much fear from its theological task.\(^{221}\)

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\(^{219}\) In other words, Christians, for example, are not completely and felicitously engaging the Hindu unless they are willing, in principle, to have their current narrative and epistemic structuring changed or even somehow subsumed into the Hindu paradigm within authentic relationship, even though they currently hold their existing beliefs with an infinity of passion and may decidedly continue to do so in light of encountering contrasting and competing theories and stories of life.


\(^{221}\) Ibid., p.182.
Our theologic, when clearly perceived, speaks for itself. However, as long as there is need within our crippled attempts to differentiate between theology and theology there is value in falsifying as much theology as possible through its own \textquoteleft logic\textquoteright and corroborative soundings within the humanities. No attempt is here made to supply such methodological specifics, but only to suggest specific concerns and methodological trajectories that must be factored within a theory of meaning as relational.\footnote{It is obvious that the accumulating insights of psychology are continuing to penetrate and expose the various mechanisms and motivations which comprise our actions. As this information grows I suspect theological discourse can only benefit. Nevertheless we must remain critically attentive, as a colleague suggests, \textquoteleft clinical psychologist, because of the great stature they enjoy in society, and because of the power they wield over the (mental) health of bodies, will always write from a privileged vantage point that \textit{at the very least} operates subconsciously to project an agenda of power and dominance (the \textquoteleft Kevorkian\textquoteright effect)\textquoteright (Rick Berchiolli, postgraduate, University of Chicago).}

\textbf{The dynamic and prereflexive between of \textit{analogia spiritus}}

Within social dialogue, or internal relationship (personal reflection), the new \textquoteleft world\textquoteright of the relationship emerges between. This emergent \textquoteleft world\textquoteright instantly creates a differentiated unity, which becomes the dynamic bed of relationship. In the first instance of intending one another much is communicated, a spirit of intention, a \textquoteleft mood\textquoteright (Heidegger), a relational disposition that shapes the interactional dynamic by which the individual is able and willing to enter the relationship. This immediately establishes the organizing process and identification of the self within the relationship. These holistic communiqués immediately interpenetrate, creating the very ground of the relationship, which to some degree shapes itself analogically to that Power and dynamic which create it. Only upon this bed which lies beyond us, between us, yet paradoxically \textquoteleft apart\textquoteright of us, do words become meaningful. We will attend to this in depth in an upcoming chapter.

This prereflexive dialogical dynamic presents much more than just a deepening relation of two associating \textquoteleft worlds\textquoteright through natural codes, symbols, concepts and behaviors which are simply de-coded and interpreted within the individual\textquoteleft s mind. These represent only the tip of the iceberg. Our dialogical cycling is much more complex, always beginning with prereflexive holistic entrance of two or more in composite response awareness. Only upon this initiating ontological foundation of relation do any sort of symbols assume social meaning. This grows into intensely complex acts of communication, always communicating more than what is focally (rationally) intended, and never are such semiotic configurations created apart from this holistic interpenetration within a perichoretic dynamic.

The event of Pentecost portended this specific dynamic within the communicative act revealing its holistic and mediational nature. Words were spoken and understood within a greater medium and dynamic of wholistic analogical communication. At Pentecost it is doubtful each person\textquoteright s meaning was systematically taken from one and implanted by the
Spirit and Christ into another, rather, through such mediating dynamics, each compliant individual was momentarily gifted with the capacity of full perichoretic relations. They prereflexively entered the domain of the relationship—Eternity itself—in which their meaning could be created in relation to the developed relational and communicative capacity of the other, transparently through God. In this transformative dynamic the Spirit alone is not transferring and translating information Himself, rather Christ and the Spirit become in grace the dynamic upon which these individuals were able themselves to communicate authentically across cultural-linguistic boundaries, thus relating to the other while in felicitous relation to (participating with) the Trinitarian tripartite dynamic.

This is the logic of spirit (analogical holism) in which nothing is ever communicated without symbol, word or story of some kind; and yet impotent without a paralleling prereflexive dynamic communicating (creating) whole ideas analogically between the relatants. Meaning is then created according to the existing common socialized capacities or that which is create-able (developable) within the relatants respectively without obliterating the existing capacities and personal integrity of each. The individual person, symbol or speech is always transformed (recreated), but this transformation does not obliterate but enriches and deepens the former self and use of language. Upon this eucharistic site of analogia spiritus all semiotic integrity and efficacy is immediately and existentially established. The degree to which we experience this dynamic corresponds to our epistemic humility and the willingness to offer one’s own semiotic structure for appropriate relational transformation. 223 To the extent this happens we experience perichoretic intimacy, and its revealing criterion will be the corresponding degree of relational satisfaction or “sublime.”

The perichoretic event is dynamic and therefore, the mediating relationship allows the creation of meaning in a “dynamic mutual reciprocity, interpenetration and interanimation” 224 with the other. From out of this dynamic union comes that which is

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223 The proverbial sexual affair is often an excellent example of where the individual’s willingness to risk in abandon otherwise guarded elements of one’s life, results in intense, but shortened, “relational sublime.” The sole reason such sublime ceases or never exists in many marriages is simply due to the unwillingness to risk the existing relational state and ‘identity’ into the transformative domain of authentic relations. Typically, most marriage and social relations quickly become our ‘low-water’ relational water mark, that which is socially contracted to insure some ‘sufficient’ level of relations (‘if I abide by these norms, no matter what, I have this’). When such structures become ossified as ‘relational’ insurance, closed to authentic change, transformative passion and fullness of life dissipate. Only within the full willingness to risk and be transformed out of authentic relations can the original ideological structures of relationships be painfully real-ized. Love believes all, i.e. begins by giving the benefit of the doubt, but, as our protective structures become revealed under the exposing intimacy of marriage they must be acknowledged and submitted into relations whereby these old ideological (socially contracted) structures of relations are brought into the transforming and unifying structure of authentic relationship—marriage (made one flesh).

greater than the sum of the constituent parts. Something new emerges in each which was previously not in either person. In this way, says Milbank, the existing harmonies, existing ‘extensions’ of time and space, constantly give rise to new ‘intentions’, to movements of the Spirit to further creative expression, new temporal unraveling of creation ex nihilo, in which human beings most consciously participate.”

The emergence of new properties is evident in the human imagination, which is an example of this perichoretic participation within reflection. The self is constituted as a relationship ‘within itself’ (‘Christ in us’) while at the same moment constituted in relation to the world. In upcoming chapters we will discuss why this perichoretic dynamic of the self must have a tripartite structure in order for there to be authentic differentiation within relational unity.

**Humility as the full entrance into the mediation of relation**

Relational openness and its iconic gaze is an inherent aspect of knowledge. Closedness, not to be confused with closure or making a stand, compromises all our knowledge. Many developmental and social theorists today continue to work with relational paradigms that struggle to balance the relational aperture between individuals in a dangerous world. Within the subject-object, even the I-thou paradigm, one cannot completely open to the other without losing or endangering self to the ‘world’ of the other. At the same time, how can we even consider authentic relationality and genuine connection without acknowledging that in some way this must happen? Greek dialectics provides us with no hope in this regard, which is the rightful contention of Poststructuralism. Such dialectics ultimately create suspicion, and suspicion ultimately leads to violence.

Kierkegaard’s relational structuring, however, expresses a perichoretic relational dynamic in which we are freed, indeed required, to offer the whole self constantly into the relationship in order for it to be authentic. The authenticity or inauthenticity of a relationship or its various aspects cannot be presupposed, it must be determined within the specific relationship. Within such a ground by which all relations are constituted abides the very character and nature of that Power that creates it. Such a presence, influence and dynamic within the relationship universally provides the moral character and eventual structure for the specific and relative situation from within the constituting dynamic and mediation of the

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226 This dynamic inherent in all relationships is noticeable within our own experiencing when we listen to a piece of music while viewing at a particular picture, portion of film, or picturesque view out our window. To the degree we are openly and imaginatively given to the unique relationship between them, each will begin to exhibit properties or qualities they had not formerly displayed. In especially powerful experiences of this dynamic whole new levels of relational dynamics and properties can subtly emerge from tacit to focal awareness, breaking forth in a manner influencing all of our knowledge and expectations.
created relationship. In this way, the evolved and established social code is appropriately re-appropriated, and yet opened to further enrichment and development through either new highly pedagogical circumstances, or through individuals with extreme responsiveness to the desire for greater authenticity in relations. Nevertheless, as we wholly submit ourselves infinitely into the relationship our relation becomes perichoretic in relation to that Power which constitutes the relationship, and all things can be known in truth, even that within the relationship which is not authentic. To the extent we venture ourselves accordingly, we are able to make an absolute stand within it (that moment).

Such a relational dynamic, however, necessitates the activity of a dynamic mediational source universally active within all relational dynamics, and one which must remain a third term within all relations—a source and dynamic which is both completely inside and outside the relatants themselves. In specifically Christian language, the love and experience (relationship) of Christ is needed in order to provide for us the full freedom to venture (with people) all that we are in order to create and sustain genuine, and thus transformative, relationships. As we shall later see, such a paradigm asymmetrically conditions the personal transformational dynamic over the stages of the individual or culture within the complementarity of transition and stages.

In closing this discussion on epistemic humility we must bear in mind that we always communicate more than we focally intend, which when distorted convolutes focal or ‘literal’ meaning and the doxastic structure of our knowledge and communication. We are never, in this age, free of it. Such impedance compromises the full power and meaning of communication simply because the individual is not completely present. And we must remember, this conditions all our knowledge.

Theologically therefore we must implement a more integrated (complex) concept of falsification and more holistic forms of awareness (numinal inclusive). Lindbeck and Lakatos implicitly suggest through their terms “performance” and “progress” that the development of meaning entails a complex set of factors which can only be assessed over

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229 To the extent the self is fully consolidated in singleness of mind and one's 'inner infinity', which always includes the individual's immediate social construction and relationship, the self will be appropriately constituted in "immediate relation to the external Power whose omnipresence interpenetrates the whole of existence" and "posits self." Kierkegaard (EO2 141), and (SUD 146-7). Cf. Luke 12:11-12; Mt 18:20 + Mt 18:16,20.

230 I am not arguing that developed knowledge, social codes, and establish judgements are to be eliminated every time one enters a new relational context; but that the individual must tender them into all relations with an openness to appropriate transformation when genuinely engaged. Such a transformance results only when compelling factors reveal themselves within the relationship. The point is, without such an attitude of universal openness one will never see the compelling factors. The primary issue is that truth emerges from within the relationship, and cannot be imposed upon it.

231 The "call" of which Heidegger says, "comes from me and yet from beyond me and over me" (1962, p.320 [275]).
time within the cultural evolution of a program. However, if we can isolate what inhibits human transformation and furthermore identify and expose unwillingness for authentic relations—epistemic pride and relational closedness—then we can expedite our progress from out of innocence.

**A concluding unscientific typology of epistemic humility**

Considering the aforementioned direction in the structuring of meaning and relations, I close with a simple theological typology of four basic relational dispositions. These present hermeneutical structures that shape our relations toward others and ultimately establish our ability to be genuinely transformed within authentic relations.

1) Closed exclusivist: Exclusive affirmation of a specific meta-narrative. This is generally a religiously sectarian (or primitivist) position that affirms an exclusive action of the Transcendent into history employing its *most complete* efficaciousness only within the faith practice of that specific meta-narrative. Distinctively, however, they not only hold specific beliefs as eternally viable, but attempt to reify their existing meaning (practice) *throughout history*, exemplifying an epistemological or pragmatic rigidity that is both unaffected by and completely incommensurable with the general cultural forms of life (e.g., Stanley Hauerwas, possibly Nancey Murphy).

2) Open exclusivist: Affirmation of an exclusive meta-narrative. Although they assume the knowledge and faith practice of the narrative to be exclusively efficacious, they recognize its immanent presence and meaning as active and contingent upon all reality. They assume all ongoing fields of relations are hermeneutically contributive to the ongoing development of its meaning and practice. This position may be held with infinite passion in contrast to other narratives simply because it remains open to further enrichment, and technically even subsumption, by other narratives (e.g., Søren Kierkegaard, Jürgen Moltmann).

3) Closed pluralist: Those who demand only pluralistic truth claims and prohibit the possibility of a meta-narrative. They believe that nothing eternal, infinite, or of a transcendent nature can be exclusively localized or efficacious within history that is not otherwise just as appropriately signified within plural or alternative means (e.g., John Hick, Peter Hodgson).

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232 In other words, because it is open to the possibility of development and transformation by all things within its relational purview it can therefore stand within that moment and that place in confidence and boldness *in relation* to the alternatives around it. To reify the possible development and transformation in the meaning of our beliefs immediately shortens the passion and scope of our inquires and relations to the world.
4) Open pluralist: Those who believe the transcendent is spectrally efficacious in a plural manner, yet, are open to enrichment from and future subsumption into a potential meta-narrative (e.g., Kenneth Gergen\textsuperscript{233}).

This typology reveals four general epistemic dispositions that deeply affect theological discourse and method. Ultimately these categories test our willingness to undergo change if confronted with new and appropriate developments within authentic relationship. Few refuse to acknowledge the transformational processes that all meta-narratives have and continue to undergo in their complementary relation to culture. Until only recently, for example, certain enabling and ultimately destructive behaviors had been acknowledged by Christian practice and theology as charitable. Do such discoveries actually change our meaning and practice of love? Yes they do, absolutely and irreversibly, yet it can do so without breaking continuity with the tradition. This, however, in no way warrants the elimination of a possible existing, composite or future meta-narrative emerging as God’s specific manifestation and communication.

The open positions, though capable of intense convictions, do not impose their present and past understanding (meaning) upon the future, only upon what they have experienced and currently know at that moment. To do so would be a claim of omniscience. Either of the ‘closed’ dispositions go beyond the call of ‘standing’ for a meta-narrative, truth, or justice, but inevitably becomes an unapproachable position that effectively withdraws from the possibility of genuine relationship with others and God’s future open and free relation to the world. I must close by pointing out these categories are an attempted at incarnating what I believe to be Kierkegaardian dynamics within theological discourse. They are attempts to focus the discussion of this chapter into categories, which inevitably force us into very revealing positions. No doubt there are many that would feel uncomfortable with them and deny their suitability.

**Conclusion**

The primary purpose of this section was not so much to consider current trends in theological method or hermeneutics, but to use them to investigate the structure of meaning itself. The positive insights and suggestions of two programs were conditionally reshaped within a Kierkegaardian relational dynamic. I have tried to present the efficacy of a perichoretic tripartite structure to meaning formation, which emerges within the event of relationship, inclusive of the individual as a relation unto herself as well. The following

\textsuperscript{233} Speaking as and to therapists and developmentalist, Gergen suggests, “we might open the door to many other discourses common within the society, but often eschewed by therapists by virtue of their “unscientific” basis. Here I am thinking of a range of otherwise marginalized discourses—or spiritual life, of the deities, and of the mystical and mysterious” (“Generate Realities,” p.6).
chapters will begin to provide alternative insights into this dynamic bringing greater
definition to this irreducible dynamic as we progress.

One of the primary thrusts in understanding meaning as perichoresis, and the dynamic
of perichoresis itself, is its multi-dimensional and constitutive nature. Meaning defies
reduction into any distinct loci and is constituted within a relational dynamic through which
many relational fields interpenetrate. Hermeneutically, there is never meaning in just the
text, nor in the reader, nor culture, but only within the integrating fields of relations when
two or more come together. In each relational occurrence something greater is created
(emerges) than the sum of what was before, and meaning dynamically incarnates itself anew
within the world.

Continuity, in both historical identity and the individual, becomes the product of
linguistic and cultural training in which our preceding energies, and emergent desires are
developed and maintained in the dynamic interanimation of the relationship in analogical
 correspondence to the corroborating and mediating activity within the Trinitarian interaction.
All rationality, in this respect, represents a diachronic continuity in relatedness as such. In
this way, all meaning is irreducibly created within the perichoretic relation between two or
more, simply because to some extent ‘we are made one, as the Father is in Christ, and Christ
in Him, that we also might be in Them’ (Jn 17:21). It is here that reason finds its well suited
but dynamic and dialogical home,234 never as a relation of our relative concerns directly to a
universal or eternal frame of reference. We must simply be satisfied to live in time. As
Kierkegaard has taught us, there is indeed is objective and Eternal truth, but we, in time, are
always constituted otherwise, and must therefore relinquish all continuity and reason in each
relational occurrence in order to be constituted in relation to the Eternal dynamic in the
next.235

From within the stirring waters of awareness our concerns emerge in the form of words,
which when spoken enter into a new world, a world unknown before the speaking. With
sublimity they fall into a world with a new unspeakableness as we ourselves, as the speaker
learn from their speaking into relationship. As Marion so vividly recounts:

Thus speaking our words, the Word re-doubles his incarnation, or rather accomplishes it
absolutely, since language constitutes us more carnally than our flesh. Such an incarnation in
our words can be undertaken only by the Word, who comes to us before our words.236

We enter all relations through analogia spiritus, a holistic awareness into the relationship by
which Christ and the Spirit mediate our de-liberation* of social intent, and therein our words
when spoken are filled with meaning greater than our prior reflection of them. When

234 How rationality is ultimately grounded within our social development cf. Alistair McFadyen in The
Call to Personhood (1990).
235 Mk 10:29-30; Mt 10: 34-39.
spoken, they immediately take part in a new creation, a new relationship which is greater than the sum of what previously existed. Our sacrifice into the relationship does not obliterate the self, but intensifies the self by meaningfully incarnating us within the relationship, the world. The self finds its greatest instantiation in the world, in relationship, and this it cannot do but by the mediating gift of Word and Spirit between.

One’s identity, as well as the truth of the text are certain and timeless as developed and informed energies, sedimented histories, which never cease to become what they are in active relational meaningfulness. Nevertheless, the text in itself is meaningless, dust upon the shelf. For all the socialized order, coherence and acceptability in the life of the dispassionate psychologist within the novel *Equus*, he eventually conceded of his depraved client, “that boy has known a passion more ferocious than I have felt in any second of my life. . . . he stands in the dark for an hour, sucking the sweat off his God’s hairy cheek! . . . in the morning, I put away my books on the cultural shelf.”

What do we do with such an infinite desire? How do we establish and name our truth and knowledge?

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237 Peter Shaffer, (1973), p.82-3.
Chapter 3

Human spirit

"The spirit of a man is the lamp of the Lord,
Searching all the inner depths of his heart."

Prov 20:27

Introduction

James Loder understands the Holy Spirit as the third person of the Trinity who proceeds from the Father and the Son, and though much more, the Spirit "is also the relationship between them."1 Furthermore,

for human nature, to partake in this Spirit is to participate in the inner life of God. Thus, statements of dialectical unity (e.g. one person, two natures; three persons, one essence; creatio ex nihilo of the natural order as simultaneously contingent and independent; human nature as both dead yet alive; God fully present yet coming; human relationships as mutual creation of each other in mutual coinherence) only genuinely illuminate creation, human existence, and the Divine nature if they are understood from within the inner life of God; that is, by God's Spirit according to God's self-knowledge.2

Loder is quick to argue this does not entail an acceptance of Augustine's vestigium trinitate, although it is consonant with Alasdair Heron's recent call to reenvisioning the Holy Spirit as relational,3 and Thomas Torrance's prohibition of reducing the Holy Spirit to ecclesiology or mere socialization of collective human spirit.4

It is my aim in this section to investigate the possibility of human existence participating within the inner life of the Trinity, and where and how this might be located in human experience. If indeed an Eternally constituted God mutually relates to humanity in spacetime, we might suspect, as Gunton suggested earlier, that human spirit is dynamically analogical to God's own relational dynamics and, therefore, perichoretic in nature. This section will investigate the perichoretic dynamic of human spirit; first, an example of self as a relationship unto itself, human emotions; secondly, Alastair McFadyen's Christian theory of the individual as constituted in dialogical relation with others; and thirdly, the human developmental psychology of Jean Piaget and its theological implications as suggested by James Loder, that human beings are a dynamic process of perichoresis. These investigations

1 Loder (1992), p.21. For Loder, the relational understanding of the constituting dynamic of the Trinity owes much to the De Trinitate of Augustine (354-430). However, Athanasius, Epiphanius, and the Cappadocian fathers, notably Gregory of Nazianzus, present a clearer picture of the relational dynamic inherent within the Trinity.
2 Ibid., p.21.
3 Heron (1983).
4 Torrance (1965), pp.229-239; and (1988).
will attempt to create space within the understanding of human experience, which might then be appropriately and analogically associated with the internal activity of the Trinity.

**Importance of human awareness as the function of human spirit**

We will here consider the general anthropological consideration that the process of human awareness is the fundamental causal nexus in persons where the Eternal activity of the Trinity breaks forth into interaction with Creation. This is consonant with the auxiliary hypothesis developed by Philip Hefner—human beings are God’s co-creators, nature’s self-consciousness, and conceptualizers of the ‘ultimate’. Human beings are constituted (Col 1:17; ‘con-sist’, ‘put together’) as persons in relation to the world and God, developmentally contingent upon genetic, social and relational structures that are informed and evolved processes. They are emergent, energized and sustained in fundamental relation to *Spiritus Creator*.5 *Spiritus Creator (ruach)* is that activity of God’s Spirit that sustains all Creation, just as cosmic Spirit is that quality of human experience that is *life* (and ‘passion’). All desire emerges within human spirit, and it is there constituted through the relational structures of persons, while in relation to the world. In this respect, all aspects of human existence—sensory experience, cognitive and emotive response, and knowledge—are therefore constituted as living desire.6 The impress of *Spiritus Creator* upon the human spirit (as in all Creation) begins as an active potential—awakening the developmental process and influencing the structuring of chaos within an open and free universe in an ever widening range of particularization and interrelations, which lead to fuller experiences and meaning. As developed consciousness, the level of openness and awareness given toward relation with the world (including the self) existentially actuates human spirit, thus creating corresponding degrees of ‘passion’ (Kierkegaard) and *life* experience. The degree and depth of the relationship’s perichoretic interrelatedness establishes the degree to which our understanding becomes our own (not hidden or ‘referred’), thus making the relationship

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5 This section on the human spirit refers us of the previous mention of God Spirit’s multidimensional activity and manifestation as cosmic Spirit, *Spiritus Creator* and Holy Spirit. This precludes our forthcoming study on Moltmann’s notion of Spirit. Human spirit, as developed cosmic Spirit, is the immanent-transcendent aspect of the *Spiritus Creator* sustaining presence, and must always be understood in relation to but not inclusive of the activity of the Holy Spirit—God’s activity as Person in focal relation to Creation.

6 This refers to the upcoming discussion on the Spirit, where Moltmann suggests that an emphasis upon the Spirit of God as solely the agent of redemption fails to acknowledge the Spirit’s activity as the “divine energy of life, which according to the Old Testament ideas interpenetrates all the living” (1992, p.8). The activity of the Spirit is actively “connected . . . with the body and nature,” as well as with “God, faith, the Christian life, the church and prayer.” “If we talk in Hebrew about Yahweh’s *ruach*, we are saying; God is . . . a force in body and soul, humanity and nature, . . . *ruach* was also the breath of life and the power to live enjoyed by human beings and animals (Ecc. 12:7). . . . The *ruach* . . . keeps all things in being and in life” (40-42). Ps 104:29f: “When thou takest away their *ruach* they die. When thou sendest forth thy *ruach* they are created; and thou renewest the face of the ground.”
more meaningful. This happens only when our own structures emerge from a response awareness that faces the entirety of truth within its current structures and situation—human as spirit; and this process necessitates a ‘dying’ of former structures.

As we have seen, the coming together of any two persons instantly creates the emergence of a relationship or relational background. Dialogically, human response to a call must be constituted from out of a process of awareness. This must happen before the individual can ever be constituted within relationship. Jesus suggests that the willingness to hear conditions the quality of relationships. Therefore, the degree of ongoing willingness and openness in our awareness establishes the level of authenticity and degree of perichoretic transformation from within the relationship. If the constituting of human beings takes place from out of this process of awareness—the hearing—then the vital character, movement and substance of the relationship transpires during these prereflexive moments. This suggests that the human function of preattentive awareness (prereflexion) antecedent to reflexive response initiates and locates the active causal nexus in divine-human relations. In dialogical terms, this is the open cycle within relationship.

This is extremely important to the overall structure of this thesis; from out of this process of awareness we are constituted as self-in-relation. Theologically, because God knows us in Christ, we are by grace always already constituted as spirit. When God as Person speaks through his Holy Spirit, our spirit contextually constitutes self in analogical relation to the Eternal Person of Holy Spirit.

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7 Cf. Mt 25:14-30: The parable of the talents.
8 A three-year-old girl screams in terror every time a train disruptively speeds past the seaside campground. This continues despite the incessant reassurances of her panicking parents—“it’s OK, it won’t hurt you.” However, only when the parents ceased ‘comforting’ the child, allowing the child to twice suffer the dread alone, does the knowledge that ‘it’s all OK’ become her own. The triangulation ends in perichoretic emergence of personal knowledge and structure within the child herself.
Chapter 3a

Perichoresis in persons: Human emotions

Life is measured by the number of things you are alive to.
Maltbie B. Babcock

If there is agreement upon anything within the contemporary discussion on human emotions, it is that the matter is complex and there is no shortage of competing theories of explanation. In fact, there does seem to be agreement that emotions are themselves unified complexities. What emotions complexly contain is of interest to this study, however, of primary interest is that emotions are constituted, and how, the dynamic by which they come to be. By investigating and suggesting how emotions are created and function in relations, I hope to locate qualities and functions that we might later analogically consider in relation to corresponding dynamics in God. Likewise, this might help us to understand more appropriately the relation between God's thinking and action, and that of humans. In this respect, we shall investigate the human emotions as a perichoretic activity within persons.

The significant quality and set of characteristics of emotions is their amazing ability to relationally collate a complexity of relational factors and contingencies in an instant of time, and conversely, sustain certain relational factors across the complexities of time. The arrangement of most factors and contingencies into a meaningful and appropriate single unified emotive response is subconscious, in other words, without cognitively working through a sequential causal network. For example, if A, then [-B-C-D-] E. E, for example, creates fear; however, if we eliminate (resolve) C, there is an instant release of fear in the person even though C within the 'relational equation' was or had become only a subconscious variable. As emotive response, this reveals the human spirit's instantaneous process and ability to organize and unify self in focused relationship.

Alternatively, this same emotive activity of human spirit is likewise active at the birth of new or emergent meaning. These are the situations where we encounter the unknown, which forces the expansion of our existing but inadequate linguistic and relational structures, in an effort to produce relational equilibrium and satisfying meaning out of excess stimulus.9

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9 The alternative is suppressing desire or expanding theory through existing but ad hoc categories and procedures.
This emergent emotive function of human spirit always begins with the experience of wonder or dread.

There are many current theories of emotions that have developed over the last century, but as such, specific theories bear little weight upon this study. Though differing theories and paradigms of emotions champion various attributes, most of them at least agree upon the presence of these attributes and certain causal dynamics. The understanding of emotions derived solely from the extreme and more visible emotions (e.g., fear and anger) is currently evolving into a broader and more circumspect understanding. The damaging sporadic occasionalism understanding of emotions has begun to give way to the belief that emotional states are always present and furthermore, interrelated with every other aspect of human life. Within a motivational/perceptual theory of emotions, Robert Leeper tells us,

> emotions are... not just rare events, of intense sorts, as the traditional ideas about emotions portray them as being, but as more or less perpetually active motives and do most of their work at moderate or weak intensities. At such lower levels, emotions do most of their work without the individual’s having any notable thought of being motivated, because the emotional processes tend to be experienced as objectified or projected as perceptions of the situation.\(^\text{10}\)

Emotional states are ever present within all relations and inseparable from and integrally connected to every element of human functioning. Reason, knowledge (epistemology), and morality, are but a few of the functions in which emotions play an essential role.

To begin with, we should note that feelings are not to be confused with emotions; feelings are never abstract, you do not feel fear when you are not afraid. Ray Anderson tells us, “feelings are an essential and accurate expression of self;... feelings are the self.”\(^\text{11}\)

Emotions, on the other hand, are not always felt.\(^\text{12}\) They can be suppressed, such as fear masquerading as tension during a job interview; or even epistemologically determinant, as in theory or tradition intransigence resulting from the unwillingness to endure the shame and embarrassment if one were ‘wrong’. Following are some basic attributes of emotions that are of interest to this study, which contemporary scholarship in one way or another affirms.

1) As just mentioned, emotions are “sometimes ’subceived’ and sometimes wholly beneath consciousness.”\(^\text{13}\) Nevertheless, these emotions have a direct affect upon the individual’s experience as a whole.

2) Some emotions are associated with typical physiological responses, which may or may not be directly felt.\(^\text{14}\) Emotions, however, principally “differ from feelings, sensations, or

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\(^\text{11}\) Anderson (1995), p.64. Much of the basic structure of this discussion owes a dept to Anderson’s research in *Self Care* (1995).
\(^\text{13}\) Ibid., p.183.
physiological responses in that they are dispositional rather than episodic." No longer tenable is the positivist understanding of emotions as solely disruptions of rational judgments, conscious thoughts, and observations.

The physiological does, however, play an enormous role in emotions and may very well be crucial to their development. Stephan Strasser realizes that all knowing and recognizing is not a result of the mind (Descartes), but as Merleau-Ponty has pointed out, of the body-ego (a mind-body). Before the subject-object tension exists, the neonate as "feeling subject, feels himself by the fact that he feels his fellow-subject." This happens through various sensations and tactile stimulation; at which point, however, there is no other, fellow-object, only himself—umwelt (surrounding world), which only later develops into a we, and later again, an I. At this time the awareness develops as a "nonobjectifying mode of awareness." From this point on and throughout the development of awareness, Strasser argues all awareness begins with "what was at first one—feeling one’s own state and feeling the other—[and only then] separates out.” The "objectifying and reflecting mode of awareness . . . is but an 'upper layer'. Our original feeling and emotional mode of awareness is indeed hidden by it, but it remains there." Because of our functional roots in infant body-ego development, human existence is “not at first perceived, thought or sought after; it is primarily lived, through feeling.” In this manner, it is this enigmatic unitive mind-body dynamic which creates and sustains the synthesis of experience and concept, and brings the process of awareness into the constitution of self which so characterizes and enables the emotive response of human being.

3) Usually an emotion is contingent upon the individual believing some state of affairs, or it may correspond to a judgment.

4) Similarly, emotions are generally motivational; they contain, says Robert C. Roberts, concerned reactions or dispositions to "propositional objects in the sense that what the emotion is about, of, for, at, or to can in principle be specified propositionally."

5) Similarly, Alston refers to emotions as "perceptual evaluation[s] of something." Furthermore, Roberts argues that emotions are "serious concern-based construals." By using the word construals, he rightly acknowledges the personal factor of theory-laden perception while also assuming that emotions do construe something.

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17 Ibid., p.305.
18 Ibid., p.306.
20 Roberts, p.195
23 Ibid., p.184.
6) Roberts notes "emotions are not, except incidentally, directly reflexive, whereas feelings of construed condition are always so." Because emotions are construals and holistic dispositions contingent upon existing relational factors (some subconscious or even linguistically 'unnamed' as in dread or wonder), they are prereflexive motivations and constructions. Whereas, feelings are immediate reflexive states of sensation, just as episteme reflects a 'coherent' and socially embedded linguistic structure (both reflexive); we can better understand emotions as 'living' bridges between human awareness (openness) and human reflexion (closure).

7) Emotions share corresponding formal properties and similar 'logics' with desire. Jenefer Robertson suggests that the cognitive element in emotions are not dispassionate judgments, rather they are, "a construal or way of thinking A as P," and a way which is "governed (caused) . . . and also 'colored' by our desires." She concludes that although an occurrent emotional state cannot be defined as a conception of something determined by desires, a particular occurrent emotional state may be identical with the occurrence of nothing but a thought, provided it has the right historical links with the agent's desires.

In other words, though an emotion may not be the direct result of a desire, the corresponding thought will have originally developed because of a desire. In this respect, all emotions are the result of desires.

Furthermore, in pointing to the wide range of phenomena which characterize contemporary understandings of emotions, from "knee-jerk" responses to highly socialized aesthetic and relational responses, Alison Jaggar views "so-called instinctive, nonintentional feelings as the biological raw material from which full-fledged human emotions develop." In this respect, we could consider the foundation of all emotions to be a socially and genetically structured complexity of basic desires and values, or as this thesis maintains, a basic desire. All desire results from the single dynamic of perichoresis, the desire to relate genuinely as entities.

8) Most important to this study, is the fact that there is an overwhelming consensus that emotions are "typically experienced as unified states of mind, rather than as sets of components (for example, a belief + a desire + a physiological perturbation + some behavior)." Again, we are back to this concept of something (the emotion in this case)

24 Ibid., p.190.
25 Robertson, p.736.
26 Ibid., p.731.
28 Ibid., p.153; "if we had no emotional responses to the world, it is inconceivable that we should ever come to value one state of affairs more highly than another."
emerging as greater than the 'sum of the parts'.

In this respect, emotions are similar in character to gestalt and hypothetico-deductive reasoning. Rather than a static collective or shape of images or beliefs, emotions represent ongoing holistic relational dispositions and construals that emerge within each transaction according to what is most important to the individual. Emotions are the attempt to constitute oneself and all one's relational factors relative to a specific focal awareness. Such concerned construals, dispositions, or appraisals are contingent upon one's immediate focus and can often change as easily (instantly) as changing the focal awareness. Experiencing fear when climbing a ladder to paint a three-story window is immediately transformed the moment you see your three-year-old daughter in the window trapped by a raging fire. The emotion experienced is constituted out of each unique set of relational factors and contingencies (both external and internal to the individual) relative to the specific situation. When approaching the ladder, the value of 'not harming (or killing) yourself in relation to a painted window produces fear, in relation to your daughter's life' it instantly transforms into courage.

Another feature of emotions, says Robertson, is their "resistance to summing." In the case of the stronger emotions, when that which produces them begins to reach a cognitive or rational equilibrium (resolution)—a coherent summing—the emotion dissipates. This brings us full circle to the first attribute—emotions are personal responses of the 'whole self'. This always entails the collective focusing of all that the individual is, both conceived or subceived aspects, into holistic focal relation.

These attributes (though by no means complete or distinct) reveal, above all, the complexity of emotions and the variety of aspects constitutive of them. The primary point, however, is that emotions are holistic collations of casually related factors into a meaningful whole or focal relation. They are instant de-liberations (calculations) of such factors within the immediate relationships without having to sequentially or focally calculate the factors. By the addition of a few new factors into the relational equation, an alternative emotive response may be created instantly without the individual's being able to give a reason. This is evident every time an emotion subsides after a counselor uncovers the causal network of beliefs and reveals the errant or adjustable causal connections, thus releasing the fear and corresponding behavior. The emotions reveal an incredible human

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30 Robert Leeper describes this holistic dynamic of emotions as "dynamically organized in the further sense that the total process tends to govern the properties of perceived parts within such larger wholes" (1970), p.160. This reflects our earlier consideration of the dynamic of supervenience.

31 Emotions, Leeper tells us, "are long-sustained perceptions of the more enduring and significant aspects of such situations" (156).


33 I am sure some of us have witnessed the instantaneous release of anxiety and fear in friends when, after ourselves noticing particular shameful aspects within their lives (long since having become invisible to themselves) they were appropriately given assurance that despite such 'damaging' factors
capacity for wholistic existence, to *instantaneously* and *subconsciously* configure and reconfigure diverse and complex sets of information, beliefs, desires and their causal relations. Most of all, we must note the emotive response indicating the human spirit’s process of creating *new* emergent properties within the developing expansion of conceptual-linguistic forms and relational networks. These processes reveal human response to an internal perichoretic activity in which persons are dialogically active in pulsating response-to-awareness, and awareness-to-response within every change in relations. Our lives, thoughts and knowledge itself retain incomprehensible amounts of relational activity that focally go unseen.

Therefore, if emotions represent a unitive state of mind, then I simply want to emphasize that the human focal awareness is able to process in a moment, a host of data, *possible* causal connections, and most importantly, compare and adjudicate subconsciously differing constellations of causal networks. In other words, in the flash of a moment, humans are able to ‘intuitively’ construct and assess various possible and contrasting casual configurations, proffering to the focal conscious of the individual the most meaningful construal for that particular situation (similar to the dynamic of hypothetico-deductive reasoning). The dynamic that creates emotions provides this construal even though the individual regulates by various means the extent of personal factors brought into the integrative process.

**Emotions: epistemology & reason**

Historically the western philosophical tradition has predominately considered emotions “potentially or actually subversive of knowledge.” 34 Paralleling Moltmann’s earlier sentiments on Modernity, Abraham Heschel contends, “the disparagement of emotion was made possible by ascribing to the rational faculty a power of sovereignty over the objects of its comprehension, thought being the active, inert material of comprehension.” 35 Similarly, Zagzebski affirms “the treatment of belief as a psychic state independent of non-cognitive

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35 Heschel (1962), p.96. Accordingly, Moltmann suggests “if modern men and women are to be healed, the segregated intellect has to be integrated into receptive and perceptive reason, and reason has to be woven into the fabric of feelings, and consciousness has to be assimilated into the experiences of the body” (1992), p.173.
states is happily nearing its demise."  

How emotions are integral to epistemology is, however, another thing. For example, Heschel goes on to say,  

the act of thinking of an object is in itself an act of being moved by the object. In thinking we do not create an object; we are challenged by it. Thus, thought is part of emotion. We think because we are moved, a fact of which we are not always conscious. Emotion may be defined as the consciousness of being moved.  

In this respect, Heschel is concerned to affirm the person, not as a point of ‘inert’ focus, but as one who is principally changed by the other (object), and this moving of consciousness is evidenced by the emotive response. Nevertheless, his formation of the dynamic ultimately lacks completeness.  

Similarly, for example, John Macmurray, in *Reason and Emotion*, believes the emotional life  

is not, as we so often think, subordinate, or subsidiary to the mind. It is the core and essence of human life. The intellect arises out of it, is rooted in it, draws its nourishment and sustenance from it, and is the subordinate partner in the human economy. This is because the intellect is essentially instrumental. Thinking is not living. At its worst it is a substitute for living; at its best a means of living better. . . . The emotional life is our life, both as awareness of the world and action in the world.  

Ray Anderson concludes,  

our emotions, because they are stimulated by feelings and sense perception, provide the primary link with reality external to the self. The intellect is an instrumental factor in rationality through its power of discrimination, reflection, and intentionality.  

In this respect, we can affirm Macmurray’s notion that human knowledge and experience is always a living construct or synthesis of both the existing relational situation and one’s own self. The relational dynamic within his understanding, however, bears further scrutiny. For example, in another description of reason and emotions Macmurray adds,  

it is not that our feelings have a secondary and subordinate capacity for being rational or irrational. It is that reason is primarily an affair of emotion, and that the rationality of thought is the derivative and secondary one. For if reason is the capacity to act in terms of the nature of the object, it is emotion which stands directly behind activity determining its
substance and direction, while thought is related to action indirectly and through emotion, determining only its form, and that only partially. Here the idea of reason being grounded in the emotions, determining to some degree the form of the thought, expediently suggests a constituting perichoretic interaction between the subject and the object or Other. A problem arises, however, when Macmurray defines reason as “the capacity to behave in terms of the nature of the object, that is to say, to behave objectively. Reason is thus our capacity for objectivity.” This type of language tends to continue the subject-object problematic of modernity. Such language assumes that somehow our nature ‘behaves’ or consciously assimilates the ‘nature’ of the other. How is it that we are able, as Polanyi similarly describes, to “indwell” or “inhabit” the framework (nature) of the other, and still remain ourselves? What is missing is the creative third term of the relationship itself.

Perichoretic structure of emotions

For Macmurray, our thoughts of an object are constituted in terms of its nature. This still leaves, however, the problem of how to integrate this into the person’s existing ‘nature’ and socialized structure of relating. In this respect, reason is constituted ‘in terms of the nature of the object’, while in perichoresis the individual is constituted ‘in terms’ of the mediating formative matrix of the relational unity itself, not ‘out of the other’. Furthermore, only to the extent the individual ventures everything into the constituting presence of the relationship, the mediating third term, will they effectively be drawn into the knowing relationship with the other. In this manner, the relatants are not constituted by the ‘nature’ of the other; rather, they are constituted by what they are in relation to what the other is by virtue of the relationship. A significant difference necessitates a theological contingency, a “Christ in us,” which enables all dialogical relations between persons and the rest of Creation.

Emotions represent the personal responses to the perichoretic tensions between the existing individual and a living world that actually form the dynamic relationship. Bringing an entangled network of social complexities and pluriform relations into a unified and personal focal relatedness is a primary function of emotions. Again, this is similar to the process of gestalt.

Sometimes a person may try for several moments, without success, to “see” something in a figure [e.g., the 3-D pictures hidden within the dots], and then suddenly he does see it. It

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41 When persons come into relation with another entity the relational dynamic is perichoretic: reason, as conceptual, feelings as experience, and emotions as the individual-in-relation.
42 Ibid., p.19.
43 These sentiments are likewise echoed by Gunton’s acknowledging Macmurray’s proximity toward persons as perichoresis, however, also alluding to his lacking the proper eschatological contingencies (‘Christ in us’) within such a perichoretic dynamic of relations: Gunton (1993), p.169, n.18. Cf. also John Aves (1992), p.133.
“came,” as we say; and in such cases we have clearly that odd mixture of passivity and activity so characteristic of our experience of emotions. 44

This ‘odd mixture of passivity and activity’ can be broken down into three aspects: the opening of the self (human activity) in awareness; the ‘indwelling’ and emergence of the relationship (human passivity); and, the subsequent reconstituting of the entities respectively within the relationship—act. The individual must be sufficiently willing to hear and act in the first and latter movement respectively. The emergence of an equitable relationship, however, is always a gift to be received by grace. Because of perichoretic relational dynamics the constitutional process represents active forces and elements from all aspects of the relationship. The mixture and synthesis of the many and sometimes conflicting forces that make up a particular emotion begins to make sense when we consider them as a perichoretic dynamic.

For example, one theory maintains emotions are motivational (relational dispositions between already existing cognitive social structures and factors), while another (Strasser), that they are existential and precognitive (feelings are cognitive and perceptual). Strasser argues that fear employs a cognitive perception of specific danger, which he classifies as only a feeling. An infant is furious not because it is ‘hungry’, but because its existence is menaced, which is dread (an emotion) not fear. Dread, for the toddler, is the feeling of being threatened by the unknown, the strange. For Strasser, emotions are the ongoing processes of objectification through the nonobjectifying mode of awareness; the emerging of objectivity from what is ‘first one’. This innate and unique dynamic is what facilitates and draws us into the social interaction that creates new linguistic and relational structures. Nevertheless, though certain emotions may not be motivated by existing cognitive considerations, this does not mean that something of a non-cognitive nature is not perceived or motivating them.

Strasser argues that the three basic emotional tendencies are the innate desire for pleasure, the innate need for security, and the desire for power. As with our earlier inquiry into the motivating forces of suicide, James Loder (with Piaget) would simply ask, ‘why’? 45 Why do humans desire and long for anything? We seek security and power for what? They do not fully explain the phenomena. Developmentally speaking, for Stasser, pleasure is existence as subject-world (umwelt), wholeness. Why then is consciousness and ego perennially constituted as individual-in-relation, while at the same time, it constantly desires existence in unity? Power and security fail to give us completely satisfactory answers. If, however, an irreducible perichoretic relational dynamic create and develop personhood, a picture begins to form that explains the primary concerns of both motivational and the

44 Roberts (1988), p.193,
existential theorist. The irreducible and fundamental desire is to be constituted as entity from within the relationship.\textsuperscript{46}

In this respect, the experience of wonder or dread is the relational \textit{call of something new} needing to emerge from experience into linguistic or focal consciousness. Similarly, within motivational theories, emotions like fear and joy express the state of \textit{existing networks} of relational factors, and whether or not adjustment or change is needed for the individual to remain in relational equilibrium. As noted, even within this latter orientation, emotions often disclose relational states that are otherwise unarticulated within conscious understanding. Overall, it would seem emotions are best understood as guardians (the functioning) of a relational ontology in persons which innately drive human flourishing by maintaining the desire or ‘call’ to relate perichoretically—irreducibly as \textit{person} in \textit{relation} to another. Such a dynamic, I would think, must not only be within human spirit, but between it and others. Within such a dynamic, \textit{analogia spiritus} has its play. Whether the wonder of nature unfolding its heretofore unknown secrets or the foreboding dread of a schoolgirl as her family disintegrates in divorce, emotions are a \textit{call} to the opening of self to be constituted and transformed in felicitous and authentic relationship, a \textit{call} (or scream) for the dynamic reconfiguring of one’s existing understanding and experience into a more confederated relatedness of particularities.

In this account, therefore, emotions reflect the person’s state of \textit{perichoresis} in relations (degree of fullness of life). This not only explains the desire for peaceful relations and solidarity, but also, begins to explain the desire for personal uniqueness and the dynamic of individual and social flourishing that drives cultural change and development. This begins to explain why our emotions within certain situations impel us to seek synergistic relations in both social and personal orientation (priestly unanimity), and yet other situations with inadequate or unsatisfying uniformity disruptively propel us away (prophetic disruption). Boredom and many other emotive responses, when appropriately contingent, motivate us toward deeper, more dynamic relations. As argued previously, we eventually experience

\textsuperscript{46} My understanding within this thesis of the perichoretic dynamic and a relational ontology situated in relation to the Trinity is an attempt to resolve, and to broadly present as complementary both, Gunton’s notion of “substantiality” (1993, p.188ff), and Milbank’s “shifting relations and generations in time” (1990, p.426). To a large degree, both exist as a complementarity, just as wave-particle duality. If you want to focus upon electron diffraction you will concentrate upon the electron’s wave-like qualities; if you are interested in the photoelectric effect, then its particle-like properties. Loder and Neidhardt tell us, “the sets of concepts referring to the same phenomenon or object do not necessarily exist on the same conceptual level; their distinctiveness yet interrelatedness together in a unitary whole is then preserved by a \textit{differentiated} relationality maintained by the asymmetric character of the relations constituting the relationship between the two levels” (1993, p.310). Similarly, in the contrast between Gunton and Milbank, as in current theoretical particle physics—where wave qualities and shifting \textit{interrelations} take slight precedence over particle attributes—the relation itself takes asymmetrical priority over relating entities; just as does value over fact, the Eternal over temporal, and transformation over stages in development.
boredom—the *loss of meaning* (perichoretic relations)—within the most advanced conceptual schemes if they cease to progress or experience the dynamic and eternal call for ever greater perichoretic relations. This is the perennial immanent-transcendent agitation of *Spiritus Creator* for authentic, undistorted, and most importantly, ever deepening intimacy within relations. Similarly, “emotional behavior,” Strasser notes, occurs whenever a subject does not apprehend his situation in an objectifying manner, but immediately, in the light of his existential needs, . . . his desire, his hate, his craving and his dread then take on such proportions that he is overwhelmed by them. The “primordial distance” (*Urdistanz*) which . . . characterizes man as man and enables him to define his attitude towards fellows-subjects, things and situations, completely disappears. And so the objective world built up by the adult loses its meaning for him. 47

The *desire to perichoretically relate*, which is constitutive of all desires regardless of personal or cultural internal distortion or deficient presence, drives and sustains the emerging and developing phenomena of human social and cultural experience. 48 Emotions themselves are not technically moral attributes. A distorted ‘anger’ or ‘lust’ (*desire*) toward another is not the fundamental moral issue. In the following sections, we will identify moral turpitude with the *unwillingness* to become authentically and fully aware of the full motivating factors creating the emotions and the *unwillingness* to transcend the void (double-bind), which lies beyond “any defensive or emergent competencies of the ego.” 49 Emotions as virtues rather than distortions have to do with the individual’s experience of *phronesis*—a truth-condusive willingness and desire to relate with *all* Reality—which within the human condition necessitates suffering in order to experience fully *analogia spiritus*.

This is the answer to Loder’s ‘why?’ concerning development. Human spirit and emotions are a holistic *response to the call to unify self in active and genuine relations to the world*, and it is here that all desire begins. It is at these deeper recesses of human consciousness and unifying processes that God’s Spirit analogically meets human spirit in an ongoing reconfigurative process, interactively and paradigmatically transforming an ‘entangled web of relations’ into an ever more perichoretic fullness from the domain of the Eternal. This dynamic within human relations provides the possibility of drawing God’s Spirit analogically into the relational dynamic of human community itself, which reciprocatively draws this communicative action into dynamic relation with the dynamic Eternal relations of God. In this respect, we are all invited through covenant from our place in history to play an Eternal role through a special relationship to the Trinity. Creation is

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48 All knowledge emerges as an “informed desiring” (Milbank 1991, p.234), and though “events already take an ideal form, already happen as knowledge, . . . body always is, with and through the incorporeal, as fact always is, with and through value,” the former are indeed instantiated (“in radical dependency”) within the immediate experience because of the unique theological “moment of the *passage* of an event from external time into memory” (Milbank 1990, p.426).
dynamically active in such teleological activity and *formation* that is divinely orchestrated (Gen 9:16).

In conclusion, I maintain that an understanding of the human emotive response and its function in personal, social and epistemological matters is imperative to understanding how God ultimately relates with human persons. Theologically this is the eschatological mystery and process of Christ’s ‘reconciling all things to Himself’ (Col 1:20) from ‘degree to degree’ by His Spirit (2Cor 3:18). Such a dipolar dynamic constituting human relationship, with its unique *process of coming into unified relatedness*, begins to open room (and time) for understanding how human community might be analogically and mutually set in relation to those similar dynamics of relatedness within the Eternal unifying dynamic of God. *At this level of relational experience, we might begin to consider that such dynamics, analogically related, prereflexively draw humanity into the creative process as free agents.* In other words, God’s interactive influence within human personal activity may indeed have its greatest activity *within* the human emotive process as ‘unseen’ but no less real activities of communication that eventually emerge through feeling, emotions and eventually on to conceptual response (word). In this respect, there is no fundamental *City of God* to ‘uncover’ sitting just beyond (paralleling) this world, no hermeneutical ‘program’ or method that will once and for all ensure our ability to follow along with God.50 God’s own specific action and personal relation to the world is dynamically lived as history unfolds. It is not “finished” outside or before, but takes completion within the midst of history. As we will see in an upcoming chapter, through the dynamic of Trinitarian *perichoresis*, all history participates within the, “It is finished,” the *moment.*

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50 Cf. McFadyen (1990), p.223: “It is not a case of the present moving steadily closer to an evolutionary future, but of God opening up the present and drawing it into the future of the kingdom. . . . Its mode of presence cannot therefore be complete or uniform, but determinate, partial and anticipatory.”
Chapter 3b

Dialogical relations as *perichoresis*: Alistair McFadyen’s Christian social theory of personhood

God does not think, he creates; God does not exist, He is eternal. Man thinks and exists, and existence separates thought and being, holding them apart from one another in succession.

Søren Kierkegaard¹

Introduction

Another source of recent philosophical and theological theory has emerged in the form of social and dialogical anthropologies. Such studies concentrating on human communicational dynamics offers yet again new perspectives into the human condition. In this section, I wish to explore the recent work of Alistair McFadyen who attempts to appropriate for theology the philosophical insights of Habermas and others that, in turn, seek to isolate transcendental and universal conditions within human existence. Both writers resolutely maintain theses of rationality and communicative commitment, however, my primary interest in McFadyen is his theory of relationality and the importance of the dialogical bipolarity of openness and closure within social and divine-human communication. A fundamental assertion with both McFadyen and Habermas is the universality of the dialogical dynamic and basic structure of communication within all human relations. Within this basic structure, McFadyen establishes the fundamental relational functions of openness (awareness) and closure (conceptual constitution of self). I will then investigate the function and process of opening to the other (listening/searching) and its principal characteristics as an important site of divine-human concurrence affecting the divine-human possibility of dialogical communication. Finally, McFadyen’s construal of the human dialogical dynamic as a Trinitarian contingency will be noted, specifically its perichoretic nature. From this brief study of McFadyen in discussion with aspects of Kierkegaard, I wish to suggest that *the dialogical cycle of human existence involves a relational alternation of open awareness as an analogically ‘infinite mode’ of perception into relationship, and a reciprocating closure from out of the relationship constituting the individual within a finite mode and social context.*²

¹ *CUP* 296.
² Polanyi likewise describes the pulsation aspect of the perichoretic dynamic expressed earlier as “an oscillation between movements of analysis and integration in which, on balance, integration predominates.” (1969), p.130.
Call, individuality and context

In a *Call to Personhood*, McFadyen presents a Christian theory of the individual as socially constituted through dialogical communication, considering all undistorted* communication as ultimately shaped by Christ through the Trinitarian activity of Word and Spirit. His thesis offers an understanding of persons somewhere between individualism and collectivism. He suggests, we begin to understand this dynamic by considering the manner by which Jesus called his disciples—the “immediate and uncompromising demand to ‘leave everything and follow [him]’.” The call was to stand out from their existing context and enter a new meaning-frame through which they would be completely recontextualized. McFadyen explains, however, that such a call to relation is not a denying of one’s existing relational contexts, rather it is a call to respond to a new, different and more complete context. “It is not so much a decontextualising act of self-constitution as a recontextualisation in response to an external address.” In such recontextualization, former identities actively draw up into the creative force of the call from Jesus, which has “no presupposition but itself.” In the example of Levi, he argues, we are given no antecedent ‘contextual’ elements suggesting presuppositions; rather, it suggests the call itself creates in the hearer the response it demands. The immediate relation itself transforms the old identity awakening the disciple to a new future, presence and past upon response.

In this respect, the call and response frees the individual from the enclosure of self. The call itself provides the space and decisive break from ‘our world’, creating the possibility of ex-centric freedom for authentic relations—the ability to be affected, or better yet, transformed in genuine relations. McFadyen believes the call of Jesus is an invitation to a ‘simple’ relation that reorients the individual to recontextualize within a new meaning-frame. This new meaning-frame is a “new form of communicative subjectivity, a new way of being in relations.”

One’s own space-time is de-absolutized in redemption by the co-intention of others with their own equally valid space-time. For ultimate meaning can no longer be found in one’s own space-time, which has henceforth to be related to that of others and God; that is, recontextualised and hence relativised. This does not, however, relativize the ‘historical events of grace’ that lie within a larger historical communicational context (of which no one particular contextual understanding of such Truth and meaning are complete). Rather, it places the individual within a mode of interaction and subsequent encounter with God’s Word in Christ, which determinately

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4 Ibid., p.49.
6 Ibid., p.56.
7 Ibid., p.57.
relativizes both self and the existing communicational context in relation to God (and subsequently to each other and the Truth).  

Because God is Trinitarian and inherently relational and dialogical, McFadyen believes that all such undistorted human communication is ultimately motivated and enabled by Christ's immanent-transcendent presence, and thereby incorporated into God's own Trinitarian sociology. In this respect, all genuine individuality and all ex-centric desire outward toward others results from Christ's call. "This presence of Christ is not an indication of an essence but a movement with others towards 'Christ between us'... Christ is therefore 'in' us as the ground of this self-transcendence, as a centre within us pushing us outwards, and as a centre beyond us pulling us towards God and others." For McFadyen, truth and fidelity of relations between individuals and communities (even those beyond the church) are shaped by this presence of 'Christ between'.

Therefore, though all communicative contexts may be diversely determined and, as such, unable to immediately agree upon universal truth, they are universally linked by an inherent dialogical structure. "Once the distortions and limitations of particularity are stripped away," all contexts are technically capable of unity, though not necessarily uniformity. In this respect, the most important factor in communication is not what one knows but how one knows. All contexts differ in their capacity of what can be known and, therefore, knowledge itself is to this extent relative to its emergent context. For example, within the context of 11th century Europe, to consider the earth flat is a 'truth' (however not Truth), and to have considered it spherical simply because one might discover an ancient manuscript page from which can only be read the words, "the earth is spherical," would indeed be irrational. For us to believe otherwise is to project our existing meaning-frame into those individuals of 11th century Europe. Only through an extensive entrance into 'their world' through an intense projection of the imagination could we begin to experience this as truth. Nevertheless, God within this context redeems this 'truth' and, I might suggest, provisionally (existentially) affirms its appropriate contextual use. Therefore, the limited scope of the particular context does not limit the existing passion and conviction by which truths are held in contrast to all other known positions at that time. The person's or community's unwillingness to transcend the 'distortions and limitations of particularity', however, eventually erodes conviction. This incarnational dynamic (the useful affirmation

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8 This concept of decontextualization is similar to the earlier concept of de-liberation.
9 Ibid., pp.60-2.
10 Ibid., p.62.
11 McFadyen (1993), p.439, 441. Though 'in theory' possible (i.e. with unlimited time and genuine relations) the diversity of communicative contexts are far too complex and variously structured through individual and cultural development to ever be inductively, deductively and demonstratively unified.
and real-ization of a particular ‘truth’), for McFadyen, is a result of the universal christological activity and contingency in all undistorted dialogical/dialectical activity of human relations.

Christian truth is “not primarily propositional,” but relational. “It concerns the proper relationship between humanity, creation and God.”12 This has to do with the genuineness and responsibility of response to the call. “When a person is, consciously or otherwise, adopting a hidden agenda, and is therefore not genuinely present in communication, that person’s address is distorted* because it is not aimed at a true mutuality of understanding.”13 How one properly responds in relationship has two personal aspects, openness (“attending”) and closure (“returning”) to the other in relationship.

Response: Openness and closure

All undistorted personal response requires an openness to others and to self-transformation, combined with the closure proper to an individually centred identity which is resistant to external overdetermination*. This represents a structure of personhood in which both openness and closure are present, but never total.14

McFadyen recognizes the dialogical necessity of alternating openness for self-transcendence and closure for personal identity. Sociologically, however, they lie upon a single continuum of interaction which must adjust according to the relational character of the Other and the appropriateness of the relationship. Here, the person’s spirit organizes her, life-giving energy, relational processes, and projected social consequences into communication. This is accomplished, however, through a measured openness to the other. The human spirit optimally establishes its relational posture in consideration of the appropriate factors and contingencies. This will include, whether consciously or not, a disposition toward God or the possibility of a God (or transcendent Reality).

In undistorted communication, the Spirit enables “ordered openness in systems” and the Word “is the form-giver to organised life.”15 Within dialogical communications one is “alternatingly the object and subject of the process.”16 In such a process, the futurity which results from the “pull” of God’s liberating future and the “push” of past mundane relational sedimentation (the desire for ever greater fullness of life) motivates transformation of

12 Ibid., p.447 (my emphasis).
13 McFadyen (1990), p.120. Furthermore, “Making responsible answers to others cannot be a simple, mechanical response to a given stimulus which returns the intention in a way overdetermined by the other. That could hardly be called free or responsible. Yet neither may our responses be completely predetermined by our personal identities or intentions of these others which existed prior to their calls. That could hardly be called a response. Response must involve attending and returning to the other as she or he is present in communication. This is a readiness to allow the calls of others to transform us in response” (121, my emphasis).
14 Ibid., p. 121 (my emphasis).
15 Ibid., p.63.
16 Ibid., p.122.
existing personal structures. The "individual spirit organises the form and content of communication by regulating openness and closure," and "it is individual spirit which is initially transformed in redemption by being placed in the enlarged context of relation with God."\textsuperscript{17}

**Divine-human relational ontology as corollary to McFadyen’s sociological perspective**

I wish to affirm McFadyen’s basic thesis. Because of my specific focus in the divine-human relationship, however, I would like to reframe his concerns within a more Kierkegaardian framework. Though he rarely uses the term, McFadyen characterizes the relational dynamic of God and human beings as perichoretic in similar ways to that of this thesis.\textsuperscript{18} This, however, necessarily and predominately takes its explanatory shape in social terms. For example, he understands and explains the opening of oneself to another, and any consideration of mutual indwelling within the relationship, in their dialogical, conversational and communicational dimensions. Little consideration is given to the intricacies of how such a divine and human *perichoresis* associatively transpire within the internal dynamics of the call to personhood by Christ and the Spirit. For example, even though Christ "is not only between but also within the partners to a dialogical relation\textsuperscript{19} . . . [therefore] safeguard[ing] the transcendence and individuality of the partners,"\textsuperscript{20} McFadyen still concludes that one’s openness to *another* must not be total, because of possible overdetermining by the other. As purely social, the individual must never be completely open nor closed to another. Theologically, however, because of the Christ grounding of all undistorted relationality "not only between but also within the partners to a dialogical relation,"\textsuperscript{21} the individual can potentially and safely offer complete openness and readiness for transformation *from within the relationship*. Optimally, though one exists within an established social code, the felicity and properness of each relationship, even ‘reason’ itself, *comes out of the immediate relationship*. The property of the knowledge of Good and Evil, and Truth (eschatological) are not ours to project into the relationship, but must emerge contextually from the whole of each relationship itself.\textsuperscript{22}

Therefore, though one comes before another in expectation "as one who is not wholly determined by the initiating communication,"\textsuperscript{23} we must recognize this as only a provisional

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\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., p.116.
\textsuperscript{18} Passim (1990, associating characteristics), and (1995, direct reference), p.47.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., p.59.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., p.61.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., p.59.
\textsuperscript{22} "Truth does not exist over and above particular location; who Jesus Christ is here and now [e.g.] has to be asked and worked out within the exigencies of the particular situation or context" McFadyen (1993), p.453.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., p.119.
posture before other sinful humans, not God. Theologically, on the other hand, Christ calls us into ongoing recontextualization only through Himself to others, even occasional transformations and changes in meaning-frames. Though we retain basic structures and sedimentations from former relations, their meaning can never be ossified. Therefore, within the broader theo-sociological framework, relational openness should optimally be unconstrained. For if "there is no single, non-contextual definition of Christian Truth and . . . truth and meaning are to be found within the particularities of each context," then the individual must always begin each new relation willing and open for the possibility that all one’s personal meaning might, in appropriate measure, be transformed within a new meaning-framework (e.g., we may meet and befriend a Newton, Galileo or Einstein). The perception and experience of Reality (a quality of relationship) is most felicitous in those who are most willing to know and acknowledge their own opacity of perception. Though the predominance of our relations fall quickly within the specter of normal communitive and social action and codes, it is imperative we maintain as much as possible epistemic humility and a full willingness for transformation within all new relations and contexts.

McFadyen tells us that sin is the "absence of genuine communication.”

The basic sin is to lay our search for meaning to rest prematurely; to refer the finite only to itself and idolise it as infinite. ‘Nurtured in insecurity, sin’s motivation is to secure, to anchor human being in a cosmos projected by itself, a creation of its own act of meaning or intentionality’. . . Sin, for an individual, is a distorted way of intending oneself, others and the world in communication which imbues one’s limited being, one’s personal space and time, with universal meaning. He goes on to confirm, “In view of the eschatological and universal nature of the kingdom, openness must be unrestricted.” Therefore, in quest of a more purely perichoretic dynamic of a relational ontology, the social dialogical continuum (open-closed scale) might be reconstructed within Kierkegaardian categories.

**Human spirit and Holy Spirit**

In this section, I want to investigate McFadyen’s understanding of human as spirit constituted within relation and the contingency of such a dynamic in relation to God’s Spirit. In McFadyen’s theory, all undistorted communications are based upon the universal dynamic of “Christ between us” (spirit and word). With Christ between us, I want to consider that both full openness and full closure are possible within each cycle respectively. They can be

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25 This does not mean we never stand against the position of individuals or communities who personally and habitually overdetermined others within their relationships, but that 'seventy-times-seven' we should openly enter the call to relations with them, and that we ideally enter all relations with an open response attitude.
27 Ibid., p.248 (my emphasis).
thought of as two distinct but interrelated continuums, which lie within the complete
dialogical dynamic. Together with the forming of the relationship in the Christological
dynamic, we can understand the human condition as perichoretic.

The notion of perichoresis developed in this chapter, up to this point, presents relations
as a dialogical dynamic by which each entity is individually constituted, yet constituted out
of the whole of the relationship. This is metaphysically and transparently real-ized by Christ
within the Trinitarian dynamic. Ideally, the whole of the individual enters the condition of
undistorted relations, which includes one’s own spirit of communication and intentions. The
relationship itself meaningfully reconstitutes the persons according to their respective
meaning-frame and spirit of relation. All of this happens in a moment, repeatedly.

According to McFadyen’s theory, all truth and meaning take place within a particular
(and therefore limited) context, then a willingness and full openness for being transformed
within the relationship is desirable. In other words, optimally all aspects of one’s life must
be allowed to genuinely condition the prereflexive awareness and process within the
relationship toward gestalt simply because of the safeguarding “Christ between” (spirit and
word). The alternative would be to suppress consciously or unconsciously personal presence
from fully conditioning the relationship through withheld (hidden) agendas or motivations.
This, however, arises in all relationships.

Closure in relational formation is the reconstituting of the individual. This is the
relational gestalt, the conceptual reflexive closure which creates meaning (word). These two
modalities of relationality cycle continually in ongoing alternation. The individual
becomes response-able (therefore moral), both in the degree of willingness and openness
they enter the relationship (not technically the ‘other’), and, likewise, to the degree of
closure which establishes the convictive nature of their response within the relationship. The
degree of willingness for genuine relationship establishes the qualitative nature of the
individual’s closure, as well as the degree of redemptive potential (fullness of life) embodied
within the particular relational structures of the existing community and society. The quality
(genuineness) of any given relationship as a whole is only as good as its weakest partner.

Person as opening in dialogical cycle: person as spirit opening to the Parmenidean
infinite

Meaning en totum is emergent from within each relationship and is dependent upon
both the prereflexive and reflexive aspect of response in each respective individual.
Nevertheless, though all meaning must emerge from out of a prereflexive gaze of awareness,
“meaning is never purely subjective. The ‘objectivity’ (intersubjective validity) of meaning

28 Within the dialogical kinesis of relationship Kierkegaard tells us “the development consist in
moving away from oneself infinitely by the process of infinitizing oneself, and in returning to oneself
infinitely by the process of finitizing” SUD 162-3.
is present in individuals at a pre-conscious or pre-reflective level.\textsuperscript{29} Related to our discussion on emotions, each process of human awareness begins with a holistic gaze \textit{through} the situation and incumbent contingencies, prereflexively organizing these immediate factors with sedimented structures while organizing an ordered, intentional, conceptual response. As McFadyen has aptly described, our history of relations as currently structured in sedimentation affects the process and way we intend and relate to the Other. How this process unfolds reflects our spirit of relating.

The transition from the open awareness process to conceptual response is, in one sense, the paradoxical \textit{moment} between spirit and word, word and spirit, the ‘Christ in and between us’. To the extent the communication is undistorted and individuals are \textit{fully present}, the relationship is created or real-ized in relation to \textit{Spiritus Creator}. This is the process of relativization from the finite call (existence), to the infinite (possibility), back to the finite. It is the appropriate, equitable and meaningful reconstitution of the partners from the newly created whole of the relationship and its particular emergent properties. It is here between the prereflexive process of awareness and constitution, according to McFadyen, that the Holy Spirit (God as Person) analogically interacts with the dynamic of human spirit creating the ground for freedom and creativity.

Because this is a ‘creative appeal’, grace and faith are not subsumed under independent, rational human categories. God’s communication creates the ontological possibility of freedom-in-response which includes the passive moment involved in understanding. The power of the Holy Spirit through which the transformation of faith occurs is not coercive in an heteronomous sense, but imploring, beguiling and perhaps even compulsive—but it is so internally: i.e. it appeals to, transforms, but does not destroy the identity and rationality structure of the person. A sign of this is actually the inherent ambiguity (apparently non-compulsive rationality) of God’s communication. It does not take the form of logical, rational propositions but, \textit{paradigmatically}, the crucifixion of the incarnate which, in appealing to human understanding, actually \textit{transforms} the understanding contained in human predicates. So God’s rule is not despotic because it creatively appeals to human rationality in a way which allows people to participate through their own rational communication in that rule.\textsuperscript{30}

This is a powerful description of \textit{perichoresis} and \textit{analogia spiritus}: the ‘passive’ (prereflexive), holistic process of God’s Spirit in analogical relation to human spirit in a pre-‘logical-rational’ paradigmatic process leading to gestalt and closure within the activity of being constituted as person-in-relation. This paradigmatic transformational de-liberation provides the creative ground \textit{within} human ‘rationality’, so that, as Loder suggested earlier, human spirit in relation to the Holy Spirit might “participate in the inner life of God.”\textsuperscript{31} In the conclusion of this section on human spirit we shall consider how one’s relational

\textsuperscript{29} McFadyen (1990), 96.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., p.299, n.1; my emphasis.
\textsuperscript{31} (1992), p.21.
disposition becomes closed in personal and sociological development, and what characterizes the sanctifying process of openness within the person.

**Person as closure in dialogical cycle: Person as self constituting the Heraclitean finite**

The dialogical closure of coming to personhood from out of the relationship is optimally a relativization of the finite contingencies of the particular situation in relation to the Eternal dynamic (*analogia spiritus*) and the call of Christ. Each individual is individually constituted by the immediate relationship with meaning appropriate to that specific relationship; and though meaning-frames evolve slowly and only rarely entail radical shifts, relations never re-present exact repetition. Sin is that degree of finite self-constituted meaning — repetition — prematurely projected onto the relationship ('other'), rather than first opening to the relationship, and then allowing meaning to emerge as constitute and created form within the relationship. In this respect, truth or adequacy is attained or created within the relational moment, but it is never technically there to be universally uncovered. Heidegger, for example, was not suggesting the uncovering of ἀλήθεια (truth) as a universal knowledge of reality known as such outside of time (or even transtemporally), but an “uncovering” of the fullness of the immediate relationship, the creation of which we in large part tend to suppress. Therefore, as McFadyen points out, true continuity in dialogical relations is the personal spirit of being for and intending of others throughout a variety of contexts and relations. Only the form and pattern of the individual’s spirit in relation bears complete constancy.

So long as one’s identity and communication here and now represent a continuity in the intending of oneself and others, then they are organised by and incarnate the same spirit which has structured personal centredness and external orientation in the past and elsewhere. It is constancy in one’s spirit which determines personal constancy and integrity and which means that one’s dependability for others may take a variety of forms. Continuity of relations, as well as truth and meaning, cannot be exact ‘repetitions’ or ‘representations’ of past conceptualizations, but obtain in the continuity of spirit that organizes, collates and allows relational authenticity and transformation.

This is similar to Kierkegaard’s insistence that the ‘absolute must relate to the absolute (“telos”) and the relative to the relative’. For him paradoxically, “existence is a synthesis

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32 McFadyen acknowledges the universal existence of truth, however, such truth is only available “once the distortions and limitations of particularity are stripped away” (1993, p.438f), therefore, because “truth and meaning are to be found within the particularities of each context” (452) there may be an indeterminate range of various understandings and construals. Therefore, the truth is to be “worked out within the exigencies of the particular situation or context” (453).

33 Ibid., p.152.

34 Ibid., p.153-4.

35 For Kierkegaard: “Aesthetic pathos expresses itself in words, and may in its truth indicate that the individual leaves his real self in order to lose himself in the Idea; while existential pathos is present whenever the Idea is brought into relation with the existence of the individual so as to transform it. If in relating itself to the individual’s existence the absolute telos fails to transform it absolutely, the relationship is not one of existential pathos, but of aesthetic pathos” CUP 347. "The pathos which
of the infinite and the finite, and the existing individual is both infinite and finite," and furthermore, "it is impossible to become both at the same time." Furthermore, "it is impossible to become both at the same time." Person as spirit is the infinite gaze and process of awareness (initial response) in which we are drawn in response to the call, which optimally considers the entirety of one's self and existing relational factors in a focused, intended relation. This creates the existential dilemma ('conflict') that is the primary issue in relational authenticity. It involves the pathos of the infinite gaze into the finiteness of self and call. It is the infinitude of human spirit's radical dependence in analogical relation to the infinite incarnating process of the Spirit and Word of God. The degree and character of responsive awareness to the call generates the background, capacity and creativity of response in relation to both the created (being) and uncreated (becoming) situation, which entails the constituting dynamic in relation to an Eternal God. For Kierkegaard,

in making a choice it is not so much a question of choosing the right as of the energy, the earnestness, the pathos with which one chooses. Thereby the personality announces its inner infinity, and thereby, in turn, the personality is consolidated. Therefore, even if a man were to choose the wrong, he will nevertheless discover, precisely by reason of the energy by which he chose, that he had chosen the wrong. For the choice being made with the whole inwardness of his personality, his nature is purified and he himself brought into immediate relation to the external Power whose omnipresence interpenetrates the whole of existence. Therefore, the degree and character of openness of self within the relationship contributes to the character of closure and ultimately one's level of conviction and passion within the relationship. To the degree past relational sedimentation has, for example, narrowed one's spirit of relating to others (suppression of openness), then one's convictions and fullness of life (passion) will be compromised. Closure constituting personhood and eventually fullness of life can only be as strong as the personal lack of distortion within the relations.

adequately corresponds to an eternal happiness consists in the transformation by which everything in the existence of the individual is altered, in and through his mode of existence, so as to bring it into conformity with this highest good" (348).

36 Ibid., p.350.
37 Ibid., p.376.
38 In Platonic language Noel O’Donoghue similarly notes: “Sharing then, participation (in the active sense) is, at the source, at once the sharing of infinite sharing, and the giving of an infinite capacity for receiving: infinites meet in the finite. The creature is no less infinite than the creator, in the infinity of its radical dependence, its radical nothingness: on this ground rests the infinity of its receptivity: homo capax Dei. The mystic makes his own of this negative immensity of openness to the infinite that shares its own being, and in this lived appropriation, experiences the logic of infinity, experiences that finitude reaching to the infinite which is the centre of all creativity as it is the centre of all prayer” (1979), p.177f.
39 E02 141.
40 In the case of child abuse with its incumbent injunctions of secrecy, McFadyen believes, “the information communicated in the abuse cannot be de-energized or dissipated, since it cannot be combined with that which is presently informing the structure of identity (pattern of relating to oneself and others [spirit]), nor with information from contexts external to the abuse. . . . Who he understands himself to be; how he relates to himself, to others and the reality as a whole—all is knocked out of equilibrium.” (1996), p.95-6.
Personal reflective and dialogical distortion compromises one's whole presence and inwardness of personality. Simply put, to the extent a person is unwilling to allow various aspects of one's life to condition one's thoughts and intentions within the relationship compromises the full presence of the individual in that relationship, and therefore the full integrity and genuineness of that relationship. This does not mean we should disclose all personal aspects within given relationships, but simply that all aspects should be personally, honestly and inwardly acknowledged and brought into the conditioning of the relationship.

**Continuity in plurality, McFadyen and MacIntyre: truth-conduciveness and the way of intending the Other in contrast to epistemological conceptual coherence (the matter of what is promised, Jm 4-5)**

Though he is concerned about the issues of postmodernity, McFadyen questions the postmodern prognosis of Alistair MacIntyre. He is not satisfied with simply epistemological or conceptual coherence. As we have seen, MacIntyre depends heavily upon the negative criterion of epistemological coherence (surviving 'epistemological crisis') while failing to forward any serious ontological theory of rightness and creation or progress. As previously discussed, the functional separation between the epistemological and the ontological places him in a precarious postmodern dilemma. McFadyen, however, claims that dialogical relations (within all undistorted communications) are themselves ontological in nature, and suggests the universal call of Christ, which is the implicit desire and means for equitable (perichoretic) relations, is the ontological positive contingency missing in MacIntyre's philosophical accounting. 41 One might argue that MacIntyre's accounting is philosophical and therefore unable to theorize such a 'theological' notion; nevertheless, in this section I wish to again question the aptness of functionally reducing an individual's or tradition's epistemic position away from its holistic and immediate dynamic of relationality. Ontic and epistemic aspects are merely emphases within unitary forms within occurrent relationships, which are ultimately irreducible from one another. Furthermore, McFadyen can be construed to suggest the criterion for 'ontological' fitness lies not in epistemological coherence as such, but in the relationship itself and its adequacy, the quality and virtue of one's relations. I suggest that the 'epistemological coherence' use of MacIntyre is functionally far too isolated for meaningful and appropriate benefit. Traditions as well as their epistemic structuring holistically embody a form and mode of life, of this there seems to be little disagreement. However, it is dubious to functionally distillate epistemic structures from non-cognitive states of experience itself and the immediate relationship (either psychic or tacit inference). This seems to run counter to the conventional understanding of MacIntyre.

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41 MacIntyre (1995).
Maclntyre’s discussion of epistemic justification always takes place from the framework of a ‘point of view’ of the individual, the tradition or the questionable ‘perspective outside the traditions’. His paradigm, in other words, assumes that all that is epistemically (and ontologically) contingent and relevant is completely contained and assumed within the ‘cognitive structure’ of the ‘point of view’, the individual or the tradition itself. All cryptically becomes again the property of the individual, tradition or the spurious ‘birds eye’ perspective, rather than the unique perichoresis of the individual or tradition within the immediate once occurrent relation. Because of his continuance within Greek structures of rational dialectics (subject-object, or subject-subject), in contrast to Christian dialogical perichoresis (Non-Hellenized Hebraic/Christian subject-covenant/relationship-subject), he is forced to restrict the dynamic creating the conceptuality and experience of the relationship within the domain of either the subject or other. This precludes any consideration of an ontological mediational dynamic between the subjects that provides the ground of interanimation and the emergence of relationally appropriate meaning. He assumes that because a ‘perspective’ is constituted in relation to an individual or tradition’s meaning-frame, that meaning is ultimately constituted solely within self or tradition. For MacIntyre, meaning is constituted in entities in relation, rather than entities meaningfully constituted in relation. When two diverse traditions come together there is communication on some level or another, and from within this immediate commonality itself the entity, if relationally open and undistorted, will be constituted. This point may seem trite and unfair, inciting quick retorts that MacIntyre obviously assumes as much in active relational dynamics, however, by presenting the epistemological argument focusing upon entities as ‘traditions’ or ‘individuals’, which then somehow assume a disconnected perspective, he has immediately prioritized the subject-object or sole subjective status of human knowing. This rigid contention, I believe, hinders his ability to consider what may indeed be most basic, a perichoretic dynamic that constitutes all relational meaning. Within a relational ontology, the immediate relational occurrence determines what is. Therefore, how can we say anything is anything except in relation to something else? It is never merely something. Furthermore, if this is true, something may be a different thing within different relationships.

All human knowing, for McFadyen, involves a contingent event of perichoresis, a relational dynamic constituting the immediate relationship (reality). Therefore, if conceptual (cognitive) elements consist of non-cognitive variables and contingencies, then again, how can a correct explanation or conclusive test, such as ‘epistemological crisis’—conceptual coherence—be conclusive? In this respect, the concept of the individual, the tradition and the understanding of knowledge, which MacIntyre assumes and functionalizes accordingly,

have already reified conceptual coherence and certain Western understandings of knowledge as metaphysical notions.

For McFadyen, the active matrix of all meaningful knowledge and dialogical discourse is the Trinitarian dynamic by which all human meaning is realized. Yes, all human beings contain the Trinitarian immanent-transcendent call within all human relations; yet, no, it is never something which can be said to be properly our own or non-contingent. This is because that which is the call is irreducibly relational and comes from out of the relationship itself constituting individuals. "There is this complementary, so that the reality we seek lies neither in us nor in the world, but in the relationships between us and the world." That which calls us out of ourselves, therefore, cannot be solely ourselves or the Other, but both.

Both call from out of the relationship itself as the irreducible perichoretic dynamic. Christ, Spiritus Creator, grounds all such undistorted relations. Because meaning, for McFadyen, evolves and changes with each "particular context," the continuity of divine or human promise, for example, never closes or ossifies into a rigid conceptualization. Rather, it must always remain a condition of the personal spirit or 'way one intends relation with another', thus allowing the specific and the contextualization of the promise to appropriately evolve and expand.

Therefore, when MacIntyre rightly argues that the epistemological development of a tradition must exhibit "some fundamental continuity of the new conceptual and theological structures with the shared beliefs in terms of which the tradition of inquiry had been defined up to this point," McFadyen would probably agree wholeheartedly. However, it must be emphasized that that which is now being cotermiously contrasted and associated with what was previously understood within the tradition, is to be analogously associated. In other words, not only do we associate the particulars in each stage of the tradition, but how each of the particulars relates within its synchronic environmental whole, as well as analogically contrasting the whole meaning-frames themselves. Analogia spiritus represents the analogical contrasting of each meaning-frame with that of the former (other). In this respect, therefore, the old definitions are never to be merely 'analogically' related to the new, A₁ to A₂. Here, former A₁ of X₁, X representing the entire meaning-frame, can be associated to later A₂ of X₂, only in their respective relatedness within their contemporary meaning-frames. In this respect, the "fundamental continuity," is an irreducible quality of the

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45 This is consonant with T. F. Torrance's understanding of analogies as "sets of relations which bear upon each other and point beyond themselves, . . . beyond the limits of empirical and observational knowledge." He furthermore cites James Clerk Maxwell, "in a scientific point of view the relation is the most important thing to know." "The similarity which constitutes the analogy is not between the phenomena themselves, but between the relations of these phenomena." (1984), p.230, n.60.
relation of the relationships, $A_1$ of $X_1$ to $A_2$ of $X_2$, and this mediated by a universal constituting dynamic (Power). The relations themselves are analogically and holistically related (the how), not merely the things (the what) according to a universal endowment within themselves as entities. Therefore, if the relationship itself between $A$ and $X$ is what ultimately bears the onus of $A$'s diachronic continuity, which I believe is the case for McFadyen and myself, then continuity is the constitutive quality created within the immediacy of the relationship itself, the moment. Such a relational ontology is based upon the fundamental uniformity of all relations being constituted with a universal Trinitarian dynamic. The continuity within MacIntyre's "conceptual" is always relationally constituted despite his inferring otherwise. This is where I believe McFadyen would differ from MacIntyre's epistemological desperateness, simply because he refuses to functionally isolate epistemological structuring from the positive ontological activity inherent within social dynamics. In fact, we cannot conceptually ossify any notion of continuity within developing traditions simply because all meaning is constantly shifting and deepening.

A complete and true Einsteinian (though none yet exist, including Einstein himself) experiences every aspect of their world differently than a Newtonian. The 'emerging' Einsteinian is able to point out the mistakes of Newtonian physics only after she and the listener have, to some degree, already been birthed into an Einsteinian gestalt in some area of understanding. A fully mature Einsteinian, however, cannot even experience or understand, without intense imaginative leaps (and this possibility is questionable), the alleged common aspects of both Newtonian and Einsteinian meaning-frames in the same way the pre-Einstein Newtonian understood them. Once the emergent properties and the new paradigm are fully assimilated within the individual and their new social meaning-frame, then individuals are disabled, as themselves, from completely comparing, analyzing and equating a tradition's past cognitive structures 'directly' with their own.46

The only way a 'new' evolved (enriched) meaning-frame going through a Kuhnian level paradigm shift is able to understand the former meaning-frame is simply because the flashes of insight, which announce the new paradigm, require several generations for full assimilation into the individual and community's meaning-frame.47 This is similar to the eschatological nature of Christian conversion and process of redemption (Rm 4-8). Only

46 Cf. Kierkegaard CUP 358, especially footnote.
47 Philip Clayton tells us, "Kuhn demonstrates how deep-seated a conceptual scheme can be. After the Copernican switch, there was an initial period in which a loss of 'conceptual coherence' occurred in other fields, ... only later was an integration into 'the complete and coherent universe envisaged by the seventeenth century' attained with the aid of the Newtonian world picture. At the beginning any new conception will be an ad hoc, probably paradoxical device for 'economically describing the known.' Only later, when the passage of time and the gradual revision of common sense in the affected disciplines have overcome the initial sense of incoherence, does a new conception become 'a basic tool for explaining and exploring nature'" (1989, my emphasis), pp. 40-1.
through death and subsequent new life are we able to re-assimilate completely the existing patterns and structures (the flesh) of relationality into complete harmony with the new insight.

This is also analogous to the dynamic inherent in embryo development in which the first appearing cells of the liver, for example, are never exactly equal in definition, structure and function to any of the mature liver cells at organ maturity. Though the early liver cell is distinctive from others within the embryo at that time, it may bear little resemblance in form and function to what is later considered a mature liver cell. The continuity between the two liver cells of differing stages has to do only with its relatedness within the immediate supervenient 'teleological' structures of the developing organism. The two synchronically constituted definitions and functions of any diachronic contrast would be impossible were it not for the supervenient diachronic relational 'structures', which teleologically transcend the conceptual structures of the synchronically constituted definitions. In other words, there is a way in which the earlier liver cell relates to its surrounding cells that is similar to that of the latter's environmental relatedness, and this relatedness can only be known in the 'telos of the entire human body development'.

In the end, it seems MacIntyre leaves us with only provisional structures (the 'conceptual'), which are indeed inclusive of seemingly 'metaphysical' aspects and criterion. By refusing ontological distinctions, he leaves no room in his discussion for a relational ontology that is somehow constituted in relation to both the particularity and whole of relations (across space or time). On the other hand, McFadyen's explanation of human existence as perichoretically inclusive of all personal sedimentations and social communicative developments within a dialogical understanding, begins to suggest how we might relate both the particular and the universal within a co-inherently constituting dynamic. Furthermore, within the Christian understanding of the Trinitarian redemptive relation to the world, we can begin to conceive of a way in which the Eternal potentially lies within time by virtue of the eschatological arch of 'Christ in and between us' that is made possible in analogia spiritus. Because the third entity of the perichoretic dynamic is the transparent activity of the relationship itself—the 'invisible' Spirit (spirit)—this source and dynamic can only be a revealed concept (revelation and gift) within each relational occurrence accordingly.

**Empirical veracity of the open-closed cycle of dialogical relations**

If all relations are dialogically constituted from out of the relationship, and every aspect of undistorted human relationship realized in analogia spiritus, then the criterion of progress should not only be right but ultimately evidential. MacIntyre himself concludes we can evidence the meaningful progress and enrichment despite the 'literal' diachronic discontinuity (i.e. B is from A, and not A, yet shares a continuity with A). An explanation,
however, of why and how conceptual progress happens is not provided. His purpose in *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* is to refute the relativist claim, but in the end, the nature of the “fundamental continuity” remains a contentious issue. A richer ‘conceptual framework’ asks the Buddhist or primitivist to concern themselves with issues like epistemological coherence, which may have little value or meaning within their tradition. We can establish verification only through specific claims that are appropriate to the universal human condition, such as McFadyen has argued within the dialogical dynamic of human communications.

If we consider conceptual coherence in any way ontologically reflexive, then name it and attempt to express the dynamic nature of its contingency. McFadyen, on the other hand, has offered us a Christian notion of a universal aspect of the human condition intact with falsifiable claims. All humans by virtue of their constituting dynamic irresistibly long for and are constituted as individuals in communication. The Christian structures of such communicational acts as McFadyen systematically presents in relation to the Christian narratives generate greater conceptual and explanatory configurations, which are testable as a universal relational diagnostics for the human condition. This is specifically noted in McFadyen’s notion of dialogical openness and closedness in personal integrity and ethical resistance.\(^{48}\) MacIntyre would limit us to an attribute of ‘conceptuality’ (the negative attribute of epistemological crisis); McFadyen gives us a dialogical dynamic with positive characteristics incumbent within the whole of universal human existence—meaning as and in relational communication.

**Conclusion: McFadyen’s significance**

There are three points of significance in McFadyen that are of specific interest to this study. The first concerns the universality of dialogical dynamics within all human relationality and the basic structures of human communication. Within this dynamic and beyond the relativity and particularity of conceptual social structures, lies the universal continuity of self as spirit and the maintaining of the same spirit of being for and intending of self and others in a diversity of contexts. The Christian narrative of Christ’s story shapes McFadyen’s relational ontology and presents a relational dynamic which is consonant with and affirms my earlier hypotheses: the pervasive human desire for dialogical (perichoretic) relations; the holistic constitution of meaning; and, the irreducibility of the relationship into metaphysical components or inferentials which stand independent of the relationship itself.

The second point involves the dialogical cycle of openness, which McFadyen at one point describes as a ‘silence’ before the other. This is a passive moment of communication

when one pauses in awareness before the mystery of the other seeking a "fuller understanding and ever fuller presence of the other." 49 Such openness requires a readiness to be transformed by the relationship (to the other). McFadyen notes, strictly speaking, we never completely open to the other per se, however, there should be full willingness for our existing construals and meaning-frame to be fully effected and transformed within the imminent relationship en totum, with its incumbent ‘Christ between and in us’. Once the relationship begins to take shape, the individual should be personally constituted from out of the full and genuine proffered wealth of the relational perichoresis, which entails the immanent-transcendent force (call) of the relationship itself realized in relation to the activity of the Trinity itself. Nevertheless, in the life consciously active within a redemptive relation to Christ, ideally one’s openness to relationship "must be unrestricted" 50 until the relationship itself begins to dictate otherwise.

As an individual becomes aware, the human spirit begins its organizational process toward gestalt, and McFadyen confirms that a major part of this "personal organisational structure [is] beyond experience." To the degree the individual’s spirit of relation is undistorted and genuine, God’s Spirit makes its ‘creative appeal’ through analogical 51 paradigmatic transformation within this “passive moment involved in understanding." 52 What goes on in this moment and how it processes into gestalt is of prime interest to this study. In the next section on James Loder and Kierkegaard, we will explore further the relational theological dynamics within this passive moment of silent awareness. Within the processing instant between the passive silence of awareness and the constituting of the self in cognition, lies the moment, the metabole (exaiphanes), “suddenly.” Nevertheless, within a dialogical social theory, McFadyen acknowledges the necessity within communicative structures of a dynamic moment (metabole) that ultimately factors in some way universality in particularity. For McFadyen, this dynamic process within human relations is analogous to the same dynamic within the constituting relationality and oneness of the Personhood of God.

The third point has to do with the perichoretic shape of McFadyen’s dialogical dynamic of openness and closure. Unlike many of the postmodern theological construals framed from inadequate philosophical paradigms, McFadyen provides for us an important element to relationship. There are never just two partners, but also the mediating function of the relationship itself (the Spirit and Christ between). The perichoretic constituting of relationships is only as full as the openness of the individual to the relationship, and only as

49 Ibid., p.135.
50 Ibid., p.248.
51 Ibid., p.116.
52 Ibid., p.299, n.1.
substantial (real or meaningful) as the degree of transformation or reconstitution the individual receives from within the relationship. Both the developed communicational structures and existing relational dispositions (ways of intending relations) within the individual and society, substantially determine relational openness and closure. The call is always external from beyond; however, because personhood is perichoretically constituted, we can also consider the call as immanent and internally created as well. To say the call itself creates the desire for response and shapes that response affirms the notion that the undistorted human condition is drawn to authentic relationship. Referring to the work of the Spirit of God in a circumspect manner allows us to understand the relational call within humanity as a dialogical dynamic with a dipolar contingency upon God, both ‘immanent’ and ‘transcendent’.

From the perichoretic point of view of the whole relationship, openness might be considered a continuum in its own right and closure another. The most important aspect within the prereflexive cycle of openness is the willingness or passion to venture the complete self (‘inward infinity’) within the relationship. For Kierkegaard, it is rationally and coherently absurd to consider that the Eternal and time are interrelated, and furthermore that one man in history, Jesus Christ, claims to be God. The Christian notion of the Incarnation is an ‘offense’. In this respect, openness is ultimately revealed in whether or not a person prioritizes their own theories and demands for understanding the possibility of the ‘offense’ over openness to the possibility of the ‘offense’, despite one’s current understanding otherwise. In other words, has the individual decided by their current understanding (dogma) that the ‘offense’ is not possible, simply because they currently are unable to understand how it might be. My primary concern with openness at this point, is the willingness to believe, not belief.

Closure, though directly affected by the character of one’s openness, can itself be considered a distinct continuum within dialogical relations simply because it lies on the other side of the dynamic mediational process, the moment of transition from prereflexive awareness (human infinite) to reflexive cognition (human finite). Like openness, closure is qualitative and this establishes the measure of conviction and appropriateness of action and transformation, which substantially result from existing relational structures and developed patterns. Nevertheless, the level of openness and presence we venture within the relationship directly affects the force of the closure. Every aspect of ourselves and our thinking we venture within the relationship is open to the possibility of transformation and closure can itself be considered a distinct continuum within dialogical relations simply because it lies on the other side of the dynamic mediational process, the moment of transition from prereflexive awareness (human infinite) to reflexive cognition (human finite). Like openness, closure is qualitative and this establishes the measure of conviction and appropriateness of action and transformation, which substantially result from existing relational structures and developed patterns. Nevertheless, the level of openness and presence we venture within the relationship directly affects the force of the closure. Every aspect of ourselves and our thinking we

53 In matters of existential relations, Kierkegaard argues, “it is necessary to risk everything, to invest absolutely everything in the venture” CUP 362.

54 In other words, one may be extremely proficient at entering another’s foreign world (accommodation), but utterly insufficient in having developed the appropriate perichoretic dynamic of constituting that knowledge and experience into their own world (assimilation).
refuse to venture within the relationship erodes the potential conviction and authority of our action within it.

This extrapolated play of McFadyen’s dialogical cycles as such allows us to assimilate Kierkegaard’s notion of human spirit and the convictive character in his understanding of faith, in other words, how the Eternal can become resident within the historical and held with the infinite passion of contemporaneous faith. If the complete meaning of such historical events of grace transcend any particular construal of them, then such a historical faith can only be possible if the person is open to being wholly transformed within each interaction as one’s particular meaning-frame develops, and its complete meaningfulness within each situation becomes so by its perichoretic relation to those Eternal events. Therefore, only to the degree one is undistortedly open to each new relation is one’s passion of faith and conviction so constituted. If one ventures all into full relations (sinlessness), one’s existing convictions can be held with an infinite passion (faith) for that responsive occurrence.

In conclusion, McFadyen’s work in The Call to Personhood attempts to forward a social theory that begins to put a universally identifiable shape to genuineness and authenticity in relationship. It is not within the scope of my current thesis to explicate such a social shape to right relationship, and therefore, I suggest McFadyen’s efforts as one such thesis that begins such a dialogue.

On a more speculative note, I believe various play in dialogical theory will improve our current diagnostic capabilities into the human soul. For example, the practical value of a dialogical dynamic which calls for the venturing of our whole selves reveals the assessment potential in our willingness to venture our whole selves. We can maintain our ‘infinite’ conviction in an historical event of grace in contrast to others only to the extent we are genuinely open in our relationship to other positions, thus renewing our own faith’s ‘contemporaneousness’ in respect to each subsequent set of relations. This leaves the possibility for subsequent enrichment of faith, and supports appropriate (genuine) relatedness within growing and shifting meaning-frames and relations.

Another benefit is the further refining of relational diagnostics. Love and codependent or enabling behavior, for example, are very similar in appearance and often extremely difficult to identify even for experienced counselors. In a single continuum paradigm of open-closure, the discernment between extreme self-sacrificial love and the passive-aggressive manipulation of codependent behavior is technically difficult to discern; both would seem to register significant openness. On the two continuum paradigm, however, split by the Christocentric dynamic constituting the relationship itself, the individual with codependent behavior will empirically register weak on the closure scale of response within

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55 Kierkegaard CUP & TC.
relations, while the individual with loving behavior will register high. Within a single continuum, we generally only sense the strength in true love and weakness in enabling compliance. In a dual continuum understanding, we can explain and locate the behavior straightway. The true lovers are constituted with personal conviction and decisiveness in relationships, codependent individuals allow themselves to be overdetermination by significant others and the community, therefore lacking any serious personal conviction. The lover stands defined as individual-in-relation, the latter is defined by the other (person or community) and pseudo relationship. Even when the oppressed offers grace to the oppressor within appropriate situations, the forgiver receives her conviction from the totality of the relationship, not an ecclesial behavioral 'equation' or the overdeterminations of the other. Though such dynamics are much more complex than stated, the possibilities are apparent.

What McFadyen offers us in a Christian social theory is a universal dynamic within the communicative act which itself creates and defines right and felicitous relationships (love). In the seemingly infinite possibilities of response to each relational occurrence, a dynamic akin to analogia spiritus allows truth and reason to emerge appropriately within the relationship. In a perichoretic-like dynamic the communicative norms and codes, the individual's historic sedimentation and current openness, the immanent-transcendent call to personhood, and God's personal will, all enter the perichoresis of relationship and are constituted equitably by an Eternal source. This dynamic takes place in a definite dialogical patterning, which McFadyen's The Call to Personhood gives shape, and in a manner that provides for truth within the reasoning of a pluralistic world simply because of a distinctive and universal dynamic that is inherently human. Each undistorted relationship (or to that degree) is effectively drawn into a creative perichoretic event of Eternal proportions.
Chapter 3c

Person as *perichoresis*: Loder, Piaget and Kierkegaard

It should become apparent that it is not the novelty of these physical and metaphysical theories which I find attractive, but the relational insight into reality which they have in common.

Michael Ovenden¹

‘[Physics] now recognizes that, for an interaction to be real, the “nature” of the related things must derive from these relations, while at the same time the relations must derive from the “nature” of the things.’ That is a statement of created, analogous, *perichoresis*. Everything in the universe is what it is by virtue of its relatedness to everything else.

Colin Gunton²

Introduction

The primary goal of this section is to explore the perichoretic understanding of relational dynamics in human development in the writings of James Loder and Søren Kierkegaard. Within Loder’s developmental theory, transformational dynamics will be of special interest, as well as the importance given to the question of ultimate meaning, especially ‘why’ and ‘how’ humans develop. We will then compare the basic patterns and characteristics of human development with Christology and the theological development of *perichoresis* in Trinitarian dynamics. The fundamental questions of how, and specifically why, human life develops the way it does remains empirically inconclusive. To the extent, however, any divine-human correlation can be revealed between the theories of their respective relational dynamics furthers our understanding of ultimate meaning in human existence and divine-human mutuality. The following is the primary anthropological hypothesis of this section, which I will elaborate and develop as we progress.

Each stage of human development is conditioned by the previous stage, yet the ultimate meaning within each stage emerges from the quality of the differentiated unity³ within its relational occurrences. In this respect, the stages to come bear upon the present in a futurity that is real-ized within the transformational process or transitions within relationships from prereflexion to reflexion. The transformational dynamic within the person is itself able to be

¹ Cited by Harold Oliver in *A Relational Metaphysic*, p.5.
³ Quality as such is the degree of differentiation attained from the *umwelt* in coordination with its relational re-integration. Developmentalist Robert Kegan is convinced that each new stage of equilibrium accomplishes this through an “evolution of a reduced subject and a greater object for the subject to take, an evolution of lesser subjectivity and greater objectivity, an evolution that is more ‘truthful’” (Kegan, 1982, p.294). The quality, therefore, has to do with the doxastic nature and structure of the re-integration in accordance with that of the whole.
transformed in relation to the Power which seeks to *co-ordinate*\(^4\) all such transformations with those of all others.

How this future conditioning actually influences the present within the transformational *moment*, reconfiguring our past, present and future into a faith-ful kairiological presence, happens within the process of *analogia spiritus*. Each chapter within this thesis is an attempt to provide dynamical insights that provide the understanding needed to venture an explanation to this enigmatic dynamic in our penultimate chapter on the *perichoresis* of time and Eternity. Before coming to that issue, and after attempting to understand the working of the Eternal within human development, we will have to reconsider how the correlative temporal development of Creation in Christ is an active and integral dimension of intratrinitarian Eternal relations.\(^5\)

**Relationality as the intelligible order of reality**

James Loder and Jim Neidhardt\(^6\) in *The Knight's Move: The Relational Logic of the Spirit in Theology and Science* contrast the relational logic inherent within human developmental psychology and the development of knowledge in science and theology.\(^7\) A generic concept of spirit is posited in which “spirit refers to a *quality of relationality*, and it is a way to conceptualize the dynamic interactive unity by which two disparate things are held together without loss of their diversity.” Generically, spirit is the “dynamic interactive unity,” an irreducible relationality, which forms and maintains relationships between things. Both authors wish, however, to distinguish themselves from the many cultural dualisms that vitiate both scientific and theological thinking; they seek a dynamic relationality that constitutes both social relations and personhood as a differentiated unity. They often use the Kierkegaardian/Hegelian contrast to illustrate this distinction.

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\(^4\) “*co-ordinate*” is not to be understood in an Aquinian manner of paralleling primary and secondary causation so that such an act is always *principally motivated* by each aspect of the causality (human and divine) even though both are reciprocatively active within the action. In *co-ordinate* activity the action itself may have been principally and decisively derived and motivated within a variety of relational processes in which either human or divine agency might have been the principle motivator or initiator of the act. Such an act and desire as possibility within the Eternal singularity is coherently emergent and *co-ordinated*, and therefore, reconstituted and real-ized accordingly back into the dynamic tapestry of history in a loving and balanced consideration of *all things considered* together. In this respect, we can speak of a *mutual emergent co-conditioning* rather than merely ‘cause and effect’.

\(^5\) We are here advised by Torrance that “Athanasius reminds us that in his incarnation the Son of God had a twofold ministry to fulfil. He was sent both to minister the things of God to man and to minister the things of man to God” (1985), p.344).

\(^6\) James Loder is the Mary D. Synnott Professor of the Philosophy of Christian Education at Princeton Theological Seminary (Harvard Ph.D. in Human Developmental Psychology), and Jim Neidhardt, Associate Professor of Physics at the New Jersey Institute of Technology.

\(^7\) Because of the primary interest and focus of this thesis I will be concentrating on relational aspects within human developmental psychology and theology, and therefore for the sake of brevity I will refer to quotes from this text as from Professor Loder, though it is here acknowledged that these sections though primarily written by Loder were indeed conspired in part by Jim Neidhardt.
The study’s methodology appropriates an analogical investigation of relationality as revealed in the nature of Jesus Christ. Thus the dynamic relatedness expressed within the Christological complementarity of Christ as fully human and fully God ultimately defines all expressions of personal, social and cultural relatedness. To this end, the study attempts to reveal “that a wide diversity of contexts may be illuminated as inherently relational and pointing toward the ultimate relationality revealed in Christ’s nature.”

Prefacing theological statement: Awareness and gestalt in theology and human intelligence

Loder begins by prefacing the theological point of both Calvin and Luther’s imperative on the Holy Spirit. Calvin states, “... until our minds are intent on the Spirit, Christ is in a manner unemployed because we view him coldly without ourselves and so at a distance from us (Institutes III.i.3).” This refers to the “inner witness” of the Spirit, which is necessary for “contemporaneousness” between oneself and Christ as the Word as presented in scripture. When divine and human spirits interact there is “a comprehensive inner consistency, across discontinuous events and times,” which relativize disparate events. In other words, in the language of this present thesis, it allows various events to emerge in direct relational consideration of each other, relating across space, time, and between individual minds and nature. Ultimately, we will consider this relation as dynamically ontological in nature. Loder believes Calvin’s returning to the early church fathers broke the medieval synthesis and Greek notions of space and time, thus returning to the notion of the “Spirit of Christ as transcending and traversing the boundaries of space and time.”

What this notion of spirit eventually provided was an understanding of relationality that would later emerge in the human sciences and the theories of, for example, Michael Polanyi, Douglas Hofstadter, and various aspects of Gestalt psychology. The latter was concerned with the relation between figure and ground, in which figure-ground reversal (e.g., the

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9 Loder/Neidhardt (1992), p.27. Cf. also H. Richard. Niebuhr (1951, Chp. 6) notes that for ‘Luther the Spirit brings Christ and culture into paradox; for Calvin, the Spirit makes Christ the transformer of culture’. For Loder, Calvin’s distinction of the Spirit as the “transforming and unifying link between Christ and all creation, including the human creation of culture...[which] allows the Son of God in his incarnation to descend from heaven without leaving heaven, and so the unity of Christ is not reduced by any descendants of Hellenic dualism or compromised by any receptacle notions of space” (28). It is worth noting that these distinctions between Luther’s ‘paradoxical’ and Calvin’s ‘transformative’ notions of the relationship analogously relate to earlier themes within the methodological discussion: Calvin’s ‘transformative perspective’ focuses primarily upon the conceptual aspect of a culture representing the explicit state of an existing culture as transformed into Christ likeness. In complementarity, Luther’s notion of paradox reflects the ‘degree by degree’ notion of cultural transformation, focusing upon the always existing tension between the historical, the present, and the eschatological which is the matrix of transition that creates human existence and enables transformation. We will return to this theme in the concluding chapter.

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familiar duck-rabbit image) is divided by a transitional moment in which you never see either interpretation at the same time and the reversal takes place in a moment described by Loder as the “blind spot.” He argues that this displays the “mind’s inveterate self-relationality” and the phenomenon of being able to relate itself to itself, the ability to intentionally draw a focal (conceptual) perspective out of the whole of experience (awareness). For Hofstadter,

the explanations of “emergent” phenomena in our brains—for instance, ideas, hopes, images, analogies, and finally consciousness and free will—are based on a kind of Strange Loop, an interaction between levels in which the top level reaches back down toward the bottom level and influences it, while at the same time being itself determined by the bottom level . . . . The self comes into being the moment it has power to reflect itself. The moment the mind produces theory in focal response the self designates itself as form within ground.

This is consonant with Polanyi’s understanding of awareness, whereby he describes “personal knowledge” as a bipolar-relational unity in which the focal aspect of consciousness exhibits “marginal control” in its producing insight out of the “tacit dimension.” We can roughly equate tacit awareness with the activity of prereflexion within this thesis. When Polanyi says, “we know more than we can tell,” he is noting that tacit awareness explicitly inhabits and conditions our focal and conceptual experience and meaning. They are ultimately inseparable. Although Hofstadter attempts to reduce the gestalt within its bipolarity (e.g., as the sum of the sole incumbent properties of the poles), Loder affirms with Polanyi the constant irreducible differentiated unity of human relational dynamic. Moreover, they claim that “relationship, not either polarity alone, is the vital center of human existence.” In this respect, “no conceptual order or linguistic expression, however sophisticated, can grasp the agent of its formulation.” The forming matrix of the relational unity becomes a greater whole (experiential) in which the individuals are co-conditioned, and from out of which they are constituted persons-in-relation. Enlisting Polkinghorne, Loder concludes “the intelligible order of reality is not in the mind, as Kant thought, or in nature, as Newton thought, but it resides in the relationship between the mind and nature.” At this point Pannenberg’s “neo-Hegelian proclivities which tend to equate

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11 Ibid., p.39.
12 It will be argued that unique to human gestalt and self-relationality is the ability to be wholly reconstituted, involving the whole reconstitution of ground, and therefore, the necessity of a “blind-spot” which accompanies the prereflexive-to-reflexive movement to gestalt. This ‘leap’ is necessary in order that such interactions and relational awareness be of a complete nature as creature. Anything less would render us unrelatable in an authentic manner to an Eternal and Infinite God.
14 Polanyi (1962).
16 Ibid., p.42.
17 Ibid., p.43.
truth and history, human spirit and Holy Spirit contrast with Tillich and Barth’s notion of two-spirit differentiated unity. Loder is emphatic about an irreducible relational (spiritual) dynamic that creates the relationship as a third term, which relatants indwell, and furthermore a paralleling reciprocal aspect of this dynamic that sustains the individuality of the relatants. This is the dynamic of spirit. Within the relationship emerges more than the sum total of constituent individuals and parts, even each one’s experiencing of the relationship is greater than ‘self’. Therefore, Loder affirms a relationality between human spirit and God’s Spirit in which ‘the Spirit Himself bearing witness with our spirit’ analogically expands and kinetically grounds the human configurative process. This provides the ground and dynamic through which the focal gestalt emerges meaningfully out of one’s tacit awareness from within the relationship. “It is here that one sees and participates in ‘what eye has not seen and ear has not heard’, ” as “the self-relational essence of the human spirit and its capacity to draw upon the tacit dimensions of human existence are” analogically drawn into relation with God and His trinitarian activity. This dynamic is the heart of Barthian ‘dialectics’ in which the person is constituted as a contingent differentiated unity.

Where Loder and Neidhardt differ from many theorists is that they do not rely on bipolar models of symmetrical reciprocity. In what might be referred to as ‘gentle hierarchies’, they adopt Polanyi and Niels Bohr’s understanding of asymmetrical complementarities which exhibit marginal control in one aspect of the polarity (e.g., “wave” attributes over “particle”). This presents, a condition in which the bipolar structure’s “lower” level is controlled by the laws governing its constituent components, but is also controlled by being subject through its boundary conditions to determination by the laws regulating the “higher” level. In other words, the “lower” level is said to be subject to dual control by the laws applying to its component particulars in themselves and by the distinctive laws that govern the comprehensive entity, i.e. the “higher” level, formed by them.

As we have discussed in an earlier consideration of supervenience*, this does not necessitate that higher-level activity control over lower activity swallows up the ‘free’ or ‘autonomous’

\[18\] Ibid., p.305.  
\[19\] Rm 8:16; cf. also 1Cor 2. Loder also notes that analogia spiritus and its quality of relation is the corresponding site of wisdom (phronesis).  
\[20\] Loder (1992), p.49,47.  
\[21\] Barth tells us, “The work of the Holy Spirit, however, is to bring and to hold together that which is different and therefore, as it would seem, necessarily and irresistibly disruptive in the relationship of Jesus Christ to His community, namely, the divine working, being, and action on the one side and the human on the other, the creative freedom and act on one side and the creaturely on the other, the eternal reality and possibility on one side and the temporal on the other. His work is to bring and to hold them together, not to identify, intermingle nor confound them, not to change the one into the other nor to merge the one into the other, but to co-ordinate them, to make them parallel, to bring them into harmony and therefore to bind them into a true unity” Church Dogmatics 4/3:2, p.761.  
action of lower level activity. In the penultimate chapter, we will consider how God as Agape incorporates into the structure of Creation, and in a special way the human dialogical dynamic, the unique dynamic and perichoresis of time and Eternity. This facilitates the free activity of lower level contingencies emerging genuinely and integratively related with that of the higher Eternal and asymmetrically preeminent level of activity within the Trinity.

**Complemenarity and the nature of perichoresis**

Theoretical physicist Niels Bohr constructed an understanding of relationality he referred to as “complementarity” in an attempt to explain the quantum world. Loder and Neidhardt contrast this notion of “complementarity” with Kierkegaard’s parallel understanding of Absolute Paradox, the Chalcedonian Christology, and Polanyi’s concept of personal knowledge. Using Bohr’s concept of complementarity in contrast with Christology, they define various attributes of relationality (reality) which are constituted in “unity of being.” The basic idea is that all reality (hypostasis) is constituted a differentiated unity. Following are a list of attributes, which Kaiser draws from Bohr’s scientific understanding and associates with Christology. I will use these to highlight features of perichoretic relationality important to this thesis.

1) Coexhaustiveness and mutual exclusiveness

The two modes of a quantum event (wave and particle) are coexhaustive. They each account for all known aspects of the event in such a way that the event can be described en toto as wave or particle, and yet each are mutually exclusive. They are operationally defined in incompatible ways.

In Christology, Jesus Christ is coexhaustively “God” and “man;” yet, in mutual exclusiveness, “the two essences, ‘man’ and ‘God,’ coexist and coinhere but they do not become confused or mix.”

This account suggests that within the triadic notion of perichoretic relations each person or entity within the relation retains their selfhood and yet each are reconstituted by the dynamic whole of the relationship appropriate to their respective development and capabilities. Likewise, if fundamental reality were constituted in such a complementarity we would expect the driving characteristic and impetus of life itself to contain a perennial desire to be constituted as individual/in-relation-to-the-whole.

2) Common and conjugate properties

Each mode contains both, common properties, for example, each have an electrical charge or angular momentum (‘spin’), and associated conjugate properties, for example, the
mode of explanation for a particle is spacetime location, or for a wave, momentum-energy vector.

Jesus Christ as human and God bears the common properties of ‘life’ and ‘personal quality of existence’, and yet conjugate properties like “a visible particularity and temporality” distinct from an “invisible universality and eternity.”

The dynamic of *perichoresis* is likewise constituted in existential, not material, synthesis creating common and yet conjugate properties within the relationship itself. According to the nature and existing relational configurations of each relatant both common and conjugate properties will become meaningfully manifest within relationship respectively. In other words, a conjugate (correlative) attribute of the divine (whole and Eternal) and human (particular and temporal) is evident in human beings as **imago dei** and the Trinity in creating the common mutuality for relationship. This reflects the dialogical distinctions (cycles) previously discussed in the section on McFadyen and Kierkegaard. These distinctions (prerefexive and reflexive, experience and concept, tacit and focal) are never dissolved into each other, but are only synthesized in the *moment* of transition (transformation) between the two, the *moment of gestalt* when one is constituted within relationship. This dynamic, for Kierkegaard, ultimately enables authentic interrelations within pluralistic relations, in contrast to the inevitable technical ambivalence experienced in traditional dualistic structures.

3) Coinherence and reciprocity

The modes of explanation are coinherent in that they may be ‘described’ in the terms of the other, and yet, they do not explicitly contain the properties of the other. We might describe them as the wave being “in” the particle, and vice versa. They are reciprocal in the sense that they evolve in “alternation” as wave collapses into particle and particle expands back into wave.

This Christologically attributes a coinherence of the divine aspects of Logos to the flesh of Jesus, and vice versa. Here the notion of *enanthropesis* (‘inhominization’) of God-the-Word and its reciprocal *theosis* (‘deification’) of the flesh are noted.

Relationally this describes the perichoretic dynamic whereby each aspect and entity within the relationship remains distinct yet conditioned by the other(s). This happens in such a way that a dynamic activity inherent in God would also be manifest in some way within human existence, and vice versa; thus, creating relational mutuality. In addition, we might expect progressive harmonization would be increasingly actualized through evolving interaction (creative redemption). In a relational ontology, we would expect within creation itself an active inveterate force in all relations from which greater and more interrelated order would emerge through time and chaos (fluctuation). Through ongoing alternations of coinherence and reciprocity creation relationally emerges in ever greater freedom, distinction
and particularization, as well as interrelation, harmony and holism; and this produces ever greater degrees of meaning. However, for this fundamental dynamic quality to be active in creation itself, it would necessarily have to co-relationally develop and emerge from out of chaos in order for this dynamic to instantiate a self that authentically relates (as its own self) with the totality. Evolving creation, whether biological, cultural or personal must contain an alternation of modes within its developmental dynamic in order for itself to be part of the interrelated whole.

4) Completeness and equal necessity

Each mode of explanation is complete in itself, not half-particle and half-wave, “nor is it an ambiguous reality.” At the same time, each mode is equally necessary for an exhaustive accounting of the whole.

“Completeness in the complementarity pattern is satisfied by the Chalcedonian statement, “perfect man,” “perfect God”; and equal necessity by Jesus necessarily being both God and man.”

Within personal and relational perichoresis, this relates to the ongoing instantiatory character of each gestalt. The quality of gestalt results from the degree of openness in the prereflexive process of awareness within relationship (Kierkegaard’s notion of truth). Nevertheless, each gestalt—conceptualization—is a complete (finite) rendering of reality within the moment, which is drawn from out of the tacit whole (infinite).

5) Asymmetry and pointing

The modes relate asymmetrically, which provides for emergent properties within the quantum event. The higher mode (wave) accounts for the stability of the event in a way the lower mode (particle) cannot. “Thus the modes, existing as they do on separate levels, allow for higher mode explanations of implicit lower-mode phenomena not otherwise accounted for.” From the other side of the asymmetrical relationship, “there is a pointing relationship which allows lower-mode explanations to point to emergent higher-level accounts.”

25 Rolston presents us in his 1997 Gifford Lectures a similar dynamic within gene activity to that of perichoresis. In contrast to the lone fundamental ‘enmity’ quality of gene relations presented by Dawkins, Rolston presents the ‘sharing’ nature of genes, aspiring related integration, “fit-ness” within the world as the fundamental relational nature of genes, which is a perichoretic like dynamic. This fundamental dynamic provides for both gene qualities, the entity status and identity with a capacity for complex algorithmic interrelations. In this respect, the gene exhibits drives far greater than its own ‘physical survival’ (Dawkins), rather it is drawn to ever developing greater interrelative economies with more pervasive interactivity and centers of action (consciousnesses)—what I can only describe as greater fullness of life.

26 Loder (1992), p.79.
27 Ibid., p.85.
28 Moltmann, (1992), p.211, might add, “whenever we are wholly there, undividedly present.”
29 Loder (1992), p.79. Kaiser (1976, p.46) specifically sees “different ‘levels’ of being in matter . . . and Christology, [which account for] an ‘emergence’ of ‘higher’ qualities due to the underlying qualitative asymmetry between the two modes of being.”
latter intuitive presence of the higher mode ‘pointing’ within the lower “may almost be said
to follow the rule of metaphor.”

Loder and Neidhardt note Kaiser as one of the few interpreters of Bohr’s notion of complementarity who emphasize his notion of asymmetry and marginal control. It would follow that such an attribute would necessitate an ‘open’ awareness into the relationship simply because our perception always ‘points’ beyond the conceptually explicit. Therefore, though these attributes are descriptive, the whole of what entails the quantum event (or our understanding of it) is always greater, “hence, causality* in the classical sequential sense is denied as a universal principle,” and the unity behind complementarity “generalizes the meaning of causality.”30

The asymmetrical relation that constitutes Christ accounts for His transcendental qualities within his human nature (the full qualitative engagement of analogia spiritus), and the full grounding of His heuristic and relational configuration pointing toward His divinity. The lower-mode, however, is only meaningful in its direct, nonetheless, implicit relation to the higher-ground within it, in other words there is no completely authentic human nature or relations without the analogous relation to the divine.

In this respect, for example, when a less relationally developed culture or tradition comes into active relation with another more developed than it itself (e.g., a Copernican verses a Newtonian meaning-frame), it will not be able to meaningfully experience or understand its heuristic fullness. However, if one is relationally open (ultimately sinless) she will be able to perceive or sense its fullness of life and greater meaning, simply because of the analogical relation between her ‘higher-implicit-mode’ of reality within her own meaning-frame and the same ‘higher-implicit-mode’ active within the higher meaning-frame of the other (analogia spiritus). Only through the logic of spirit, which Loder uses the Möbius band to illustrate, does the activity of analogia spiritus interanimate the complementarity within Christology, which furthermore situates all human relationality that is felicitously related.

This aspect of perichoretic relationality presses upon the developed order and undeveloped chaos, perversion, ignorance and fantasy, within all relationships, driving all life to greater and greater degrees of meaningful interrelations. Full openness to relationship (Reality) allows the Spirit of God fully into the analogia spiritus, thus allowing us to appropriately develop into a more advanced tradition’s meaning-frame as our own.

30 (1992), p.80. This observation by Kaiser expresses what goes unseen by Nick Herbert in Quantum Reality who assumes that Bohr’s relational reality determines the complementarity within the immediate context and locality of the ‘event’, observer and measuring devise (229), which Bell’s theorem now denies. However, because complementarity is asymmetrical, Bell’s theorem, which implies non-locality and the interconnectedness of every quantum event across space and time, is easily assimilated into Bohr’s notion of complementarity.
Likewise, we will retain the aspects that benefit the other meaning or relational-frame, as well as condition it accordingly within its ongoing development. We must constantly remember when we venture everything into the relationship, by definition of the dynamic of perichoretic relations, we analogically open to that very Power which posits self and "whose omnipresence interpenetrates the whole of existence." Therefore, the truth and rightness of relationship will come from within the relationship itself. This is ultimately an irreducible product that emerges from within the relationship through that Power that creates and interpenetrates the relationship itself. This is a holistic experience that is ever reconstituted ('pulled into existence') by our reflexive response within developing (transforming) relational and linguistic structures. Because relations are constituted within an asymmetric complementarity, prioritizing the holistic (spirit) over the particular (word), and though we are a perennial complementarity, our constitution (e.g., resulting knowledge) is established by our own spirit-to-word, or experience-to-concept. In this respect, even the words on this page contain a narrative structure, which emerge from my expression as spirit. You, as the reader, consider the words, are intuitively guided by the words, however, what you first grasp are whole thoughts, which in turn intuitively hold you in guidance to more complex gestalts. The spirit that created the words is embodied within the narrative structure and it is your spirit (wholeness), through the guidance of the narrative, that will preeminently define these words. We will return in a moment to this discussion, and what Marion calls the 'hermeneutical delay'. Nevertheless, though such language does not ultimately describe the dynamic of perichoresis, 'top-down' causality has asymmetrical priority over 'bottom-up'.

The discriminating factor within this open relatedness is the relationship between human spirit and divine Spirit. As McFadyen might say, it is the groundedness of the individual or community's interactional dynamism, which presents the form and identity of the person, in the co-inhering trinitarian dynamic of Spirit and Word, which creates and dynamically maintains the capacity for open forms of communicative order and structuring. Not only does such a dynamic make authentic relations in a plural-developed world possible, the process of analogia spiritus also provides the defining discriminating criteria.

Bohr's dynamic of complementarity, according to Loder, proximates the relational theory of Kierkegaard, in which the nature of synthesis as a complementarity can never be reduced to a Hegelian ontological synthesis in itself. It also redefines the classical sequential sense of causality, which will be the paramount subject in an upcoming section. Before

31 E02 141.
32 It might be appropriate here to mentioned that though historically Physics has been a methodologically ‘bottom-up’ construal, it is now recognized through quantum dynamics as in some way open at the bottom.
developing this idea further within a perichoretic notion of relationality, it would be beneficial to investigate Loder’s interest in Piaget and human development.

The human developmental psychology of Jean Piaget, and the relationality and the theological implications of his work

Introduction

Pannenberg tells us that unless theologians begin to defend the truth about God against the atheistic critique within the discipline of anthropology, their assertions about God and universality will remain only ineffective and subjective assurances. Though we only know God through His movement to us, recognizing the truth of God (and reality) always entails an antecedent willingness for the disruption of our present plausibility structures. Therefore, anthropology is not merely ancillary within theology.

Such has been the sad fate of dialectical theology and in particular the theology of Barth. It disdained to take a position on the terrain of anthropology and argue there that the religious thematic is unavoidable. . . . As a result, its very rejection of anthropology was a form of dependence on anthropological suppositions.34

As argued previously, all rational structures are existentially developed and holistically maintained upon a deeply complex ‘open’ dynamic of complementarity which sustains and imbues it with meaning. Though conceptual structures are always in flux, such complementarity for the theologian insures some aspect of interrelated wholeness. The rejection of anthropology—‘closing’ the system—was indeed an ‘anthropological’ move and ultimately an exclusion of an inherent element of theology, the entropy of which, in Barth’s case, he would struggle with throughout his theological career.35

As a theologian, James Loder is interested in Jean Piaget and human developmental psychology because, of the modern theorists, Piaget is the one most concerned with ontogenetic and phylogenetic36 origins. Pannenberg is similarly attracted to him because he “takes as his starting point the phenomenon [of] . . . the symbiotic vital unity between child and mother (organism and environment).”37 Both are adamant about the implicit theological theme inherent within this dynamic.

Summary of Piaget’s human developmental psychology

Developmental psychology is interested in the development and transformation of the structures that produce understanding and intelligence. Piaget’s basic model of functional invariants within development entails the assimilation of experience into the mind, and a

34 Pannenberg (1985), p.16.
35 Pannenberg adds: “As a result, it was defenseless against the suspicion that its faith was something arbitrarily legislated by human beings” (16).
36 Ontogenetic: concerning the development of an individual organism. Phylogenetic: concerning the development of a species or group of related organisms.
reciprocal accommodation of the mind to experience. Assimilation refers to the appropriating of some idea or object of experience into the existing meaning-frame of the person. Accommodation refers to the altering of the individual’s meaning-frame to account for the object or idea. In experience both are always taking place in order to create adaptation. Until adaptationa l\text{ equilibrium}^* takes place, either assimilation or accommodation will marginally predominate over the other. An example of assimilation dominance is play, when accommodation becomes dominant, imitation.\textsuperscript{38} When adaptation has been achieved, intelligence increases in its capacity to manage and experience ever-wider ranges of complexity and depths of meaning.

Piaget suggests four maturational stages in the development of intelligence: 1) sensory motor intelligence; 2) intuitive or preoperational intelligence; 3) concrete operations; 4) formal operations.\textsuperscript{39} These comprise an invariant sequence, each stage requiring the transformation of its basic structures in order to create the next. For Piaget, according to Loder (and Pannenberg), “language is a necessary but insufficient factor in the emergence of the highest stage of intelligence.”\textsuperscript{40} Mature consciousness is a product of and dependent upon “inverting the subject's initial position with respect to” the “totality.”\textsuperscript{41} It has been shown\textsuperscript{42} that the upper competencies facilitating mature intellectual development necessitate the capacity to “view oneself from outside oneself.”\textsuperscript{43}

This latter point is pivotal in understanding Piaget’s work, which leads us to Piaget’s perennial dualities that exist in tension: 1) the duality of stages and transformations; 2) the complementarity of causality and meaning; and 3) complementarity in the drive toward totality.

**Duality of stages and transformation**

In a later reflection upon his research Piaget recounted:

\begin{quote}
What is the relationship between morphisms [stages] and transformation? Which is master? Is it the comparative aspect [morphism] or is it the creative and formative aspect of transformation as I had always thought? And I found that, in the evolution of morphisms, they become increasingly subordinated to transformations. Clearly transformations are master.\textsuperscript{44}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{38} These categories reflect our theological and anthropological categories of spirit and word respectively, both are needed for adaptation into full and felicitous relationship (perichoresis).
\textsuperscript{39} For summary of these stages see Loder (1992), p.150.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., p.151.
\textsuperscript{41} Piaget (1967), p.13.
\textsuperscript{43} This dynamic of complementarity is expressed by Piaget in his concept of reflection. “Reflection is nothing other than internal deliberation, that is to say, a discussion which is conducted with oneself just as it might be conducted with real interlocutors or opponents, ... Contrariwise, socialized discussion might also be described as externalized reflection. Since all human conduct is both social and individual, this problem, like all analogous questions, comes back to whether the chicken appears before the egg or the egg before the chicken.” (1967), p.40.
\textsuperscript{44} Jean-Claude Bringuer, *Conversations with Piaget* (Chicago: U.ofC. Press 1980)
Not only are the transformations given marginal control, we are told if transformation is the creative and formative modification of one morphism to another, then clearly “the ground of Piaget’s thought is a dynamic state-changing activity which persists throughout the stages.”45 Developmentally, however, if transformations build on the existing structures, we must acknowledge that the original morphic structures intrinsically bear the transformational process within themselves and the potential of the forthcoming states. In the original state lies the transformational dynamic itself. Pannenberg tells us that within Piaget’s interactive adaptation process lies the “potential of an innate intelligence, which however, acquires its structure only as it is developed.”

Piaget calls it a “mistake” to regard “the a priori as consisting in structures existing ready-made from the beginning of development” [Piaget (1952)]. The structures that govern experience must, rather, themselves be developed. “This a priori only appears in the form of essential structures at the end of the evolution of concepts and not at their beginning” [ibid.].46 Therefore, a tensive perennial complementarity exists in Piaget in which the emergence of new structures can never embody a final telos or meaning, yet, it is clear, says Loder, “that these structures are, in their advancing complexity, the ultimate achievement and formal terminus of the dynamics of transformation.”47

**Complementarity of causality and meaning**

A similar tension occurs in the distinctions between causality and meaning (implication). For Piaget, causality does not directly apply to human meaningful consciousness. Consciousness arises from “original” and “specific categories” which selectively ignore and consider various material facts.48 Piaget believes consciousness develops out of both material causality and the individual’s existing meaning-frame, which form a relational complementarity. In this respect, for example, “consciousness develops directly by implication and meaning, and only indirectly from and in complementarity to underlying physiological or neurological causes.”49 This produces two types of transformation.

The first are the transformations of the actual stages, when a new emerging tacit dimension of meaning ruptures the meaning-frame itself. This is similar to the genitive emergence of new structures in meaning, which provides a wider “stage” (ground) of experience eventually facilitating an increase in focal articulation and awareness. This type of transformation can only be effected internally by theory change and is not directly

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47 Loder (1992), p.154. Piaget notes: “Now as we have come to see more clearly though Gödel but knew long before, the ideal of a structure of all structures is unrealizable.” Cited in Loder (1992), p.147.
48 Piaget, et al. (1968), chp.3.
effected by material or focal causality (causality which is only apparent within the existing meaning-frames). The second transformational dynamic happens *within* the existing stage, and pertains to the systematic modification of various forms and interrelations within the existing stage, producing greater pragmatic and interrelated efficiency within one's knowing environment, which at paradigm maturity eventually becomes ‘ground’ for paradigm shift. External causal anomaly produces this type of transformation, which is only intra-paradigmatic in nature. Nevertheless, the primary control of the expansion of consciousness and the development of meaning and intelligence is “the logic of implications [meaning], not the logic of causality.”

These categories can be referred back to our section on meaning in which concept + experience = meaning. This second aspect of transformation noted above (intra-paradigmatic) produces the greater conceptual diversity, which creates new ground for the further expanding of experience (interparadigmatic shift). The first transformational dynamic is what produces a wider frame of experiencing, which creates the ground for later conceptual growth and expansion. This is an attempt to re-construe the categories of Piaget’s complementarity of causality and meaning within the conceptual and experiential modes of human relations. The actual state of meaning, which is not completely presented or isolated by Piaget at this point, is an irreducible product of these two complementary aspects within human existence which *is* the third term of the *relationship itself*. This leads us directly to the third complementarity, which creates totality.

**Complementarity in the drive toward totality**

Loder, and Pannenberg, believe Piaget’s most basic but implicit category which encompasses those already mentioned is that of *relationship*. Furthermore, Loder believes Piaget “saw the whole context of his theory in terms of an ontology of relationships.” This relationship is always the product of a complementarity, which is continually active creating the drive toward totality. “The development of the child is thus a process of differentiation in which the totality must be restored at every stage; the totality thus reappears in a constantly new and enriched form.” This begins with various repetitions. The constant “restoration of totality through repetition and assimilation draws the child’s attention to itself” (e.g., the sucking reflex). *Totality* functions as both the starting point and goal of behavior and development. Piaget writes,

> The correlative of the idea of totality is, as Høffding has shown, the idea of relationship. Relationship is also a fundamental category in as much as it is immanent in all psychic

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50 Ibid., p.155.
53 Ibid., p.347.
activity and combines with all other concepts. This is because every totality is a system of relationships just as every relationship is a segment of totality. In this respect, we find in Piaget the first movement toward what Loder identifies as human spirit, and what Pannenberg insistently refers to with religious significance as "ecstatic identification." The broader implication here is that the textbook appropriation of Piaget, which places transformation inside a Newtonian 'container model' of the stages, needs to give way to his larger project, in which the stages must be situated in a "larger dynamic context." There are a couple of characteristics within this drive toward totality worth noting.

The reciprocating dynamic between totality and differentiation is never satisfied in any state of totality

Piaget's notion of equilibration is commonly misunderstood as a static balance. Rather, ... equilibration [is] a dynamic cognitive "process," a cycle of cognitive approximations to a state that is never totally satisfied, ... (1) it entails active compensations to environmental change; (2) it operates to maintain internal coherence; and (3) it represents an ongoing search beyond current cognitive maturity (equilibration is thus a misnomer). The process of equilibration is a "genesis" of human behavior and consciousness which itself creates the motivation for states of totality. Furthermore, such transformational fluctuations are themselves capable of creating ontogenetic or 'spontaneous' increase in meaning and emergent organization. "Piaget's work suggests that, through partially

54 (1952), p.10.
56 Ibid., p.153.
57 A leading interpreter of Piaget, Hans Furth (1981), describes Piaget's mature understanding of equilibration as "the self-regulation of human knowing. It regulates the network of cognitive cycles and keeps them in more or less permanent balance (equilibrium). This balance ... is open to the unlimited number of new encounters and perspectives deriving from the interplay of human actions (external and internal). Some of these encounters lead to disturbances of existing balances. In consequence, people experience conflicts or gaps relative to their given systems of knowing. The system which in the first place is responsible for the disturbances then responds in a compensatory manner and overcomes the disturbances to the point of essentially integrating them as part of the system. In doing this, there is a reequilibration, but not simply a return to the old equilibrated system. Rather, the compensation is at the same time the construction of an improved system. ... Hence Piaget speaks of an 'increasing' equilibration. ... For Piaget, 'structure without function (genesis)' was as incomplete as 'function without structure.' This argument is developed more fully in pp.253-283.
58 In agreement with Diane McGuiness, Karl Prikram and Marian Prinazar, Loder suggests that Piaget's equilibration as a continuously changing and self-organizing process might "be analogous to the discovery of Prigogine that in open, nonlinear physical systems processes can be identified that are characterized by temporary stabilities far from thermodynamic equilibrium which depend upon fluxes constrained by initial conditions and the context in which they occur. These temporary stabilities are characterized by global (encompassing the whole system) physical order that spontaneously emerges from nonequilibrium states characterized by global disorder. Before Prigogine's work, nonequilibrium states were considered devoid of any interesting physical information, thermodynamic nonequilibrium was treated as a temporary disturbance of equilibrium rather than a source of new order. But Prigogine's three decades of research established that thermodynamic nonequilibrium can be a source of spontaneous order, or organization spontaneously arising in open systems which exchange energy and matter with their environment" Loder (1992), p.159.
disordered encounters with one's cognitive environment, new states of increased intellectual
capacity can spontaneously emerge in the human learner actively interacting with her or his
environment. This dynamic within relationality, as we shall see, gives us an enriched
understanding of authentic relationship and sin.

This reciprocating fundamental drive within human beings further establishes that all
human existence is fundamentally emergent within the relationship and situated upon a
desire to relate perichoretically. The drive to 'interact' and the interaction itself is the
irreducible ontological reality of human existence. It is this innate dynamic quality of
relationality, in which all persons are existentially constituted within an interactional matrix,
that motivates both higher consciousness of individuation, and harmonic relation to the
broadest experiencing of the world. Piaget and Pannenberg convincingly reveal the implicit
call to "totality" inherent within the transformational dynamic. In a complementary fashion,
Colin Gunton argues that within this same transformational dynamic is the call for and
instantiation of particularization.

The pre-cognitive and awareness modality of Piaget's "totality" (relationship)

Ernst Schachtel directly supplements Piaget's notion of totality by noting that "acts of
focal attention exclude the rest of the field (environmental and internal) from that form of
consciousness which is designated as focal awareness. Concurrently Ulric Neisser shows
us that this process is pre-cognitive and preattentive when he argues that "preattentive
processes control . . . immediate bodily motion, or attention itself." What we choose to
become focally aware of within the vast field of experience (internal and external) is
determined prereflexively. Even rationality, as we have already seen, "is 'secondary' in the
sense that it works with objects already formed by a 'primary' process. . . . It seems to
[Neisser] that all directed thinking is an elaboration of this sort, just as all visual and
auditory perception depends on prior wholistic construction of some kind of unit." This,
however, leaves open the question of how the prereflexive process effects and circumscribes
specific attention from out of the pre-cognitive totality. At this point, Pannenberg is critical
of Piaget's lack of recognizing the religious thematic implicit in his own construal of being
drawn to "totality," which he affirms as prereflexive. In another respect, however, I am

59 Ibid., p.159.
60 (1993).
61 Metamorphosis (1963), p.253, in "The Development of Focal Attention and the Emergence of
Reality."
62 Cognitive Psychology, p.93 (my emphasis).
63 Ibid., pp.302-3.
64 Pannenberg lucidly describes the prereflexive process as such: "Because subject and object are not
yet distinguished within the focus on the whole that is proper to feeling (as distinct from sensation),
feeling provides the horizon not only for relating experiences to the whole of the individual's
existence but also for grasping impressions as parts of an objective whole which in its turn has its
place in the context of the world in its entirety. At this root level, feeling and reason are bound
sympathetic with Kierkegaard, Loder and Gunton’s position as critical of both Pannenberg and Piaget’s lack of religious thematic within the complementary draw to particularization also apparent within the dynamic moment. For Kierkegaard the internal force of individualization of human being is also a religious contingency. Nevertheless, the point at issue here is that such forces are active within the moment (movement) between prereflexive de-liberations and reflexive gestalt.

The hidden question of ultimate meaning

It is well known that Lawrence Kohlberg, a follower of Piaget, established six formal successive stages of moral judgment. During his work in the 1960’s with Harvard students who had scored his highest level six, they surprisingly acknowledged that ethical judgment meant very little to them. Loder points out that they, in effect, “had no answers to the question, Why be moral?” Disillusioned about his empirical search for moral reasoning, Kohlberg “recognized the empirical significance of ultimate meaning, and tried to develop a ‘stage 7’.” Between then and the time of his tragic suicide in 1987, he failed to answer conclusively, “Why be moral?”

Similarly, in Piaget’s work on intelligence we must begin with the question that never specifically concerns Pannenberg—why interest? Piaget remarked, “interest is the proper orientation for every act of mental assimilation.” Therefore, a fundamental question for Piaget would be, where does the interest come from which actually motivates the cognitive act of intelligence from out of the “totality?” Thus, the unavoidable question in human development remains, why does the neonate even react as such with interest to the fluctuations within its environment? And, why the reciprocating perennial motivation to adapt within the “totality?” We have already taken note within the act of suicide that pragmatic and self-serving biological survival is not the fundamental foundation of meaningful life.

together. Out of it arises the differentiation, occasioned by sense impressions, between feelings, which refer to the self, and reason, which relates to the totality that is the objective world.

In the lived experience these two sides are not yet separated. . . . The concrete grasp of meaning in the lived experience of the meaning of things and events as parts of the wholes which they represent is not to be regarded as a positing of meaning by a subject, because, apart from any other consideration, its origins precede any separation between subjective and objective. Only with the coming of language does the differentiation become definitive, but with an initial focus on a quasi-mythical subjectivity in things, which spontaneously manifest their being through the words that name them. . . . The unity of consciousness arises only in response to the linguistically apprehended identity of things and their order, in which . . . the little word “I” has its point of reference.” (1985), p.518-9.

Again, with Pannenberg, this has much to do with his Hegelian influences.

65 CUP 347-385.
67 Piaget (1967), p.34. Schachtel also argues that “an autonomous interest in the environment” (252) is fundamental to human being.
Concerning the “something” of ultimate meaning which motivates the transformational dynamic, some might offer Piaget’s own reference to a “lived out” Spinozism. This is a view in which transcendence and immanence are held together as dual-aspect modes of a timeless ultimate unity of being. This, however, does not explain the motivating interest (force) in human existence that seeks to differentiate, theorize, and constitute itself as a totality in relation to the world and its environmental fluctuations. Loder developmentally describes the emergence of meaning and intelligence as such:

... each new stage explicitly embodies the latent structural potential which resided in the previous stage, so the emergence of a higher stage ipso facto becomes the meaning of the previous stages. ... If we turn from the stages to the sequence as a whole ... we can see that the meaning of the sequence of intelligence as a whole resides in its enduring, stage-after-stage, tacit aspect, ... the dynamism of transformation by which a relational reality between any two stadial positions is constructed. ... Since these patterned dynamics are reenacted in every stage of human development and are the persistent tacit dimension of every new form of intelligence ... as a whole, the ultimate meaning of the four stage sequence must require that transformation, itself transformed, become that meaning.

In this respect, ultimate meaning must not come from a metaphysical monism, being, or ‘unity’, but rather from an “inherently relational reality, transforming all proximate transformations in an ultimate transformational relationship between transcendence and immanence,” in other words, a dynamic perichoretic relationality that constantly and alternatively seeks differentiation and unification.

Rather than focus upon the question of human existence within the “dichotomous choice” and the Modern understanding of the human will, developmentalist Robert Kegan similarly considers the “dialectical context which brings the poles into being in the first place.” Kegan’s Piagetian position presents development as a negotiating dialectical dynamic that is active within each stage of development. This optimally brings the oscillating imbalance of development and construction of new matrices of meaning into an “interindividual” balance, resulting in a “culture of intimacy” containing “interdependent self-definition”. His dominant theme, which is perichoretic in nature, is reciprocity:

Reciprocity now becomes a matter of at once mutually preserving the other’s distinctiveness while interdependently fashioning a bigger context in which these separate identities interpenetrate, by which the separate identities are co-regulated and to which persons invest in affection supervening their separate identities.

In this apt description of the perichoretic dynamic, Kegan describes a dynamic that is evident in all forms of relational evolution, but furthermore presents us with a transformational dynamic definitive of the highest stage of development. This dynamic which transcends any

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69 From a little known 1933 article, “Deux Types d’Attitude Religieuses.”
70 Loder (1992), pp.163-4, my emphasis.
71 Ibid., p.164.
73 Ibid., p.118.
74 Ibid., pp.253-4.
one stage presents us with what it means to be human. Rather than the egalitarian alliance which engages the other within the other’s current evolutionary position, which tends to ossify the other’s protective schemes and thus stultify relational growth, “the relationship is wedded most of all to that life motion which the partners do not share so much as it shares them.” The “life motion,” which presents the “bigger context,” facilitates transformation in which both the relationship (or All) and the individual reciprocally condition each other continually creating a more integrated intimacy. This is, for Kegan, a process fundamental in all persons.

This “life motion,” or “transformation, itself transformed” (analogia spiritus) is what produces the perichoretic dynamic in all relations in which “transition itself becomes the very matrix of existence.” Human as spirit repeatedly seeks individualization and reincorporation-as-individual in relation. This perennial force motivating and creating human relations drives culture to ever-greater levels of interaction and fullness of life.

Ontological status is given to human spirit (relationship) because of its analogical relation to the ‘open system’ of God’s Spirit which effectively draws the individual (in itself a closed system) into the possibility of an interactive reality, which includes an interactive matrix permeating the entirety of spacetime, and enabling co-ordination with God’s similar activity and will. Such a dynamic equivalent in Piaget and explicit in Kierkegaard and Loder will allow us to incorporate later a complementarity of time and Eternity into human existence that could not otherwise be imaginable. Such a complementarity, it is hoped, will begin to reveal a developmental process in which a teleological process itself is not merely active in the beginning, but because of the unique dynamic of God-Man, such a process makes it possible for this dynamic and subsequent stages to actually be the meaning within the antecedent stages. Moreover, within such a complementarity of time and Eternity in Christ, history authentically affects God within His Trinitarian relations. For Kierkegaard and Loder, this meaning takes complete hold only within the heuristic ‘absurdity’ of God-Man.

75 Kegan (1982), p.254, my emphasis. Cf. also the earlier section on social constructivism.
76 Perichoretic relationality and the evolutionary development of relational intimacy is also reflected in Kegan’s following statement: “The popular psychological notions of greater differentiation and greater integration as goals are here given a substantive and justifiable meaning. Each new evolutionary truce further differentiates the self from its embeddedness in the world, guaranteeing, in a qualitatively new way, the world’s distinct integrity, and thereby creating a more integrated relationship to the world. Each new truce accomplishes this by the evolution of a reduced subject and a greater object for the subject to take, an evolution of lesser subjectivity and greater objectivity, an evolution that is more “truthful”” (294).
77 Ibid., p.295.
Person as perichoresis: Loder and Kierkegaard on Christ, time, and transformation

Introduction

Within this section, we have thus far concentrated upon the predominately immanent aspects of God’s action within human relations, the penultimate aspect of the Christian experience, entrance into Kierkegaard’s “Religioness A”. It is only upon the Christological event and knowledge of God-Man that Kierkegaard believes humanity experiences the fullest of existence possible within divine-human relations in which the relationship itself becomes embedded in time and creation (history). Likewise, for Kierkegaard and McFadyen, it is in the knowledge of Christ and the relational dynamics it facilitates, which gives ultimate meaning to human life in every dimension. To this point, it has only been argued that ultimate meaning must lie within the integrative and transforming aspect or force that affects human development. The importance of such a discussion is to underscore this relational dynamic as universally human. This presents the framework for understanding the complementarities of time-Eternity, immanence-transcendence as basic to human existence.

The moment of dialogical reflex, and human being as the dynamic unity between time and Eternity

In the previous chapter, we noted the dialogical cycles of openness and closure in the communicational dynamics of McFadyen in parallel with the Kierkegaardian categories of the finite and infinite aspect of human existence. These are modes of relationship which cannot become a material synthetic sum, nor is the synthesis (relationship) reducible to the sum of autonomous polar entities. The relationship as a whole is always a tensive differentiated unity, which is asymmetrically constituted by its most supervenient* holistic quality. Loder points to the notion of “the Now” as the critical unifying aspect of the Parmenidean whole and the Heraclitean differentiation. This moment in Kierkegaard is what lies between the prereflexive and reflexive dynamic of human existence. It is a transtemporal* moment which unifies the grammar of sequential time into meaningful existential wholes (kairological time). It is the moment of insight, the aha!, breaking forth into consciousness with convincing force after a creative gestation process, which can last for many years. Likewise, Loder is here consonant with the earlier equation of human meaning as the tensive dynamic (unity) of concept and experience: “experience and knowledge are always in a differentiated, bipolar, reciprocal relationship which is, for pedagogical purposes, asymmetrical in the direction of the emphasis being made; but ultimately, it favors experience.”79

In a conference on “Immanence and Transcendence” at Boston University, Gadamer described the Parmenidean notion of “sudden blow” or metabole which embodies change in every day life:

... this blow-like occurrence, opens a new dimension of time, which is called in the later terminology of the New Testament “eschatological” time. Paul says, “you should not keep on waiting for the return of the Savior. He will come without your calculating expectations, like the thief in the night” [cf. 1 Thess 5:2]. Indeed, the same problem regarding the moment of the Second Coming of the Savior, the eschatological moment, is in the Gospel of John, where it is interpreted as the moment in which the believer accepts the message. It seems to me that we have a pre-shaping of all this in the dialectic of time and of movement in the Platonic view. Strangely enough, I cannot find any trace of this whole theory of the sudden, of the exaiphanes, through the whole history of ideas until Kierkegaard.80

Exaiphanes is a New Testament word, “suddenly,” used to describe the transfiguration, annunciation, the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost, and Paul’s conversion. Gadamer, says Loder, notes “Tillich, Heidegger, Bultmann, and others conceive of “the moment” as decisive, but it is in Kierkegaard that its Judeo-Christian understanding converges explicitly with the Platonic-Parmenidean dialectic.”81 For Kierkegaard, the movement of transcendence into time (e.g., the incarnation) must abandon any conceptual notion of ‘absolute rest’, and must instead, says Loder, “adopt a kinetic mode of reason;

in [Kierkegaard’s] language, in “a moment” one must make “the leap of faith,” which is just as surely an act of thought as it is an act of choice for radical change in one’s whole being.

Yet thought and being must never be collapsed either way, for in the tension between them is the velocity and vitality of existence, “the spirit.” Thus, his kinetic claim regarding authentic existence: “Man [person] is spirit.”

For Kierkegaard, reason is always a retrospective logic. In order for logico-mathematical constructs to work, they must freeze the flow of time. Einstein, in this respect, sought without final success to formulate a mathematics that could embody time within its formulations (“kinematics”). If we view this from the perspective of Greek and Modern metaphysics, it seems to contradict Einstein’s complementary belief in a dipolar-aspect of timelessness (Spinozian metaphysical idealism) and his own belief that time was ultimately an ‘illusion’. Though certain understandings of timelessness prima facie seem consonant with the apparent conclusions of his Special Theory of Relativity, this must balance with Einstein’s conviction that the conceptual alone was barren if separated from its dynamic unity and fullness of temporal experience. This complementarity within Einstein’s thinking is explicitly expressed, says Loder, only within the Kierkegaardian kinetic mode of human existence as “spirit” in analogical relation to “the Spirit of Christ.” This provides for, as T. F. Torrance describes, “the movement of the eternal in time, . . . a way of thinking by

80 Gadamer, cited in Fred Lawrence, ed., The Beginning and the Beyond (Chico, CA: Scholars 1984), pp.7f.
82 Ibid., pp.185-6, my emphasis.
abandoning a point of absolute rest and moving kinetically along with the truth in order to understand it."\(^{83}\) Also, "in the Cur Deus Homo Anselm insisted that even Jesus Christ must not be treated like a fixed principle, or a logical cypher, from which to extend formal logical connections and thus to build up a system of necessary truth."\(^{84}\)

In this respect, truth is always a paradox for Kierkegaard; reason is only "continuity in reverse."\(^{85}\) Loder suggests, "this analogy [analogia spiritus] would take us into the apocalyptic understanding of time, because to fully participate in the light of the logos would be to see everything that has been made all at once—in a moment that contains the fullness of time."\(^{86}\) The "leap" is the transitional moment and human condition necessary for the dynamic (existential) synthesis and transition from the ‘infinite’ prereflexive awareness into the correlational* matrix of Christ’s constituting dynamic (the relationship itself). From this we are able to be analogically and reflexively constituted in conceptual response. This is a time-embedding move or consciousness for Kierkegaard which unifies past, present, and future together in such a way throwing the individual (and relationship) more deeply into existence than otherwise. "Spirituality is not a leap out of time but a leap that releases real time into human existence so the concreteness of the dunamis of existence is lived out."\(^{87}\) The temporal (historical) is not to be contrasted with a static eternal, rather, as we shall see, the historical unfolds in direct relation to a dynamic Eternal, and the possibility of personal relations with God. In one’s relation to the Trinitarian God who empowers all interactions, one in effect comes into transtemporal relationship with the entire emergence of history.

**Prigogine and time**

Loder and Neidhardt employ Prigogine’s thermodynamic theories of how order emerges out of chaotic aspects in open dynamic systems to gain insight into this dynamic complementarity of time and Eternity. Prigogine suggests a shift in the understanding of how causation* transpires in a “more subtle form of reality that involves both time and eternity. . . . Being and Becoming are not to be opposed one to the other: they express two related aspects of reality.”\(^{88}\)

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\(^{83}\) Torrance (1984), p.278.
\(^{84}\) Ibid., p.277.
\(^{85}\) Kierkegaard explains: “What I usually express by saying that Christianity consists of paradox, philosophy in mediation, Leibniz expresses by distinguishing between what is above reason and what is against reason. Faith is above reason. By reason he understands, as he says many places, a linking together of truths (enchainement), a conclusion from causes. Faith therefore cannot be proved, demonstrated, comprehended, for the link which makes a linking together possible is missing, and what else does this say than that it is a paradox. This, precisely, is the irregularity in the paradox, continuity is lacking, or at any rate it has continuity only in reverse, that is, at the beginning it does not manifest itself as continuity.” JP, 3 October, pp.399-400.
\(^{86}\) (1992), p.186, my emphasis.
\(^{87}\) Ibid., p.198.
Broadly speaking, destruction of structures [forms of order] is the situation which occurs in the neighborhood of thermodynamic equilibrium. On the contrary “creation of structures” may occur with specific non-linear kinetic laws of far-from-equilibrium conditions. The energy and matter exchanged by the system from the outside world is then really transformed into structure. 89

This spontaneous self-organizing process, Loder comments, could be understood as a “reversing the arrow of time if the premise of the movement of time were toward disintegration and increasing entropy.” If, however, we view it theologically within the Trinitarian dynamic and from the point of the resurrection, we could see it as a “prefiguring of the ‘new creation’, [in which] giving rise to new order could be seen as a wrinkle in time, a leap into the future, bringing the future into the present ahead of time.” 90

This, once again, returns us to the heart of this thesis: how are we to understand the prefiguring of creation, the bringing of the future into the present, or the experience of seeing “everything that has been made all at once—in a moment that contains the fullness of time”? 91 The problem lies, as most of our problems do, in the Greek and Modern paradigm which incorporate a timeless, absolute point of view or rest which is inherent within the Platonic distinction of the whole, or concept of eternity. Even for Loder and Neidhardt the tense of their expressions fights the fullness of their intended meaning. After first looking at Kierkegaard’s understanding of how this theological contingency takes residence within the person, we will reconsider how Loder’s and Neidhardt’s idea might be more fully expressed.

Person as dipolar-aspect—perichoresis: Loder & Kierkegaard

For both Loder and Kierkegaard all life is constituted within a relationality, a dynamic differentiated unity by which all things are being held together. Nothing exists that is not contingent upon this dynamic which creates the relationships in which all things are constituted, specifically human sociology. Humans are not persons who are simply constituted in perichoretic relation to the world (Process or Spinozian theology), they are first perichoretic beings (a relation unto themselves) who are then constituted in perichoretic relation to the world (a Trinitarian action). For Kierkegaard, person is constituted both individually and socially.

Person as individual in perichoresis

Perichoresis in the Trinity is the mutual interpenetrating and indwelling of each person without loss of personal identity or corporate mutuality. All created relationality derives its ultimate meaning from this preeminent relation to the sustaining Trinitarian dynamic, which furthermore perichoretically sustains and indwells it. 92 As this study opened, we noted that person, for Kierkegaard, is by nature perichoretic. If the individual is to keep from

90 (1992), p.215, my emphasis.
91 Ibid., p.186.
imploding solely into its own 'worlds' of understanding it generates, or if, on the contrary, it is to keep from being constituted in full determination by its environment, it must be sustained by a Power which enables it to relate fully to itself. The key aspects to understanding individual spirit, says Loder, are;

the basic polarization of cognitive modes represented by the bicameral brain*; the self-transcendence or agency of initiative by which the “world” is chosen, composed, and believed in; and the transformational dynamics by which that agency works toward the creation and composition of the “world” in which the individual lives.93

Furthermore, “only if the self-transcendent agency of the self finds its ground outside and beyond the pattern of self-relatedness can self-relatedness be sustained.”94 In other words, the self-relating pattern of human spirit itself must be sustained by a source which allows its own pattern of self-relations to be related back unto itself, thus able to itself be transformed. Such a Power, however, must be grounded transparently. Transparency is related to both the nature of Christ’s activity within us, and the non-distortion within the human condition necessary to attain such optimal self-relatedness.

Kierkegaard is concerned with this dynamic, and the necessary openness required by the individual in order to keep this process grounded and centered beyond the individual. This Kierkegaardian pattern is identified by Loder as one of “mutual coinherence,” where not only are the polar relatants coinherent within the relation, but the relation also becomes coinherent with itself. Therefore,

it is evident that the self cannot be itself without its centered grounding beyond itself, but it must be a participant in that ground such that its life is preserved and its integrity as spirit is sustained by that ground. Thus, the ground also participates in the self in such a way that both ground and self are sustained as such from the standpoint of the self. In other words, there is a coinherence of the whole patterned activity of the self in and with its ground, and of the ground in and with the self. In essence, the self is spirit when the pattern governing it is perichoretic.95

Because human nature is spirit (potentially) and reflects the divine nature; 1) its ontological nature of relationality and subsequent patterning may not be understood simply in spacetime categories, but in analogical relation to the inner life of God, and 2) the conceptual nature of this patterning can therefore never be reduced to any fixed level of being;96 it is operative regardless of discipline of thought or experience, and in ever open developing and evolving conceptual relational configurations. For both Loder and Kierkegaard the human as spirit is ultimately dependent upon the sustaining hypostasization of God’s Spirit. When

94 Ibid., p.291. Also, “there are important analogical connections between the impossibility of a closed self-explanatory system as Gödel showed for logic and mathematics and the impossibility of a closed or self-explanatory view of the self-system. The irreducibility of the observer or the creator of the system to the system’s own terms is analogous to the irreducibility of the validation of first principles to the logic of their relationship within the system” (n.5).
95 Ibid., p.292.
96 Ibid., p.293.
Kierkegaard considered, "the Greeks did not grasp the notion of the spirit in its deepest sense," he understood spirit, says Loder, as wholeness and as a "subordinate half of an analogy to the Spirit of God." He also believed in spirit as grounded in history.

Ronald Hall, in *Word and Spirit* emphasizes the incarnational character of Kierkegaard's notion of spirit. Because of God-Man, spirit is never merely a dipolar-aspect of the human condition without the complementarity of word or conceptuality; rather, in analogical relation to the Holy Spirit (and thus the Word) it is always existentially grounded in spacetime and history. The Greeks had "no world-picture in which spirit could come forth into its full reality," simply because it lacked the heuristic and conceptual reality of the Incarnation. Here, the Eternal breaks into history, and Word is never without Spirit, nor Spirit without its correlative Word; and yet, neither are the two ever reduced into a material synthesis (a non-transtemporal notion).

Therefore, the "Power which posits self" is ultimately, inevitably, and only, that power which brings human existence wholly and coherently as person into unified existential relations with the world (trantemporally). Within the human condition itself is first the human ability to become spirit, to relate itself fully to itself, to experience itself as whole in relation to the world, rather than merely as a reaction to its environment. Secondly, it is a dynamic patterning which is itself potentially open to transformation. Thirdly, it is a pattern of relationality that reaches its highest potential when it includes the heuristics and knowledge of the Christian Incarnation which empowers and frees the whole person for full re-constitution and transformational relationship. For Kierkegaard, without the Christian narrative and resultant faith experience of the Incarnation, the individual is unable to wholly enter perichoretic relations. Only by *first* experiencing the knowledge that a human being lived and claimed to be the positive absurdity of the Absolute Paradox, that God lived as a human person, and Eternity has come into time, are we heuristically and relationally (ontologically) able to enter the dynamic which calls for the *whole of self* to enter into transforming* relations—love.

In conclusion, the dynamic of *perichoresis* must be a constituting dynamic both *in* persons, creating the individual, and *between* persons, creating relationships. The quality of perichoretic relations is always contingent upon the disposition and capacity for wholeness. In a following section this will be analogically equated to the same dynamic within the Godhead, but first brief mention must be made concerning the perichoretic constitution of person as social.

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97 Ibid., p.299.
98 Hall (1993), p.73.
Person as social in perichoresis

In both Loder and Kierkegaard’s thinking the transformational dynamic itself is definitive of the highest stage itself, which is active from the beginning of development to the end. Recalling Piaget’s primacy of transformation over stages, and Kegan’s transformational dynamics being definitive of the whole process, Loder argues that such dynamics are indeed what ultimately create the possibility and matrix of mutual and enhancing reciprocity between persons. Because this echoes many of the ‘perichoretic’ convictions of McFadyen already considered within the relational aspects of his Christian social theory, Loder’s understanding of social relations as perichoretic will be abbreviated.

Loder would contend, the Hegelian understanding of a ‘stage’ emphasis in dialectics results in pluralistic ambivalence and must give way to Kierkegaard’s understanding that persons mutually creating each other, in ways that presuppose earlier stages but are no longer dependent upon staging, i.e. “arriving at a higher stage,” as an orientation to what it means to be or to become fully human. . . . This triumph of the perichoretic pattern in human development [suggests that] what one experiences at first is so much a part of oneself it cannot be set “out there” and consciously intended. . . . Thus, by the standard pattern of differentiation and reincorporation-as-differentiated, transition itself becomes the very matrix of existence. The dynamics of change become the vital center of mutual interaction, not merely the means to higher order stability. . . . [And because] theologically, this means actualization by the presence of the Divine Spirit of the trinitarian image of God through Jesus Christ as mediating image [within perichoresis of self and community] . . . persons can intentionally, as part of who they are because it is integral to how they have developed, provide the other one with the combination of openness and tangible symbolic expression, i.e. the space and the manipulatable symbols thereof, to allow the two (or more) together and separately to repeatedly recompose the world, the “bigger context,” such that mutual enhancement can continue. Transitional space mutually provided and symbolically represented means corporate development.

For Kierkegaard the perichoretic dynamic of person as spirit begins through God’s immanent sustaining relation and call to personhood. This internal relation which is an aspect of “Christ in us” allows us to be, first, immanently constituted out of the whole of a relationship to the divine. This creates the ability for transparent human existence and all its historical sedimentation to be constituted as individual in relation to the ‘whole of self-in-relation to the world’. In this respect, only the transitional and transformational dynamic within humanity is primordial and immanently fundamental. All else is transformable in relationship, including the ‘known’ or ‘existing’ structure of transformation itself. This is what provides within transparent human existence (fully and wholly related) the capacity to be completely constituted and transformed (redeemed) by its relationships within the world. And, because it can be completely given to such ongoing reconstitutive relations, this capacity of relations alone can obtain to the unique distinction of agape.

100 "The capacity to give love," says Loder, "is directly related to the power of a convicting experience to make developmental time reversible" (1981, p.182). In other words, a person can only free herself from the negative dynamics developed within her sedimentation, which set off fears of abandonment
Regardless of the existing cultic play and mythic orientations, continuity and authenticity of relations are created to the degree any two relating individuals are willing and open to authentic relations. The conceptual play and orientations are secondary to the universal contingency of the perichoretic dynamic, the integrity of which is verified in the willingness to be reconstituted within relationship. If the truth-conduciveness within the relationship is consummate, the construals and narratives which stimulate this Power of ‘the highest stage of relationality’, will become ever more manifest within the ongoing interactions of various cultic and mythic play by providing the greatest relational satisfaction.

Therefore, only because persons are first perichoretically constituted by a Power immanently-transcendent within them, are they able to be fully constituted in social relations. In this way, the koinonia created community of Christ both negates and affirms the typical anthropological considerations. Such processes themselves are transformed and often obviated in an inclusive but transcending activity of the Holy Spirit within the community. In effect, the idealized reality, toward which Kegan’s developmental theory moves, becomes an actual reality only in the cultus of the koinonia (Pannenberg), i.e. only when it is an expression of the cosmic ordering, self-confirming, relationally-constituted reality of the Divine Presence.

Attributions of personal perichoresis

Before commenting on Loder’s thesis, it might be helpful to note his perichoretic understanding of imagination and the intensification of the knowing event leading to discovery. The unique characteristics of imagination will help us to understand the paradigm of perichoresis in its practical dimension. Kierkegaard tells us:

Imagination is . . . not one faculty on a par with others, but, if one would so speak, it is the faculty instar omnium [for all faculties]. What feeling, knowledge, or will a man has, depends in the last resort upon what imagination he has, that is to say, upon how these things are reflected, i.e. it depends upon imagination. . . . [In] relation to knowledge, imagination is the origin of the categories. . . . Imagination is the possibility of all reflection, and the intensity of this medium is the possibility of the intensity of the self.

Imagination and language as perichoresis

How is it that we are able to continuously maintain our beliefs (historically) yet relax their structures for potential relational and developmental transformation? As we have seen, Kierkegaard points to a relational third term and dynamic constituting the relations in which the person experiences and is conditioned within a broader (Eternal) ground and dynamic constituting the relations of the community. Imagination is the telling dynamic.

or absorption, when indeed those deeply seated dynamics themselves are able to be reconstituted within holistic transformation.

Loder lists some of the ordinary socialization processes as; determination and defense of territory, initiation rites, rites of intensification, role structures, hierarchical stratification, and legal system.


SUD 163-4.
"Any assertion of truth," according to Loder, that does not recognize and accept its primary dependency on some leap of the imagination, some insight, intuition, or vision, is guilty of intellectual dissimulation. Such error fails to acknowledge all knowledge as "personal knowledge" laced with human interest specific to the individual and society. With Karl Popper, he notes that "the logic of induction" is a fallacy, and furthermore, that in deductive reason, "truth is first grasped by an imaginative leap, then demonstrated." Both believe the theory inherent in all knowledge cannot derive solely from observable data, but must be created or invented within the leap of the imagination. "Facts do not determine the theory. Instead, the theory creates the facts, and it is contradiction that creates theory through an act of the imagination." Imagination is the power to generate, shape, and construct a meaningful world in which to live, and furthermore construct it when our existing 'world' becomes intractable. Image here is dynamically fundamental for language as metaphor, the visual, or ideas. For Kierkegaard, as with Sartre, the image both reveals and conceals aspects of the relationship. We always know more than we are focally conscious of, and the image always conveys a truth deeper than what the consciousness can grasp. Error develops in consciousness when the person attempts to self-determine the relationship without the willingness to be fully constituted within the truth of the specific relationship. This phenomenon Loder calls the "eikonic eclipse," which represents the selective (usually defensive), manipulative limiting of one's being constituted by the third term of the relationship itself. The relationship stands as an existentially created dynamic whole which meaningfully instantiates the individual's constructed image. Attempting to describe the dynamic of language and image, poet Ezra Pound tells us,

All poetic language is the language of exploration. Since the beginning of bad writing, writers have used images as ornaments. The point of Imagism [Pound's approach to poetry] is that it does not use images as ornaments. The image is itself the speech. The image is the word beyond formulated language. . . . The image in not an idea. It is a radiant node or cluster, it is what I can and must perforce call a vortex, from which and through which, and into which ideas are constantly rushing.

The image is a vortex through which countless factors are composed into a gestalt, an inner world which is constantly changing. Between the cognitive consciousness and the creative unconsciousness is the vortex of what Loder calls the hypnagogic image. In the paradigm of *perichoresis*, the cognitive consciousness is the conceptual and reflexive construction

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105 Ibid., p.23.
108 Empirical evidence is rapidly accumulating within neuropsychology and other related disciplines, which reveal this phenomenon. For example, cf. A. David Milner's "Vision without knowledge" (1997), in which he shows evidence that our visual capacity operates on two distinct cordial processes, one facilitating action and the other perception and cognition.
109 (1916), pp. 102,106.
(episteme) of the individual that is prereflexively conditioned and grounded within the created and dynamic ontological third term, which encompasses the sum concerns and conditions of the relatants into a mutually conditioned dynamic occurrence. The vortex of the relationship creates a kinetic 'analogy of wholes'—analogia spiritus—upon which all linguistic structuring emerges.

We reductionistically consider that a person perceives facts and details first, and then consciousness compiles them into coherent meaningful wholes. In reality, it is much more complex. The dynamic of supervenience, discussed earlier, suggests that the highest stage and form of order (e.g., human or divine consciousness) has marginal control over lower level determinations; in analogia spiritus the whole of consciousness is analogically communicated to the whole of consciousness, as well as the symbols. Out of such a dynamic preeminent joining, meaning emerges reflexively in social forms as language explodes forth from this prereflexive dynamic. When this happens, says Loder, "the experience seems to rupture boundaries of imagination while at the same time images rush in to contain it." 110

The contingent third term of the relationship is formed by the dahbar (the spoken word) of God—Christ—and there the differentiated aspects are held together (ουνίστημι Col 1:17) and given analogically meaningful relational or social shape with each relatant respectively. In this sense, the formation of the relationship is grounded and sustained technically outside the individual, whereby it is conditioned by the flexible symbols, details and in-tensions of the relatants; however, it communicates in return an immeasurable and dynamic whole (spirit) capable of an infinite amount of interpretations as it analogically traverses the 'vortex', or third term of the relationship. 111 As this relational whole is perceived, it is received as an ineffable whole to which images are then affixed in an effort to construct personal meaning. For Kierkegaard, notes Loder, all imagery retains a metaphorical or parabolic quality, rather than literal. This provides the space necessary for choice, mind, love, and personal identity to be constituted within the individual.

This theory of imagination and relationality re-frames the confusion of the Modern epistemological dilemma and the Kantian subject-object dichotomy within the paradigm of perichoresis;

"subjectivism is the way to solipsism, not the way to truth. But "objectivity" needs to be understood, not as excluding the subject, but as growing out of the mutual indwelling of subject and object. What we call "object" is an emergent synthesis of so-called subjective

110 (1992), p.250. Walter Lowrie suggests this is reflected in Saint Paul's experience of being "caught up into Paradise and heard things that . . . no mortal is permitted to repeat" (2Cor 12:4).

111 Marion, speaking of scriptural hermeneutics, yet reflecting the perichoretic dynamic, acknowledges a 'delay in interpretation' where by "a sort of infinite text is composed. . . . It offers, potentially, an infinite reserve of meaning, . . . hence [this] demands an infinity of interpretations, which, each one, leads a fragment of the text back to the Word [relationship], in taking the point of view of the Word [relationship]." In (1991), p.156.
and objective factors. . . . But where does the theory come from? It comes as contradiction forces the subjective mind of the theoretician to explore tacitly held theories, assumptions and opinions, many of which are as vague or beyond the periphery of consciousness.\textsuperscript{112}

In such a relational ontology, the human condition itself is thrust into a constituting dynamic at a prereflexive primordial level. Because of the transparency of this irreducible perichoretic dynamic within our relationships, such Kantian subject-object distinctions are able to be theorized, but they ultimately fail to satisfactorily explain human existence, let alone the power of human imagination.

Cognition as conscious focal awareness is humanly conditioned and maintained as an iconic medium into the dynamic world \textit{being created} within the world of the “emerging” relationship. Accordingly, human unconsciousness is the life of the relationship itself which is perceived but unable (or unwilling) to become fully conscious with adequate meaningful imagery. Nevertheless, in \textit{perichoreshis}, \textit{we do not indwell the 'object', or the 'nature' of the object, we indwell the dynamic creating of relationship itself between the object and the self which is always a dynamic creating of relationship itself between the object and the self}}

As I express my ideas to you, you are not conscious of the ‘words’, you reflexively experience only meaning (use); holistic consciousness is supervenient over the lower structured logic of the symbols we employ. The collating of words in relation to meaningful ideas is a prereflexive process (both \textit{personal} and holistic) that is not linearly constructed. Strangely enough, we are more correct in considering that the first movement of the communicative dynamic between us happens through the emerging creation of the perichoretic relationship itself as an analogy of meaning, which collects and shapes words and images, rather than words which are constructed into meaning. In this respect, words embody the emergence of meaning, they are the “house of Being” (Heidegger). The intension(al) whole of the relationship is, however, created, not technically constructed, allowing each to be perichoretically and existentially constituted according to their respective in-tension(al) engagement. The primordial ground of relationship itself is pneumatological,\textsuperscript{113} and this means relational. In the next chapter we will consider how the Father is not the Father without a Son, and the Spirit proceeds from the Father of the Son, in other words their can exist no Word without Spirit, which is not to say the Son (Word) proceeds out of the Spirit. That would again be an imposing of the pejorative notion of causation* upon the perichoretic relationality of God.

\textsuperscript{112} Loder (1981), pp.23-4.

\textsuperscript{113} Moltmann tells us, “All things are called into being out of God’s living breath, and that breath ‘holds them together’ [Wis. 1:7; Isa. 34:16] in a community of creation which furthers life. If they cut themselves off from that community, they lose the living Spirit. If they destroy the community, they destroy themselves. The Spirit of life means especially the connections and cohesion’s of everything created” (1997, p.24).
Imagination and experience in social relationship: language as perichoresis

As mentioned, the exemplary narrative and model of such communicational dynamics is radically portrayed for us in the story of Pentecost (Acts 2) when everyone understood each other despite the diversity in language and development formation. Meaning was the primary exchange as the words, cultural-linguistic forms and relational configurations were constructed analogically by the individual within their own process of spirit (‘they understood in their own language’). In this narrative we might suspect something expressed by a person from a highly developed culture to one from a more primitive culture would be understood only partially within their own limited development and forms of imagery and language. Yet, if felicitously engaged, the extra or the remainder, would nevertheless be intuited within the practical structures of the unique occurrence. Less developed relational configurations will not experience the meaning with the same ‘fullness of life’ as the other, but it is all there in the relationship to be experienced either in a manner of praxis (Hodgson) or analogically to one’s specific communicational development. On the other hand, when an individual with less relational articulation and categories attempts to express something meaningful to another who has greater facility, the advanced person may eventually be able to intuit the individual’s meaning and ‘articulate’ it within their own more advanced relational configuration, thus giving the meaning of the expression greater fullness of meaning and definition than what the person expressing it was able to explicitly articulate in their own linguistic development. This is exactly what happens in successful teaching or psychotherapy. Within the dynamic world of the relationship between them, the therapist indwells the client’s world and cor relacionally* aids the client in expanding her or his horizons and categories of relations (understanding) effecting adaptive equilibrium. This is possible only through the analogy of meaning and the irreducible nature of the perichoretic dynamic.

The deep complexity which is irreducible from the relational whole is noticeable in the differing ways we engage various members of our community in order to attain felicitous relational engagement. For example, my wife and I have distinctly different personalities (ways we intend others and express self identity), as do my two daughters. Not only do we each relate differently to our children, in order to attain optimal relational engagement, we each relate differently with each girl as well. In fact, we are often amused at how radically different each of us must engage each particular daughter (especially in correction) in order to effectively relate. The specific relationship which is formed in each case will uniquely determine the dynamical structure of its own truth and felicitousness of relations within the whole of the situation (the opposite of relativism). Truth is first a matter of how before what in communication. The matter is far too complex to merely assess the sum of the parts, rather each relationship will form its own existential mutuality. The truth however is there,
and the commensurability is within the ultimate meaning of the relationship ("the mind of Christ") simply because of the fundamental analogia spiritus universally active within all interactions.

Imagination and experience of the numinous: the relation of the divine and human

The dynamic of perichoresis and analogia spiritus also shed light on the mystery and manifestation of the numinous*. Kierkegaard's own conversion experience was recorded in his journals at 10:30 a.m. May 19, 1838:

There is an indescribable joy which glows through us as unaccountably as the Apostle's outburst is unexpected: "Rejoice and again I say, Rejoice."—not a joy over this or that, but full of jubilation, "with hearts and souls and voices"; I rejoice over my joy, of, in, by, at, on, through, with my joy—a heavenly refrain, which cuts short as it were our ordinary song; a joy which cools and refreshes like a breeze, a gust of the tradewind which blows from the Grove of Mamre to the eternal mansions.

As Kierkegaard encounters God, it is significant to note that he experiences the joy just before any imagery becomes conscious. We cannot say that experience comes before cognition, but, we can suggest there is a prereflexive dynamic within the formation of relations in which the expression of the other traverses the prereflexive process of the listener. Here the listener becomes analogically absorbed within the dynamic process of the mediational event itself, which begins to hint and signal before its arrival, as a voice calling from the wilderness, announcing and making ready the way of the word and the eminent forthcoming of meaning. Within the "transparency" of the co-indwelt third term of the relationship, human spirit and Holy Spirit "indwell" a coinherent process of constituting the relationship and, when the appropriate imagery is attained, one experiences the numinal. Loder suggests,

although imagery is primarily the property of the human spirit, it is made vulnerable, permeable, and iconically transparent by the Holy Spirit. Although transparency is a primary property of the Holy Spirit, it uses images, making them imageless, so it may be evident that invisible reality exercises marginal control over visible reality.\(^{114}\)

Within the image is the implicit denial of its ability to convey the full wealth of the truth within the relation. Nevertheless, because the human spirit, as wholeness, becomes analogically related as such to the wholeness of God (Holy Spirit) within the in-tensioned dynamic, the person is constituted in a dipolar manner in which God's Word (and meaning) is able to be communicated through the individual's images. In this way, human symbols, inadequate as they may be, are able to 'socialize', objectify and make explicit the analogous meaning of the whole. The totality, or whole of the relationship, is there to be implicitly experienced in a practical manner and explicitly known through the image to the degree of relational openness and cognitive development respectively. In this way, for example, Jesus expected the Jews to be able to recognize Him as the Messiah and His words as the words of

God *through* his relationship to them, despite His ‘radical’ departure from much of the existing Jewish and rabbinical forms of life. Those who were genuinely open despite their formerly inadequate relational structures, would have sensed the compelling force of his actions as an explicit ‘shock of recognition’. They would have recognized what had only previously been implicitly sensed and practically experienced at times within the old structures of meaning and interaction. In the experience of Kierkegaard, 

a swirling vortex of images pour into the pre-conscious arena of [his] search for expression of the ineffable, and many partially adequate images pass and “speak” before the climactic and cumulative image from Genesis gathers up the “chaos” according to a hidden order and the tension is released and the system cools. In this image, Divine initiative and conflicted human existence, a personal history and a biblical story, past and future, are bound up in present time as the concrete visible situation becomes the bearer of an invisible eternal— these are all bisociative* connections which tacitly retain their differentiation even in the unifying power of the ecstatic experience.\(^\text{115}\)

This explanation makes strikingly obvious what is characteristic in all human relationships, that meaning is *created* within a dynamic (bisociative) complementarity of differentiated unity. In one manner of thinking, there are no ‘entities’ within relationships; ‘entities’ are themselves relationships, which attained the provisional status and force to be *used* as ‘entities’ within authentic relationship, or *koinonia*. Meaning is never “out there” as a currency to be passed between us as a fixed item or a fact from some absolute point of reference.\(^\text{116}\) Even memory is not a meaningful event ‘literally’ stored in our brain, but an active relational creation.\(^\text{117}\) Therefore, what is ineffable or inexplicable within the creation of the relationship (non-inferential), though *implicitly* or holistically experienced, becomes *explicit* only through social adaptation and the existing development of each person’s relational configurations. Optimally, the relational logic and irreducible dynamic of human spirit processes itself in analogical correlation with those supervenient qualities active within and constituting the relationship, which because we all ‘move and have our being in Him’, is the relational logic of the Trinity itself. Marion tells us,

Incarnate in our words, the Word acquires in them a new unspeakableness, since he can be spoken in them only by the movement of incarnation that is, so to speak, _anterior_ to the

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115 Ibid., p.253.
116 Merleau-Ponty, as cited by Prigogine (1984), p.299, [originally from *Éloge de la Philosophie*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1960), pp.136-7] states: “So long as I keep before me the ideal of an absolute observer, of knowledge in the absence of any viewpoint, I can only see my situation as being a source of error. But once I have acknowledged that through it I am geared to all actions and all knowledge that are meaningful to me, and that it is gradually filled with everything that may _be_ for me, then my contact with the social in the finitude of my situation is revealed to me as the starting point of all truth, including that of science and, since we have some idea of the truth, since we are inside truth and cannot get outside it, all that I can do is define a truth within the situation,” i.e. being inside the Truth it cannot be handled as currency within our complete control.

117 For example, Moltmann tells us “memory does represent a certain _re-creation_ of the past in the present; and expectation does in a sense represent the _new creation_ of the future in the present mind” (1985, p.115, my emphasis). Cf. also Gunton (1991), p.68.
words, which he speaks and which he lets speak him. Any speech that speaks only from this side of language hence cannot reach the referent.\textsuperscript{118}

The meaning is created within the individual as spirit, and by the Spirit of Christ which existentially incarnates us in meaningful social relation to the degree we fully venture transformation within the genuineness of the relationship and the willingness to decisively respond. Our speech and hearing then emerge from a perichoretic dynamic whole of the relationship.

Words (entities) themselves become constellations of diachronic and synchronic relations each meaning-fully “delayed” and appropriately reconfigured within the anterior formation of a related in-tension(al) and meaningful whole.\textsuperscript{119} The continuity of words or forms of life, as discussed earlier, lies in the their specific relatedness within the whole. Their diachronic quality comes from their synchronic interrelatedness. This is what provides the opportunity for complete reconstitution of meaning-frames (or paradigm shifts), and more specifically, gives room for a relational theory of ‘top-down’ supervenience, whereby the constituting (transformational) dynamic of the existentially created relationship (meaning) shapes and constitutes all the ‘entities’ (words) accordingly. Words, as well as propositions, are coterminal with past use, not because they throw ‘meaning’ from the past (or text) forward to be used for present construction, but because of their similar synchronic placement within constellations of meaning, which are themselves recreated existential relations tacitly framed within the whole.

When the greater constellation of relations evolves in increasing or changing interrelated complexities, the word use (meaning) begins to change. When the meaning-frame is radically changed itself, the words can sometimes lose continuity with past use. Nevertheless, the highest level of meaning within the relationship establishes the transformational dynamic and bears only marginal control over the felicitous construction of meaning within all aspects of the developing relation. As we have seen, this is the same for persons as relations. Accordingly, Kierkegaard’s experiencing of joy before the images of the knowing event reveals the anterior and preeminent status of analogia spiritus over, for example, the Barthian notion of analogia relationis, which focuses more upon the eventuality of the word. At the prereflexive level of analogia spiritus, an anterior causal or co-conditioning aspect of the relationship is preeminently engaging, which creates the

\textsuperscript{118} Marion (1991), p.141 (my emphasis).

\textsuperscript{119} Cf. also David Braine (1993), pp.465-6. “We are never concerned with the understanding of langue as if it were something withstanding in its own right, but only with the understanding of langue as something to be realized in the understanding of parole or speech. . . . [And yet] we must reiterate that we are not speaking of indeterminacy of meaning or indeterminism as to how speech is to be understood. The openness of a unit of langue to polymorphous use, the flexibility which allows us to use words meaningfully outside the type of context within which they were learnt, the flexibility of which metaphor is only one example, involve that langue-meaning does not by itself determine parole-meaning.”
relational possibility of the divine-human symbiosis of meaning. Barth’s notion of *analogia relationis* is concerned with the analogy inherent between the resultant reflexive constitutions of the relatants (Calvin’s ‘transformational’ result). The causally anterior *analogia spiritus*, however, gives us the theological space to reframe Barth’s notion of the divine-human point-of-contact, which dramatically effects our eventual understanding of the human will, human as spirit, ethics, and most dramatically, divine providence and human freedom.

**The polymorphic symbols of ‘recollection’ and the supervenience of the totality in relationship**

In 2 Cor 3:17-18, Paul briefly describes the divine-human relational dynamic:

Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

The word *κατοπτριζόμαι* (‘beholding as in a mirror’), used only once in the New Testament, signifies the beholding of an image not based on an exact recollection or reflection of what is being reflected, but is perceived through a miraculous mirror making visible that which is invisible. This is an iconic viewing. Gerhard Kittel tells us, Paul is suggesting that it is by the spirit we ‘see’. 120 This is similar to the basic thought in 1 Cor 13:12, where there the resulting image through the mirror is dim and partial. Together these passages reflect the twofold nature of the developing relationship which is contained in the image of the mirror, namely the unveiled perceiving which is not completely represented in our explicit cognitive rendering, and the image which ‘reflects’ to some degree this fullness within the interaction. This dynamic cannot be strictly considered Platonistic. Again, a greater whole is experienced than what is explicitly known, and the whole of what is in the relationship is implicitly experienced through the formation of the individual as spirit according to their specific developed and sedimented relational structuring. The inability of the image to convey the fullness of meaning has to do with the incoherent, incomplete and truncated relational structures which are available within personal and social development. Nevertheless, “this looking into the divine *κατοπτριον* [mirror] has the wonderful result that those who look are changed into the likeness of what they see (→ *νευροφόμαι*), i.e., they themselves acquire a share in the δόξα.” 121 The “glory” represents the depth of meaning experienced and the developing ability of our images and relational dynamic within our tacit frameworks to wholly reflect the fullness of the relationship.

When dealing with the analogous relating of holistic meaning (spirit), there are no attributions of differentiation within the meaning itself. Such thoughts given to attributions

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121 Ibid., p.696.
are themselves whole new interrelations. Likewise, the differentiated aspects and image of each within the relationship become manifest only within the personal meaning structures of each person respectively, though within human mutuality and an established social code, meaning in final is constructed in personal spirit, which is person-in-relation. Nevertheless, the preeminent and emergent relationship itself becomes the supervenient ontological force in which persons correlate* in meaningfully relation to one another and are constituted through the Trinitarian dynamic of *perichoresis* (to the degree of ‘self’-abandonment).

### Time and Eternity: Eschatological Time

The writings of Loder and Kierkegaard richly express the dynamic of *perichoresis* and the dynamic complementary between time and Eternity which is necessary for any personal notion of divine-human relations. The Kierkegaardian ‘leap’ and subsequent moment of synthesis as differentiated unity (dipolarity) is created within the divine-human relation in which the individual participates to some degree in the Eternal light of the Logos, and in some manner sees “everything that has been made all at once—in a moment that contains the fullness of time.”

When transformation is no longer merely the dynamic pattern of development working as human spirit within the horizon of adaptation and ego formation but, instead becomes the pattern of Spiritus Creator, according to which the ego itself and its horizons are radically transformed, then this same pattern prevails, but now on a far more profound scale of being. This is transformation (as in the human spirit) transformed (as by the Holy Spirit).

This speaks of the potential constituting action of Christ within our relations enabling them to be constituted in relation to Eternity, the fullness and singularity of time. If this is so, we can assume through Christ that we are able to be constituted in relation to the Eternal. Furthermore, not only is humanity through Christ able to be constituted in relation to the Eternal, but God within His Trinitarian relations is able to be genuinely constituted as Eternal in relation to history through Christ.

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122 Moltmann tells us “the interrelations of the world cannot be traced back to any components, or universal foundations, . . . in reality relationships are just as primal as the things themselves.” (1985), p.11. Fritjof Capra, (1976), p.302, considers: “In the new world view, the universe is seen as a dynamic web of interrelated events. None of the properties of any part of this web is fundamental; they all follow from the properties of the other parts, and the overall consistency of their mutual interrelations determines the structure of the entire web.”


124 Ibid., p.256.

125 Because of the causal interconnection of all kairolological time throughout history, it is only by being brought into such comprehensive relatedness that multiple persons can each in his or her own time be endowed with full dominion, i.e. all power and dominion is given, but only to those who are open to living alongside others of the same endowment. Logically, ‘all power’ and full participation within the Kingdom of Heaven can only be dispersed through a mediational matrix which comprehensively interrelates all times, lives and desires (“the mind of Christ”). The fulfillment of one person’s ‘desire’ or ‘freedom’ is quite often another’s oppression. Cf. Moltmann (1981), p.215.
The Christian Trinitarian God is, likewise, constituted a differentiated unity in relational perichoresis. Even the perfect perichoretic relation of the Son to the Father does not technically afford the Son the explicit or focal perception of "everything that has been made all at once." Even in the Godhead the infinite and the finite are not synthesized in a Hegelian manner. In other words, when Kierkegaard argues "existence is a synthesis of the infinite and the finite, and the existing individual is both infinite and finite," and furthermore that a person must simultaneously maintain an "absolute relationship to the absolute "telos" and a relative relationship to relative ends," we can suspect the same dynamic perichoretic constitution within the divine Persons. Therefore, the Son as human is focally and explicitly constituted in relation to the world (spacetime), as well as tacitly and implicitly within His full and perfect prerereflective process of existence in direct relation to the Father, Spirit and the Eternal. During His physical development on earth, he was constituted as such within His specific interactions; however, in ascension, He is then personally constituted in historical relation to all of history, relatively within history. The only difference between Christ's knowledge during His earthly journey and ours is a matter of intensity and degree of hypostasis within the synthesis of existence (the complete abandonment to the Father within each moment between infinite awareness and finite constitution). Our post-resurrected difference will be due to His having been first born (raised) and constituted as Person in existential relation to all history within its unfolding while concurrently related within His Trinitarian relations. As He knows us now, we will know then, but at present He plays a part as Person in our earthly pilgrimage that we are unable to accomplish but through Him.

To consider that we experience "a far more profound scale of being" in relation to Christ may also be misleading for some. Loder's thinking might be more fully expressed by saying we experience 'a far more profound scale of relating within the world', both perfect being and becoming. Both must be included and maintained separately. Even the Father, as constituted Person in relation to the Son and the Spirit, does not explicitly 'know' the future before it happens. Within the infinite Eternal singularity He merely sees its becoming in singular emergence with every other point of becoming in history. If trinitarian relations entail full and perfect perichoresis, we must assume the Father Himself only explicitly knows in relation to the actuation of the Son's con-sisting metaphysical action in history.

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127 CUP 347.
128 This transtemporal dynamic of the ascending Christ ensarkos will be the subject of the next few chapter, and presupposes the work of T. F. Torrance in Space, Time and Resurrection.
129 This will be explained in depth in an upcoming chapter. The basic idea is that Christ (constituted in Time) is able to say of the Father (constituted Eternally) that 'of that day only the Father knows' simply because for the Father (as well as that time) it is already happening, not happened.

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Therefore, the human participation within the Eternal light of the Logos might be more fully expressed as perceiving ‘everything’ (in history) being made all at once—in a moment that contains the fullness of time. In other words in the present passive indicative, rather than a past pictorial tense. This perception is a perception or awareness through perichoretic relation with Christ into the process of everything in history being made, which, for example, is active within the scanning state of awareness in the prereflexive processes of the knowing event. Therefore, when Loder, with Moltmann and Pannenberg, states, that "convictional experiences are to be seen preeminently as a breakthrough from the future," we can just as well say such experiences, both past, present and future simply emerge in holistic relation (in hypostasis) or mutual conditioning with those emerging processes across time and space. In other words, the process of the knowing event is homogeneously and interactively created within the very same reality (hypostasis) as those same processes which produced past and future events. Reality in Kierkegaard's notion of a kinetic mode of existence (reasoning) compresses time, all time, into the dynamic moment. Surely, this is one possible direction toward satisfying Prigogine's call for a "more subtle form of reality that involves both time and eternity." We will go deeper into this theory in the next few chapters.

**Supervenience in perichoresis**

We are now in a better position to expand our notion of supervenience. Earlier Murphy's use of supervenience was enlarged, stressing that supervenient levels of interaction are indeed active at all levels of interaction even though they may not be explicitly evident within lower level logic. Conversely, the lower level language, and understanding has within its own tacit dimensions and use the higher level logic and praxis, even though these higher level functions are irreducible to the explicit logic of the lower level activity and understanding (the fish in water). In the understanding of person as perichoresis, the dynamic of human spirit and the notion of analogia spiritus provide us with a complementarity in human relationality whereby supervenient qualities of divine relations and irreducible interaction are not only noticeably active at the human level, but present a

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130 The indicative mood confirms the reality of an action from the viewpoint of the speaker. The present passive pictures continuous action received by the subject in present time. In this case, we prereflexively experience through the Spirit of God and Christ in a tacit manner the transtemporal interrelatedness of our situation and possibilities in relation to those of all other such processes in history unfolding together.


132 The future proleptically conditioning the present is a limiting perspective that is the result and conditioning of Reformed thinking. It still leaves us open to the idea of an ‘impositional’ God and His preeminent decree of Alpha or, in this case, Omega (Telos) in which we must simply attempt synchronicity. Co-relational transtemporal emergence, however, maintains a dynamic in which human freedom can be genuinely and mutually maintained in relation to God’s Personal action.

reciprocity that facilitates human participation at such levels within the interaction. In other words, mutual interaction is a possibility within the divine-human relations at a level which interrelates the relational cycles of human existence with those same analogical dynamics within the divine Trinity. In this respect, the holistic, tacit background of human knowledge and action are drawn into analogical relation with the Eternal (analogia spiritus) in such a way that the corresponding 'lower level' consciousness (which is relative and focal) is not suspended or trivialized. Rather, the lower level logic and action is interactively and holistically integrated into the higher (Eternal) in such a way that it become tacitly present and active within the lower level consciousness and action. We experience the totality of the action only at the level of spirit. In this respect, the tacit awareness active in the process of gestalt is conditioned by the same dynamic active within the Trinity, which entails the entire unfolding of history within the Eternal awareness. Because of such divine-human interaction, personal action in the world at whatever level bears moral character within the self-structuring posture of the person to this highest supervenient level of relationality itself, and is experienced at the most holistic levels of conscience.

This does not negate God's Personal activity and will being worked in Creation, but broadens the manner in which He works and orchestrates His specific will within it. My wife communicates many things to me, often subconsciously and unintentionally. Just as often, I am aware of them and act upon them subconsciously as well (we become focally aware of such activity only through later conceptual growth and in retrospection). Whether or not we wish to classify all such communications as 'speech-acts' is moot, especially when this process births new categories of relations which never before existed. What then do we say of various aspects of emergent praxis just before they emerge into categorical expressions? My point is that God's supervenient (perichoretic) activity at the human level will be interactively affective at many levels of communication and causation. Though God speaks, he also influences and is influenced by Spirit-to-spirit-unto-Spirit. Nevertheless, all such interactions are ultimately coherent and coinherent with His speaking.

Conclusion

In this section I have attempted to establish the following hypothesis through the work of Loder's Kierkegaardian notion of relationality:

Each stage of human development is conditioned by the previous stage, yet the ultimate meaning within each stage emerges from the quality of the differentiated unity within its relational occurrences. In this respect, the stages to come bear upon the present in a futurity that is real-ized within the transformational process or transitions within relationships from

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134 For example, I don’t believe mature saints of old would have been able to categorically identify and explain the logic of 'co-dependent' enabling behavior within what 'appeared' to be loving behavior, however, they would have been able to intuit that the behavior was not love. Do we consider these unarticulated aspects of intuition language? They certainly were included within the tacit awareness and use of language.
prereflexion to reflexion. The transformational dynamic within the person is itself able to be transformed in relation to the Power which seeks to *co-ordinate* all such transformations with those of all others.

In this Christian notion of *perichoresis* and the relational dynamics of differentiated unity, the greater qualitative and encompassing relationships take on a supervenient marginal influence over lessor quality relationships within them. If this is in fact the case, we are in a better position to now understand how it is that God becomes mutually related to Creation through humanity. Just as the unique narrative of the God-Man is able to open insights into the anthropological dynamics of relationship, so reciprocative aspects within human dynamics condition our understanding of God’s relationship toward us. The investigation of the dynamic of *perichoresis*, as meaning (epistemology/method), in persons (emotions) in social communications (McFadyen/Kierkegaard), and persons as *perichoresis* (Piaget/Loder/Kierkegaard), reveal aspects within relational dynamics that likewise provide us with images which help inform our understanding of the Master Image Himself, and therefore God as He relates to humanity and the world.

Loder’s study in relational dynamics prepares the way for our specific inquiry into the *perichoresis* of time and Eternity and the unity of ‘immanence’ and ‘transcendence’ in human existence. Before this investigation into the unique ‘Kierkegaardian’ synthesis between time and Eternity, it is necessary to briefly consider the doctrine of the Trinity and specifically the multifarious activity of the Spirit of God.
Chapter 4

*Perichoresis in the Trinity, and the Spirit of God: Jürgen Moltmann*

It is hard to accept the idea that there cannot be an order in the universe because it would offend the free will of God and His omnipotence. So the freedom of God is our condemnation, or at least the condemnation of our pride. . . . Isn’t affirming God’s absolute omnipotence and His absolute freedom with regard to His own choices tantamount to demonstrating that God does not exist?

‘Adso’
Umberto Eco

**Trinity and perichoresis**

The purpose of this section is to compare various internal and external relational dynamics of the Trinity with that of human internal and social relations. This brief consideration of the Trinity and its relational dynamic of *perichoresis* will center upon the work of Jürgen Moltmann, and specifically his notion of God’s Spirit within relational structures. We will explore the striking analogical resemblance between the dynamic and place of the Spirit within this sociology and those corresponding dynamics of human relationality previously discussed. The aim is to situate theologically the earlier anthropological inquiries.

Though I believe methodologically that revealed structures of theology maintain an asymmetrical influence over our developing anthropological structures, as Calvin was cited earlier, the two form a hermeneutical complementarity that dialogically evolve our growing knowledge of both Trinitarian and human relational dynamics. It is, however, the Spirit of God within its Triune relations that provides the asymmetrical and analogical preeminent force within *analogia spiritus*, which guides such growth and enhancement. Repeating John, Jesus prayed that we would become one, as He and the Father are one, so that we could be one with Them. This most defining distinction of Christianity clearly marks the loci of divine-human mutuality—the manner and dynamic of relationality itself. My primary premise has been that Trinitarian sociology grounds redeemed human sociology, therefore human sociology will reflect the Trinitarian dynamic of *perichoresis*. Furthermore, advances in our knowledge of human relational dynamics should indeed contribute to our

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2 I wish to confess, in one sense, an openness to the possibility that both disciplines contain a ‘theological’ and an ‘natural’ dimension in which I suspect a ‘theological’ anthropology must rightfully condition a ‘natural’ theology, i.e. there are cultural cycles in which flourishing humanities must provoke dead religion (as Johannes Climacus believed).
understanding of God’s intratrinitarian dynamics, and most importantly, how these two bring created humans into genuine relations with an Eternal God. Nevertheless, though I mark the theological preeminence within this methodological complementarity, this study itself emerges in many ways as an anthropological stimulation of theology for their mutual benefit. In the next chapter, we will investigate how these relational dynamics suggested thus far might actually enrich our doctrines of the Trinity, the Spirit, divine perichoresis, and the divine-human relational conundrum of immanence and transcendence.

Moltmann’s read on the Trinity is multi-faceted, complex, and often affably unsystematic. Because of its scope, his theological gestalt and coherence often go unnoticed or misconstrued, especially by those who demand ‘conceptually’ tight notions of the Trinity, Spirit, and especially perichoresis reducible to quick and easy one or two line historical formulas. Though serious and meaningful, Moltmann’s theology is experimental, adventurous and suggestive. He states

there are theological systems which are not only designed to be non-contradictory in themselves, but aim to remain undisputed from outside too. They are like fortresses which cannot be taken, but which no one can break out of either. 3

Moltmann’s theology is not about affirming once and for all dogmatic doctrines of faith, but “imagination for the kingdom of God,” in which various and diverse images give expression to a dynamic gestalt that can never be ‘conceptually’ circumscribed or ossified. Therefore, without “built-in safeguards” and in what some regard as reckless, what I perceive as dynamically impressionistic, 4 his theology evokes a rich purview into the whole of our faith experience through often scattered but well placed strokes. The true strength and coherence of his theology emerges only within the richness of the theological gestalt (whole) it creates within the reader.

Like Loder’s analogical synchronicity of relational structures between the divine and human, the knowledge of the Trinity, says Moltmann, is ultimately doxological and such ideas must “suffer a transformation of meaning.” 5 Experiencing God or any other “has to be understood, and can only be understood, in Trinitarian terms.” 6 True openness to the other and self-change within relationship necessitates that the subject “enter entirely into his

4 In other words, the ‘realism’, whole picture, or meaning within his theology must happen between the text and the reader. In Impressionism the painting forces the viewers themselves to enter the process of making meaning; requiring the proper relationship (e.g., 15’ft. back) and an active constructive participation in order to manifest the relationship between them, rather than attempting to reflect reality to the viewer from a universal ‘realist’ point of view.
6 Ibid., p.4.
counterpart." This for Moltmann is *perichoresis*, what Loder and Kierkegaard would define as entrance into the created third term of the relationship itself.

Moltmann’s social construal of the Trinity is well known and yet rarely, I believe, fully understood. To most, it seems contradictory. This, I believe, is primarily a failure to completely understand and correctly identify the experience of *perichoresis* and its paradoxical dimensions when attempted to be understood within Modern paradigms of relationships. It is also sometimes due, I believe, to an individual’s deficient understanding of personhood.

**Basic Trinitarian metaphor of relations**

In a terse article concerning the Trinity and the *filioque* issue, Moltmann, describes the Father as the source of the Son and Spirit, however, the Spirit of God is from the Father and the Son. The Spirit of God always “proceeds from the Father of the Son.”

Citing Boris Bolotov, Moltmann claims:

> The Spirit is the third hypostasis of the Holy Trinity. His being presupposes the existence of the Father and the existence of the Son, because the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, and because the Father is the Father of the Son alone. Consequently, as soon as God *proboleus tous pneumatos* is called *Father*, he is thought of as having a Son.

The existence of the Spirit presupposes the existence of the Father and the Son, and accordingly, says Moltmann, the Spirit produces the “uniting mutuality and community” of the Trinity. Though the Father constitutes the Trinitarian unity and it is concentrated around the Son, it is “illuminated through the Spirit.” Therefore, corresponding to the wholistic nature of relationship and communication discussed in Loder, the holistic illuminating knowledge and experience of God is always “perceived through the Spirit first of all.” In one respect, the relationship as “mutuality and community” results from the agency of the Spirit, however, the idea of relationship involves also the instantiating (*hypostasis*) of individual subjectivity as well. In addition, this dynamic must be irreducibly associated with the perichoretic nature of Spirit. Nevertheless, the Spirit “issues from . . . the Father’s relationship to the Son.” Within the mutual indwelling dynamic of *perichoresis* the “Holy Spirit has his perfect, divine existence (*hypostasis, hyparxis*) from the Father and receives

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7 “From time immemorial, experience has been bound up with wonder or with pain. In wonder the subject opens himself for a counterpart and gives himself up to the overwhelming impression. In pain the subject perceives the difference of the other, the contradictions in conflict and the alteration of his own self. In both modes of experience the subject enters entirely into his counterpart.” (1981), p.4.


10 Ibid., p.178.

11 Ibid., p.184.
from the Son his relational form (eidos, prosopon)." Furthermore, "the 'issuing' of the Spirit from the Father and the 'reception' of his relational perichoretic form from the Father and from the Son are two different processes." Nevertheless, these processes are simultaneous and comprise a relational complementarity.

During the time of Moltmann's specific work on the Trinity, unlike Loder and Kierkegaard, he relaxed any consideration of the Spirit as the relationship itself; rather, the Spirit was a product of the relationship. As we shall see, the Spirit became more prominent within his thinking later on as the principal aspect of the relationship. First, however, it is important to note a few other Trinitarian distinctions.

**Trinitarian relational attributes**

**Differentiated unity**

The One God, for Moltmann, is neither a "numerical" or "monadic" One, but a "unity which is differentiated in itself." To understand the concept of differentiated unity, one must transcend the structures of Modern and Platonistic metaphysical thought. The immanent and economic Trinitarian distinctions are merely speculative and their use has fallen prey to Kantian structuring. The Persons are not distinguished from each other in their personal character; “they are just as much united with one another and in one another, since personal character and social character are only two aspects of the same thing.” There is no distinct separation of personal character within the perfect sociology of the divine person, and yet their respective personhood remain distinct. In human relations, this is only approximated rarely in experiences of intense intimacy or empathy. Likewise, God's unity and "at-oneness", its 'transcendent primal ground' cannot lie in the homogeneity of one divine essence or substance, or an identity of one absolute subject. As Person, only a *unity* of differentiation can be communicated in relationship, and only a *differentiated* unity can be open to change. The history of God’s Trinitarian relationship is the eternal *perichoresis* of Father, Son and Holy Spirit in “their opening of themselves for the reception and unification of the whole creation.” This results from a differentiated unity whose perichoretic dynamic is both ontologically and personally generated from within the uniqueness of their interactions. The history of salvation is the drawing of humanity into His “eternal triune life with all the fullness of its relationships.”

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12 Ibid., p.186.
13 Ibid., p.188.
14 Ibid., p.137.
15 Ibid., pp.150,158.
16 Ibid., p.150.
17 Ibid., pp.150,157.
18 Ibid., p.150.
19 Ibid., p.157.
Perichoresis is the "circulatory character of the eternal divine life... they live in [and indwell] one another to such an extent, that they are one. It is a process of most perfect and intense empathy."\(^\text{20}\) Their co-indwelling is not intermittent nor subsequent to their becoming Persons. In this respect, Word is never Spirit. There is, however, no Word without Spirit, or Spirit without Word.\(^\text{21}\)

As mentioned, in a more Irenaean Trinitarian conceptualization, Gunton similarly describes perichoresis as a "dynamic mutual reciprocity, interpenetration and interanimation."\(^\text{22}\) Likewise, in creation "the 'nature' of the related things must derive from these relations, while at the same time the relations must derive from the 'nature' of the things'. . . . Everything in the universe is what it is by virtue of its relatedness to everything else."\(^\text{23}\) In this respect, both Gunton and Moltmann agree that the perichoretic dynamic active in the Trinity generates the ontological quality in both the instantiation of individuality and unified relatedness as a complementarity of personal existence, whether in the Godhead or humanity. Furthermore, they proximate the emphasis of Loder and Kierkegaard concerning the over-all weight of this irreducible dynamic. This is what leads to Moltmann's (or Pannenberg's) social Trinity of three subjects. This generally provokes critical reactions from Barthian and Modern theologies alike that are incumbent with what I would consider as underdeveloped understandings of human personhood.\(^\text{24}\) As we witnessed within certain social constructivists, we have only begun to realize and integrate the vast nature and contingency of the subject's social constitution. This begins to corroborate the understanding of personhood in these social Trinitarians.

The nature of the Persons

Though Moltmann is clear about three Persons in the Trinity, he is purposely indeterminate about the nature of Personhood shared between them. Each one's manifestation of Personhood is unique and different from the other. Their "particular individual nature is determined in their relationship to one another."\(^\text{25}\)

The 'three Persons' are different, not merely in their relations to one another, but also in respect of their character as Persons, even if the person is to be understood in his relations, and not apart from them. If we wanted to remain specific, we should have to use a different

\(^\text{20}\) Ibid., p.174-5.
\(^\text{21}\) "Word and Spirit, Spirit and Word issue together and simultaneously from the Father, for they mutually condition one another." Ibid., p.170.
\(^\text{22}\) (1993), p.163.
\(^\text{23}\) Ibid., p.172.
\(^\text{24}\) One only need consider the aggressiveness of Moltmann and Pannenberg to keep abreast of concurrent anthropological and psychological developments in relation to Barth to understand one possible influence for their respective theological trajectories.
concept in each case when applying the word ‘person’ to the Father, the Son and the Spirit.”

Moltmann is reticent to say person is relationship, rather, relationship constitutes person. Relations and persons form a complementarity, and are relationally perichoretic.

The nature and character of the Spirit within the Trinity

The Spirit is active in differing ways in relation to the Father and Son, as well as creation. Moltmann portrays the Spirit as issuing from out of relationship between the Father and the Son, and emphasizes the Spirit’s role in making space for relationship. As for all life, “life is experienced and lived in the Spirit, ... it is the medium and space for experience.” This is a function of the Spirit for the Father and the Son as well.

The Holy Spirit allows the Son to shine in the Father and transfigures the Father in the Son. He is the eternal light in which the Father knows the Son and the Son the Father. In the Holy Spirit the eternal divine life arrives at consciousness of itself, therein reflecting its perfect form. Finally, the mutual transfiguration and illumination of the Trinity into the eternal glory of the divine life is bound up with this. This uniting mutuality and community proceeds from the Holy Spirit.

It is only in the Spirit that the Father and the Son are able to relate with each other. Effectively, the Holy Spirit becomes the essence of the relationship between the two.

Moreover, it only makes sense that two cannot be maintained as distinct and yet interrelated by that which is greater, lesser or other than what they are by nature, notwithstanding the attribution of personhood. Because the Father and Son are Person, that which enables the relationship must itself be constituted as such—Person. There exist compelling insights into such Trinitarian dynamics that suggest three persons, not two, are needed to create and maintain Personhood.

27 Ibid. p.186.
30 Barth tells us: “The Holy Spirit is the love which is the essence of the relation between these two modes of being of God” CD 1/1, p.480.
31 Dumitru Staniloae (1981) expanding on Moltmann’s concept that the Spirit receives its existence from the Father and his image (ēfōc) from the Son agrees that the Holy Spirit is a Person within the Trinity because of not only its place in the relationship between the Father and Son, but also because of it’s intimate and unique relationship to both individually. When the Spirit relates to the Son, thus receiving the image, He must experience the Son while also on another relational front experiencing the Father in order to differentiate the Son from the Father and know fully the Son, which entails the Son’s knowing of the Father. In analogous reference to human relations he points out, “no one can exist except in relation with two other persons, and not only in a perpetually closed relationship with one other person” (185). In effect, Staniloae asks, how can I live in the fullness of the other’s life without myself knowing the other’s other? “I cannot live in the fullness of the life of another—and therefore also in my own—except by also living my relation with his other other, thus making it my own relation. ... I can say that I know my other in the light of his other other, with whom he is linked. As for me, I must see them both differently, not just one of them.” And similarly from the other side, how am I able to keep from dissolving into the other and the other in me if not through the experience of relations obtained outside of our specific relationship. “The third person opens the horizon which can embrace all and frees the relationship between the two from narrowness and from a certain
In this respect Moltmann is to some degree consonant with Loder's use of Kierkegaard—the Spirit is the relationship itself becoming a third hypostasis (or in the case of human or divine relations, a person). When Moltmann says, "it is the nature of the person to give himself entirely to a counterpart, and to find himself in the other most of all," he reveals an admitted Hegelian interpretation. On the other hand, his reticence to affirm the Spirit as the whole of the relationship (an undeveloped Augustinian notion) is however laudable because it ultimately tends to diminish the individuality of the Father and the Son. Loder, however, never intends the Spirit as relationship to subsume the identities of the relatants, but as relationship to facilitate the full indwelling of each relatant into the others. Nevertheless, if indeed the Spirit creates the space for the counterparts to experience each other, then presenting the Spirit as the space and medium upon which the relationship perichoretically flourishes enriches his theology and relational dynamics. The Spirit now becomes the space of relationship within a perichoretic dynamic which simultaneously affirms not only the individuality of the Father and the Son but, because of the Spirit's unique interrelations within the Trinity, its own subjectivity.

Of specific interest to this thesis is Moltmann's unique and comprehensive treatment of the Spirit of God. If the Spirit becomes manifest within and as relationship between, for example, the Father and the Son, the Son and Creation, the Spirit and Creation, then we would expect the presence, activity and manifestation of God's Spirit to be diversely understood in the life of the Church and expressed as such in Scripture. Therefore, it is worth our while to consider an investigation into this complex and multi-faceted dynamic of Spirit within the Trinity and Creation by Moltmann.

**Multi-faceted Spirit of God**

To my mind Moltmann is the most recent major theologian attempting such a comprehensive study of the Spirit and the dynamic of spirit in all its multidimensionality. The presence of the divine Spirit in creation must be further differentiated, theologically; for we have to distinguish between his cosmic, his reconciling and his redeeming indwelling. The way the Spirit in his indwelling acts will have to be differentiated in each given case according to the mode of his self-manifestation as subject, as energy, or as potentiality. The monotony.

In this manner, and simultaneous to the begetting of the Son, the Spirit necessarily becomes Person in order that the relationships become perichoretically complete. As Moltmann himself says, "Only when we are capable of thinking of Persons, relations and changes in the relations together does the idea of the Trinity lose its usual static, rigid quality" (1981), p.174. 32 (1981), p.174, my emphasis. Cf. his questionable notion of indwelling to Greek thought (p.200) in *The Spirit of Life*.

33 This is in order with Staniloae's suggestion that "The Holy Spirit proceeds from the only Father as He begets the only Son." (1981), p.174.

34 Some of the ways Moltmann considers the Spirit of God's activities: the divine energy of life, cosmic Spirit, God's presence, His Shekinah, Messianic expectations, the Spirit of Christ and the Holy Spirit of the Trinity.
efficacy of the Spirit can then be differentiated into his creating, his preserving, his renewing and his consummating activity. These distinctions can be broken down into a few basic categories: cosmic Spirit, *Spiritus Creator* and Holy Spirit. These distinctions will be helpful in penetrating the complex dynamic of the Spirit’s relations and the dimensions of *perichoresis*. For Moltmann, cosmic Spirit is the Spirit that transparently enables and sustains life and cosmic interrelations, specifically that immanent dynamic within human beings which creates personhood as a relation unto itself. The Holy Spirit represents God’s personal transcendent action with the world. This represents God’s own inner perichoretic dynamic which instantiates Him as Person in relation.

How would Moltmann’s categories of the Spirit’s manifestations appear when juxtaposed with the notion of *perichoresis* in this thesis? The cosmic Spirit, as he normally stipulates, would be the life force within humanity, the relation or perichoretic synthesis of the temporal and Eternal, which produces life. The Person of the Holy Spirit remains the direct result of the perichoretic relationship of the Father and the Son, facilitating God’s *Personal* action in Creation. Thirdly, however, and separate from the other manifestations, the perichoretic activity (unity) between these two perichoreses themselves would have to be considered as *Spiritus Creator* (the third term of the relationship). The latter facilitates and sustains all cosmic relationships, including human self as a relation unto itself. *Analogia spiritus*, in this respect, is that aspect of the communicative act within all relationships respectively. Because of the irreducibility of the perichoretic unity, these working categories never represent completely unconnected aspects of God’s Spirit. They are simply manifestations of the Spirit with respect to certain relationships and focal emphases. In some ways this suggests a pneumatological (relational) or more properly a perichoretic metaphysics, a relational ontology. The logic within this dynamic is neither a reductionistic (Heraclitean) nor holistic (Parmenidean) emphasis, but a complementarity of the two that can only be located within the irreducible dynamic of *perichoresis* (the Trinity). Such a complementarity between higher and lower forms of relationships always entail complete reciprocity, with the higher forms of the relations supervenient over the lower qualities. The relational dynamic at any level ultimately issues from the highest form, the Trinity itself.

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36 "Theologically this Spirit must be called the Spirit of God and the presence of God in the creature he has made, But according to biblical usage, this is not the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the name given to the Spirit of redemption and sanctification ... the Spirit of Christ" (Ibid., p.263).
37 If the Spirit and Christ are what sustains relationship, we might consider in one manner that “the human being has really no substance in himself; he is a history ... [a] narrative ... which present him in the relationships in which he lives” (Ibid., p.257).
Cosmic Spirit

I will briefly mention two of Moltmann’s scriptural readings that motivate his distinguishing of cosmic Spirit. He conceives the Hebraic concept of Yahweh’s *ruach* as simply the force of life itself in humanity and nature. However, never very far from Yahweh’s *dabar*, *ruach* is the sustaining breath of life, “You take away their *ruach*, they die and return to their dust. You send forth your *ruach*, they are created; and you renew the face of the earth” (Ps 104:29-30). Similarly, in death “the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the *ruach* will return to God who gave it” (Eccles 12:7). In this respect, all that has life and movement has such by the Spirit of God. Paul uses the word spirit for both the Spirit of God and human spirit. For human beings ‘spirit’ is designated as the “psychosomatic totality of the person,” and “a ‘self’ that ‘can become an object to himself, [has] a relationship to himself [and] live in his intentionality”.

Human spirit

In Moltmann’s thinking, the human spirit is cosmic Spirit replete with the dynamic of *perichoresis*, which develops into human identity. The Gestalt of the human being, in which body and soul have become united, is a Gestalt formed by the creative Spirit: the human being is a *spirit-Gestalt*. But the Spirit . . . is not merely the creative Spirit: he is at the same time the cosmic Spirit: for body, soul and their Gestalt can only exist in exchange with other living beings in nature and in human society.

Because of this, the perichoretic dynamic is the most fundamental aspect of human being. God the Spirit is ‘the common deity’ who binds human beings into higher life with one another and, in this common sphere, makes of them again particular individuals. For though the Spirit in the person is certainly ‘the common spirit’ animating the shared life, he also gives each separate person his own Gestalt and the right to his own unique individuality. Moltmann argues this is not panentheistic in nature, rather Trinitarian. The perichoretic dynamic of relationship allows creation to stand apart from God, and yet “it also simultaneously takes creation into God, though without divinizing it.”

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38 Ibid., p.101.
39 Ibid., p.16.
40 In the “*imago Trinitatis*” the person emerges from human community “as a *perichoretic* relationship of mutual interpenetration and differentiated unity . . . [a] *Gestalt*—the configuration or total pattern—of the lived life . . . formed by the human being and his environment.” This dynamic synthesizes the human nature, genetic structure, society and culture, history, sphere of transcendence, religion, and system of values, etc. In (1985), p.259.
41 Ibid., p.263.
42 Ibid., p.267.
43 Ibid., p.103.
44 Ibid., p.258.
struggle within his theology confusing of two disparate relational dynamics. These 'panentheistic' characteristics are a result of Greek relational dynamics that vitiate his intended perichoretic paradigm, which labors for clearer coherent expression. These dynamics emphasize a dualistic (subject-object) rather than a tripartite structure (subject-relationship-subject) within all relational dynamics. If his earlier notion of perichoresis and relational dynamics is maintained, creation is 'taken into the relationship', not God proper; and yet, in one sense, to be drawn into the Relationship does connote, as Loder insists, a 'participation in the divine ground' (the desired goal of Moltmann).

The perichoretic relation that manifests this multidimensional activity of the Spirit is necessary if human persons are to relate authentically in differentiated unity to God. 45 Something of themselves—the perichoretic dynamic of human spirit—must be mutually concordant and participatory within the relational dynamic of the Trinity. 46 Otherwise, we fall back into the conundrum of Hegel's Absolute Spirit. Nevertheless, because God's Spirit is irreducibly perichoretic it always differentiates and unifies itself in relation to human spirit. If indeed self is negative relation in and of itself, and only a positive relation in relation to another (or that Power), then in one sense, we can understand how God and Creation 'co-indwell' if qualified within perichoretic dynamics and the social dynamic of the mediating hypostasis of the forming matrix of the relational unity itself.

Consonant with this thesis' earlier conclusions, Moltmann argues that this dual-spirit perichoretic dynamic between humanity and God is what ultimately creates desire in the heart of humanity for both God 47 and perichoretic relations with the world. 48 All longing in the heart of humanity is its own developed longing, not that of the Holy Spirit's impregnated into humans. Through openness to the world, human spirit, as developed cosmic Spirit, longs to relate perichoretically with the world. Through openness to God, human spirit comes into analogous relationship with the Holy Spirit, and its desires are shaped accordingly. Taking our cue from Loder's understanding of human imagination, we would suspect that the interpreting of God's personal action in history would result from the Holy

45 “Through the Spirit ... God himself is 'in us' and we ourselves are 'in God' .... We experience the reciprocal perichoresis of God and ourselves .... It is the communion of reciprocal indwelling. In the Holy Spirit the eternal God participates in our transitory life, and we participate in the eternal life of God.” In (1992), pp. 195-6.
46 “The Holy Spirit reveals the structure of the Spirit of creation, the human spirit, and the Spirit in the whole non-human creation; because it is to this that their experience corresponds.” In (1985), p.101.
47 “Love is a desire .... God is the most desirable of all” (1992), p.248. He ends his work on the Trinity with Augustine's decree, “Our hearts are restless until they find rest in thee,” and “our hearts are captive until they become free in the glory of the triune God.”
48 He here presents the Spirit as indwelling all creation as life, movement and order. “If the world were completely and wholly godless and forsaken by the Spirit, it would have become nothing (Ps 104:29); it would have ceased to exist” (102). Moreover, because of this cosmic Spirit is in all thing, specifically life; it longs for complete and felicitous (perichoretic) relations with all things and God.
Spirit’s analogical action upon the image making process of human spirit in all ways possible (analoga spiritus). 49

Cosmic Spirit (cont.)

God’s Spirit is both transcendent and immanent, its dynamic forms a complementarity in which the “presence of the infinite in the finite imbibes every finite thing, and the community of all finite beings, with self-transcendence.” 50 This dynamic activity of the cosmic Spirit in creation develops life processes and ever-higher relational organization. Ultimately this “creative and life-giving Spirit therefore arrives at consciousness of itself in the human consciousness.” 51 According to Moltmann, this is made possible by understanding the cosmos in relation to the Trinity rather than a mechanistic model (in which complex systems are derived from simple ones). Similar to the notion of supervenience Moltmann’s premise is “the principle that the more complex system explains the simpler one, because it is capable of integrating it; not vice versa.” 52 Within this perichoretic dynamic, the Spirit as cosmic Spirit permeates all relationality in nature. This is noticeable in: 53 a) the principle of creativity, creating new possibilities, anticipates new designs (transtemporality*), b) the holistic principle; creating interaction, harmony, mutual perichoreses (relationships), c) the principle of individuation: instantiating differentiation in all matter and life; providing self-assertion and integration, self-preservation and self-transcendence, d) the principle of intentionality, openness and potentiality. This is evident in spirit as anticipation, human as openness to the future, constituted as project. Even “the history of their lives takes its impress from what they expect of life.” 54

These are the basic attributes of spirit in the world which are active within the dynamic of perichoresis, and thus the relational dynamic in which the providential hand of God can interactively and superveniently relate. This is a cosmic process which perichoretically objectifies each action and entity drawing it into increasing interrelatedness and self-organization. Moltmann here describes evolutionary and developmental processes as ‘parts always giving rise to a whole’. 55 From atoms to human community, across time and in open relatedness, creation itself

49 Accordingly, to the degree one is willingly open and desirous of truth and felicitous relations, the Spirit, in what ever form and manifestation is appropriate (cosmic, Spiritus Creator, Holy Spirit, etc.), will without coercion, influence, attest, and aid in constructing the most felicitous rendering of God’s action and presence within the situation. The greatest manifestation of truth possible entails a highly complex set of interrelating factors.

50 “The transcendence and immanence of the divine Spirit are not mutually contradictory. They are two complementary aspects of its dynamic” (1992), p.227.


53 Ibid., p.100.

54 Ibid., p.265.

55 Ibid., p.203.
'leaps' from quantity in a particular area into a new quality, ... with the complexity of the structure, the capacity for communication grows. And with this capacity for communication, the capacity for adaptation and transformation increases in its turn. This, again, widens the range of anticipation [openness].

For Moltmann, creation contains and lies within an immanent-transcendent dynamic that provokes and facilitates the emergence of properties greater than the sum of the former constituent parts. Creation is a participatory system in which the primary communication between God and creation is accomplished at the level of spirit, yet manifest in word. The spirit of each thing is its highest totality, in the case of persons the "psychosomatic totality of the person." This obviously entails more than just explicit or focal consciousness. Since relations are primordially spirit-to-spirit, totality-to-totality, all of the person comes into relation with God, not just the 'intentional' actions, but the unconscious as well.

The testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum also enables the human being to give himself up to the instinct, the impulse and the guidance of the Holy Spirit: the Spirit is present and at work in the feelings and in the unconscious as well.

In other words, because of analogia spiritus we are constantly communicating more than we can explicitly say, and God is speaking more than we explicitly hear. In Moltmann, the structure of communication and change is primordially holistic, and therefore the dynamic fullness of relations takes place at this level of interaction communicating far more than our shortened presence reflects. Here, the word and the temporal are filled out and sustained within Spirit and the Eternal.

Holy Spirit

In relation to the world, the Holy Spirit is the redemptive and sanctifying action of God upon creation. For Moltmann, the Holy Spirit represents the action of God as Person, the witness of the Father to the divine identity of Jesus Christ as the One through whom God speaks and relates with the world. When the Holy Spirit comes to humans, God is in Personal relation with the person or community. We might think of it as the Holy Spirit being pivotal within the dynamic and aspect of revealed revelation, just as cosmic Spirit and Spiritus Creator are more pivotal in general aspects of revelation. Nevertheless, in order to be inter-personal, the totality of God must relate with a totality of human beings, and therefore for Moltmann, the Holy Spirit and the human spirit (developed cosmic Spirit) must become correlational dynamics within the perichoretic dynamic of relationship.

Nevertheless, there is ultimately no way within divine relations to humanity to completely segregate the whole of any one act or communication to one manifestation of God's Spirit. All are commensurately active in concert, full transcendence and full immanence.

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56 Ibid., p.204.
57 Ibid., p.205.
58 Ibid., p.264.
Spiritus Creator

For Moltmann, Christ through His action as Creator Spirit accomplishes His forward and redeeming relation to the world. If cosmic Spirit is the basic immanent life source in human being sustaining life as an individual constituted in reflexion, and the Holy Spirit is that transcendent holistic interaction between God and ourselves in prereflexive awareness, then Creator Spirit is that transforming activity of Christ mediating the moment of transition between these dialogical cycles.

The transcendence and immanence of the divine Spirit are not mutually contradictory. They are two complementary aspects of its dynamic. The pantheistic interpretation is just one-sided as the transcendentalist one. Nor does process philosophy’s bi-polar interpretation of the life process comprehend the dynamic moment lying between the divine Spirit’s transcendence and its immanence. The orthodox theological distinction between the Spirit’s ‘uncreated’ and ‘created’ energies does not take account of its creative energies. We understand the dynamic better when we begin to think triadically, so as to mediate between the world beyond and this world by way of the forward movement of process.59

Echoing Kierkegaard’s insistence that the finite and the infinite remain an existential and never a material synthesis, Moltmann argues that even in the perichoretic dynamic, the Spirit facilitates a rhythmic synthesis between immanence and transcendence.

‘Quid est tempus?: The perichoresis of time and Eternity

Moltmann interprets human freedom in three ways, freedom in the relationship between subject and object (lordship), between subject and subject (community), and the relationship of the subject to a project (future). In this latter aspect, a special dimension of the Spirit enables the transcending of the present toward the direction of the future. Understanding this unique dynamic in human experience assists our ability to understand human freedom in relation to God’s Eternal movements. In this way the present is conditioned (not determined) by the past, and is defined “from the future.”60

Our predominant notions concerning perichoresis and gestalt deal primarily with the spatial and visual categories—figure-ground. Moltmann, however, emphatically brings our attentions to bear upon the perichoresis of time and Eternity, which produces in human experience “a perichoretic understanding of the different modes of time, which interpenetrate one another qualitatively, and cannot simply be quantitatively separated from one another.”61

In this manner, time or times are equivalent to ‘figure’ and Eternity to ‘ground’.

Concept of eternity

In presenting his idea of time and eternity Moltmann uses the ‘time of the feast’ (Eliade) to introduce the idea of time as the repetition of eternity. The idea of the reoccurring feast instituted a cyclical structure within the temporal concept in which no event is unique and no past final.

61 Ibid., pp.125-6.
Everything comes around again. Every moment, everything begins again from the beginning, ... everything really abides. ... To experience time like this is not to experience the individuality of events and the irreversibility of their happening. The very opposite is true. This experience of time is the experience of repetition. But the experience of repetition is nothing other than the experience of eternity.

The useful image here is one of circularity by which everything throughout the course of time is in a sense interrelated. Nevertheless, it is an attempt to present a dynamic characteristic to eternity.

From Augustine, who believed time could not be a category of eternity, Moltmann assumes that time is "a definition of created being in its difference from the eternal being of God." Time exists as created time, and therefore, God creating the world from eternity can be said to "never 'have created' at any time, so he has 'never' created." The concern here is to relativize the various tenses of time into a perichoretic unity. From God's eternal creating there is no past (or future). That is a perspective from within created time. In Eternity, A is not created before D; they are dynamically created in dynamic singular relation. Time, like space, is simply a product of relations. For Augustine and Moltmann the Eternal is not a static set of relations like a movie reel in a box, but a transtemporal dynamic of interrelatedness in which the beginning and the end happen in dynamic relation to one another. In this respect, time happens inside relationships, not relationships inside time. Everything within its own time(s) in perichoretic relation to God's Eternal dynamic, is given the possibility of being created in relation to everything and every 'time' according to its developed nature. In one sense, spacetime is made possible for creation through God's withdrawing of his eternity into Himself. Moltmann here furthers the "temporal symbol for eternity," --circular movement--by embracing Augustine's God who transcends historical causal sequence. Humans in relation to God are then "drawn into the circular movement of the divine relationships," which facilitates the human ability to perichoretically unify its 'times' into and existential whole, facilitating the movement of faith and narrative.

Using Augustine's subjective notion of time--"through memory, sight and expectation, the soul has the ability to unite the times in itself," Moltmann presents various human experiences of time; kairological, historical, messianic, eschatological and the eternal, which

62 Ibid., p.108.
63 (1985), p.113, "time cannot be a category of eternity." Citing Augustine, "the world is not created in time, but with time."
64 Ibid., p.114.
65 Cf., the inadequate accounting by William Pollard which is held by many, (1958), p.103, "In the world described by relativity theory life in time is like the slow rolling up of a shade to reveal an already completed picture behind it."
66 Ibid., p.114.
68 Ibid., p.305.
he then argues perichoretically interpenetrate to produce an existential whole which is
greater than the parts. This is accomplished within Christ’s Time through His direct
perichoretic relation to the Eternal life of the Trinity, which provides “the chance to
influence God and to participate in his rule.”70 In this respect, “memory does represent a
certain re-creation of the past in the present; and expectation does in a sense represent the
new creation of the future in the present mind.”71 Here, Moltmann carefully qualifies the
‘actualization’ of the past and future in the presence. In the next chapter, however, we shall
investigate the sobering possibility that humanity in relation to the Trinity can actually affect
the past and live within the reality (hypostasis) of the future from within one’s own times.
Moltmann says this “implies the participation of finite creatures in the infinite existence of
God as well as the participation of the eternal God in the creatures’ temporal existence.”72
The two never materially synthesize, and Kierkegaard’s ‘infinite qualitative difference’ is
maintained. We can only witness them in the dialogical cycles, never the between. Because
of God-Man (Incarnation), however, the two were brought into relation: ‘God was made man
that we might be made God’ (Athanasius).

The linear and cyclical temporal concepts combine within “feedback processes” which
ultimately remain open within a “future as project” which “goes beyond the future as
experience.”73 Here Moltmann refers to Heidegger: ‘the primary phenomenon of primordial
and authentic temporality is the future.’ Therefore, “traditions and dogmas can be critically
relativized, and the hopes which they preserve and the hopes which they suppress can be
taken up again;”74 the absolute claims of traditions are not lost to a skeptical relativism, but
“lead to a living relationalism in an intricate fabric of interconnections.” Shifting paradigms
deepen and enrich the appropriate aspects of earlier well formed claims of traditions. These,
furthermore, remain ‘open’ and constituted within a living and developing relationality.

We must constantly combine the tension between ‘extrapolation’ and ‘anticipation’ into
one act.

Extrapolations do not treat the future as an open field of the possible; they see it as a reality
already determined by past and present. But this is illusory: it leads to a dangerous blindness
to the apocalypse among men and women in the modern system. . . . Without anticipatory
awareness we should not discern something that is still in the future at all.75

71 (1985), p.155; furthermore, “the soul’s power of remembrance and hope must in its own way be
termed ‘creative’. The created mind of man reaches out through time, penetrating past, present and
future being; . . . and in this way it partakes of the eternal Creator Spirit and engenders in the soul of
human beings a relative eternity, in the sense of a relative simultaneity of past, present and future
being.”
74 Ibid., p.131.
75 Ibid., p.134 (my emphasis).
Within healthy awareness, we seek to genuinely align ourselves and authentically interrelate as meaningfully as possible all things and all times. Again, in the process of awareness human beings experience the de-liberations from what 'is'. Here, our whole in-tensional self with all its anticipatory awareness can be prereflexively conditioned and eschatologically informed by God's own prereflexive Eternal in-tensions. Such prereflexive de-liberations break forth in creative moments Eternally establishing us in our own times.76

“What human beings are, is not thoroughly determined,”77 and as Dilthey insists, human nature is not a closed and fixed nature, it is open to the future. Only in open and ventured perichoretic relation to the Eternally dynamic Trinity will humanity be transformed into His image, from degree to degree. This leads us to our penultimate chapter in which we will consider one possible way of understanding how humanity participates in the ground of God’s Personal Eternal action.

76 “Because God's creative activity has no analogy, it is also unimaginable. The divine act of creation is never described in differentiated terms. Nor is it dissected into a number of different processes. It is unified and unique. This means among other things that time is excluded from the act of creation, for time always requires duration, and creation takes place suddenly, as it were—in a moment.” In (1985) p.73, my emphasis.

77 Ibid., p.229.
Chapter 5

The perichoresis of Time and Eternity: Analogia spiritus in 'immanence' and 'transcendence'

So then, man was said to be a synthesis of soul and body; but he is at the same time a synthesis of the temporal and the eternal.

The self is a 'relation' between heaven and earth, eternity and time.

The concept around which everything turns in Christianity, the concept which makes all things new, is the fullness of time, is the instant as eternity, and yet this eternity is at once the future and the past.

Just as finitude is the limiting factor in relation to infinitude, so in relation to possibility it is necessity which serves as a check. When the self as a synthesis of finitude and infinitude is once constituted, when already it is κατὰ διόνυσμα [potential], then in order to become it reflects itself in the medium of imagination, and with that the infinite possibility comes into view.

Søren Kierkegaard¹

Introduction

Thus far, we have explored the dynamic of perichoresis in the Christian notion of the Trinity and its related possibility in human persons, human knowledge, sociology, and as human person. We now take an unusual turn into the possibility of understanding the complementarity of time and Eternity as a perichoretic dynamic. For many, it has been a stretch applying the dynamic of perichoresis beyond the Trinity into general relational dynamics, notwithstanding the plausibility of such a dynamic active between time and Eternity. Nevertheless, this chapter explores Kierkegaard's thesis that human beings are the intersection of time and Eternity. Where Eternity breaks into time, persons exist. For Kierkegaard Eternity is not in either beast or angels, but only in the heart of human persons. Therefore, in some way, time and Eternity literally define personhood.²

I have attempted thus far to develop noticeable connections between the dynamics of perichoresis and the formation of gestalt, while pointing out the predominant understanding of gestalt as spatial and visual.³ Largely the more subtle and difficult interpolation of

¹ CA 76; ED 17,76; CA 80; SUD 168.
² Similar but different to Heidegger, here, person is considered cyclically constituted by temporality from within a relation to the Eternal.
³ Likewise, it is Kierkegaard's primary contention that we misunderstand time and Eternity simply "because we spatialize a moment, . . . visualizing time instead of thinking it" (CA 77).
temporal dynamics and gestalt has thus far gone undeveloped. For example, T. F. Torrance is convinced that the moment we die we are with Christ, at the end of time, the parousia. In this sense, when you die, not only do you instantly come to the end of time, you will be there with individuals yet unborn at your death. “We have to reckon here, however, with something like a ‘relativity of simultaneity*’,” which rubs against our common sense notions of temporal sequence. 4 “The primary theological point to get clear, however, is the ontologically and temporally indivisible nature of the one epiphany or advent of the incarnate Son of God in whom all men and all ages are held together, without any detraction from real differences between different individual experiences or times.” 5 In an effort to explain how everything is relative, not to each other, but to the invariance of light, Einstein used a concept of “assigning two different but equally real times to the same event.” Torrance, however, does “not wish to argue from relativity theory in physics or cosmology to a solution of the problem we have in Christian theology of understanding temporal experience in Christ when in him the age to come telescopes back into this present age in such a way that in Christ we live simultaneously in two ages or times, the on-going present and the future which comes to meet us.” 6 Though I make no pretense toward a similar equation between these peculiarly similar dynamics, I do attempt to metaphorically interplay the relational dynamics developed thus far in this study with new relational heuristics currently emerging from postmodern science.

The project of this section is to suggest a perichoretic theory in the relation between time and Eternity that constitutes the relationship between God and humanity. Such a complementarity, however, suggests alternative considerations of causation, which are currently requisite within new theories in science and philosophy. The theological implications will take shape within the discussion of immanence and transcendence by contrasting various aspects of Barth, Hegel and Kierkegaard.

God, Time, and Special Theory of Relativity: Expulsion from the innocence of absolute time and linear causation

John Polkinghorne has said that ‘God does not know the future before it happens.’ 7 On the other hand, what are we to make of God’s portending the future through prophets in time before that future event; or the dispensation of faith—proleptically experiencing in some manner the reality ‘Now’ of events future, ‘having seen them afar off’ (Heb 11:1,13)? My primary thesis is that all these statements are necessary for mutual and authentic divine-human relations, and that a particular understanding of the dynamic of perichoresis makes

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5 Ibid., p.343.
6 Ibid., p.342-3.
7 (1990), p.11.
this possible. Time and sequential reality must somehow condition a God who relates with humanity as Person in filial relations. Likewise, the interactive (non-interventional) enabling of prophets and more specifically the creating of faith relations in humans seems to suggest an aspect of human transcendence of sequential time. The notion is counterintuitive. Much like the experiences at the dawn of the Copernican age; we are living in an age of paradigm breaking anomalies and insights. The quest is to grasp “a more subtle form of reality involving both time and eternity,” and yet I can only begin and end this inquiry with the same prayer as Augustine: “Here your proceedings are beyond the reach of my sight; it is too mighty for me, I cannot attain unto it.” From the outset, I wish to acknowledge the mysterium tremendum, the ungraspable, the moment when Eternity comes into Time.

This unrelenting paradox has intensified itself throughout the ages. An inescapable need, however, for accommodating pluralistic realities and more directly postmodern physics has finally broken the back of former metaphysical structures. In the Special Theory of Relativity (STR), as Albert Einstein has shown us, “light is always propagated in empty space with a definite velocity c which is independent of the state of motion of the emitting body.” This means that regardless of the relative speed of any two moving frames of reference to a particular light beam that same beam will always be measured at speed c, in other words all space and time warp and conform in such a way around the constancy of light (c), or, more bluntly, “for a photon, cruising at the ultimate speed limit, the passage of eternity is but an instant.” If this is true, which is believed by all respectable physicists, and if God precedes the creating of the photon, then the formerly affirmed philosophical propositions that ‘only the present is real,’ and ‘only the past and present, but not the future, have determinate reality,’ are no longer tenable as classically understood.

Denying the determinate reality of an entity in the future because it does not exist at the moment of the assertion is as absurd as denying that an object is not real because it is not at the place of the assertion. The future and past are as determinately real as the present. This, however, does not mandate a determinism, which deals with the relations of events each

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8 Loder tells us, “In the context of irreversible thermodynamics it is not time per se that is irreversible, but time’s determinants. The fallen and shattered teacup can’t reassemble itself on the table; the filmstrip of events does not run backwards. However, time stripped of its determinants (as can only happen in reflective human consciousness, an inveterately ‘open system’) appears to be reversible in the spontaneous creation of a new order of determinants.”

“Theologically, the experience of the ‘reversibility’ in faith is a new being in Christ. However, as we will see, this notion involves ‘God’s time.’ In this context, what appears to be reversibility may instead be highly accelerated motion toward the eschatological future in Christ—a wrinkle in time and foretaste of the redemption of all things. This [is a] complex interrelationship between irreversible thermodynamics and Kierkegaard’s view of time” (1992), p.122.


11 Einstein (1923), p.38.

upon the other, but stipulates that a frame of reference exists through which one can perceive our past and future simultaneously. Lawrence Sklar, tells us that the “philosophers who maintain that past and future objects are not real existents, or that future events do not have determinate reality, are refuted out of hand by special relativity.”

It would seem, therefore, we must choose between the traditional theory of ‘temporal’ relatedness with its sequential causality of reality, or special relativity. “But [we] need not do either, for we can simply accept the consequences, surprising no doubt, but by no means inconsistent or patently absurd, of relativizing our notions of reality and determinate reality at the same time that we relativize our concepts of simultaneity.” Just because two separate moments in one frame of reference contract together within one moment in another spacetime reference does not destroy the causal integrity or reality within either frame. Though we can posit no universal present moment or reference point for something with mass, STR does suggest that all of spacetime is relative in relation to the invariance of light. Therefore, if we believe God created light then STR would indicate the existence of some kind of preferred divine frame of reference. STR does not prohibit such a possibility, and theologically from this point, we could argue that God in some way perceives all of reality as happening simultaneously.

The character of such a perceiving will be questioned later, but for now I would like to consider the hypothesis that all reality (past and future) is as determinately real as the present.

The fact that all spacetime is determinately real from a particular frame of reference (e.g., a photon) supposes by definition alone that such a dynamic of reality, which defies our existing conceptuality, must be determinatively real to an Eternal Personal God. This leads to a second hypothesis, therefore, that all reality in some manner must be singularly, though dynamically, real to an Eternal God. If indeed all history is determinately real, it is obvious that some aspect of an Eternal God is in singular relation to all history—trans-temporally.

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13 This is similarly expressed theologically by Boethius, as Copleston relates: “God does not, strictly speaking, ‘foresee’ anything: God is eternal, eternity being defined in a famous phrase as interminabilis vitae tota simul et perfecta possessio, and His knowledge is the knowledge of what is eternally present to Him, of a never-fading instant, not a foreknowledge of things which are future to God. Now, knowledge of a present event does not impose necessity on the event, so that God’s knowledge of man’s free acts, which from the human viewpoint are future, though from the divine viewpoint they are present, does not make those acts determined and necessary (in the sense of not-free). The eternity of God’s vision, ‘which is always present, concurs with the future quality of an action.’” From Copleston (1993,v.2), p.103.


15 Ibid., p.275, my emphasis and pronoun adjustment.


17 I choose to use the term transtemporal over ‘non-temporal’. Non-temporal suggests to us what Kierkegaard considers a static Platonic non-causal state of eternity, whereas the Eternal within its perichoresis with Time is the fullness of causal interrelations which include but transcend the
Therefore, God may not be able to ‘know’ the future before it happens, but because of His Eternal dimension He from any particular perspective in time tacitly perceives all creation ‘simultaneously’ happening within its full interrelatedness and dynamic emergence.\footnote{In other words, God within this frame of experiencing simultaneously experiences the promise He made to Abraham, Joseph’s dilemma at the hand’s of his brothers, their subsequent reunion years later and the anxious prayers of a mother fleeing to Egypt, and furthermore, how they ultimately and dynamically interrelate within an Eternal cosmic interrelation. Within this frame of reference, however, He experiences nothing before it is happening.}

At this point the parallel dynamics in Kierkegaard's anthropology are remarkably similar. J. Heywood Thomas tells us Kierkegaard both “attacks the view of time which makes the present the only reality,” and affirms that “faith is in one important sense a non-historical relation to its object: but it is also a real relation. . . . The relation is neither [a purely psychological] memory nor hope but co-presences.”\footnote{(1973), p.37 \textit{[my clarification]}.} Kierkegaard’s radical postulate concerning the ontological inseparability of the past, present and future within authentic human existence became the lonely cry in the wilderness forecasting the parallel discoveries forthcoming in physics. It was beginning to become apparent that causality was no respecter of ‘sequential time’ and that such temporality was to some degree in human beings rather than just humans in time.\footnote{Time as such is not a purely subjective emergence, nor is it an ontologically universal within a material cosmology. It is the property of the \textit{relationship} that is always inclusive of that Power which holds together all things and relationships, and therefore coherent causality (law). Nevertheless, it will be important to maintain these various distinctions as we progress.}

Kierkegaard’s defining of Christianity as “absolute contemporaneity with Christ”—“as Christ is the absolute it is easy to see that with respect to Him there is one situation that of contemporaneousness”\footnote{TC 68.}—suggests a relational ontology in which the Eternal breaks into time creating a causal structure of transtemporal, trans-historical and non-historical causal interrelations. He here considers faith no longer a mere ideological or psychological projection onto the real, but an ontological dynamic that always kinetically forms within the specific relationships as the third term.\footnote{Kierkegaard asks, the “synthesis has only two factors: the temporal and the eternal. Where is the third term?” (CA 76). Unlike Hegel, he argues that it is existential rather than material, and that it is contingent upon a Power that is able to temporally synthesize the contradiction of time and Eternity.} \textit{Ontological and causal interrelation within the specificity of the relationship transcends the moment from within the moment}. What, however, is the nature of this third term synthesizing two seemingly contradictory aspects of relatedness. In this respect, Kierkegaard both anthropologically and theologically maintained a notion of the Eternal which was both simultaneous and yet

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textbf{Historical note:} The phrase “ontological and causal interrelation” was used by Kierkegaard to describe the relationship between the past, present, and future. This relationship is not merely a matter of memory or hope, but something that is present in the eternal moment.
\item \textbf{Historical note:} Kierkegaard’s concept of “ontological” refers to the fact that his understanding of the eternal is not just a matter of time, but a real, present experience. This is in contrast to a purely psychological memory or hope.
\item \textbf{Historical note:} Kierkegaard’s “contemporaneity with Christ” is not just a matter of belief or faith, but a real, present experience. This is in contrast to a purely psychological memory or hope.
\item \textbf{Historical note:} Kierkegaard’s concept of “third term” refers to the fact that there is something that is both past, present, and future. This is in contrast to a purely psychological memory or hope.
\item \textbf{Historical note:} Kierkegaard’s concept of “ontological” refers to the fact that his understanding of the eternal is not just a matter of time, but a real, present experience. This is in contrast to a purely psychological memory or hope.
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dynamically transtemporal in its causality, transforming cause and effect into mutual conditioning.

Still, how can any perception of the whole be anything other than static if it is indeed a whole without sequence? For Moltmann, the notion of the Trinity as well as its internal and external relational structure of perichoresis is indispensable. Through the perichoretic dynamic of the Trinity—the begetting of the Son and the subsequent procession of the Spirit—the divine Oneness is differentiated and perichoretically transformed into a determinate transtemporal reality (the Eternal). With the birth of Christ, this Relationship gave way to differentiated unity and the birth of Time, which, furthermore, created the possibility for creation. All of spacetime was created by and relativized to this ontological Truth (felicitous interrelation) which is accomplished through and actually is the Spirit and Christ. At this point, an earlier theological thesis of this study becomes significant.

God becomes human and is constituted as a Trinity: Within this relationship, a) the eternity (atemporal singularity) of the Father is constituted into an Eternal dynamic interrelatedness, and b) the spacetime differentiation of the begotten Son is constituted within a Trinitarian Temporality, which includes His historical relations. This produces both the dynamic of perichoresis—differentiated unity—and the corresponding dialogical cycles of personal communication.

This interpenetrating dynamic of Trinitarian perichoresis becomes the fundamental and sustaining force facilitating all human relationships. As God constitutes Himself in divine Personal relations Time itself is simply a characteristic of personal relationship and the corresponding dynamic in which this happens. J. R. Lucas tells us,

Time is not a thing that God might or might not create, but a category, a necessary concomitant of the existence of a personal being, . . . It exists because of God: not because of some act of will on His part, but because of His nature. . . . God did not make time, but time stems from God. 24

Likewise, not only is time an inherent quality of personhood, but also the Eternal nature of God in its perichoretic human form is a necessary and complementary source of personhood. 25 Persons are the perichoresis of the finite and the infinite, the temporal and the Eternal; and this irreducible structure of personhood and relationship produces the previously established dialogical cycles of personal communication. We can review one contemporary understanding of the temporal dynamic of God in a brief look at Ian Barbour, Holmes Rolston and Ted Peters.

Ian Barbour argues that God being immanent at all points omnisciently knows all events instantly, and yet he qualifies the relationship that results from this knowing. “We would have to assume that God influences an event in terms of the pattern of events relevant to its

23 Cf. Barth: “Not even the pure, eternal being of God as such is non-historical pre-truth, for being triune it is not non-historical but historical even in its eternity” (CD 3/1, p.66).
25 Cf. earlier discussions of Loder, Kierkegaard, and Pannenberg.
situation and its causal past, which, of course, is uniquely defined for all frames of reference." 26 Putting the contentious issue of ‘knowing’ aside for the moment, I wish to acknowledge the idea that God manifests Himself in various frames of reference accordingly, each to the relevant patterns of knowledge within it. This is not relativism, but relativity. 27 The question is, however, what is God tacitly aware of within this localized knowledge. God’s will or influence is always perichoretically respective of the particular person and is manifest in a manner that is meaningful to that situation. This allows each individual or situation to develop appropriately without destroying the integrity of the existing selfhood altogether, yet coterminous with God’s gracious will and nature.

Holmes Rolston, using a panentheistic model, sees God as interpenetrating all things and omnipresent in the sense that He materializes and energizes into each spacetime frame of reference. He is always the same God relatively revealed and ultimately consistent with all other relative disclosures and influences according to His divine nature and will. “If God is anywhere,” he writes, “it will be as God ‘comes through’ in our space-time, relative to our local existence, as God is, so to speak, locally incarnate.” 28 Commenting on this idea, Peters explains,

The key is local incarnation—that is, the entering of God into the created order and taking up residence within a single inertial frame of reference. Through such an incarnation we would then find God on both sides of the ledger, both eternal and temporal, both universal and particular, both acting and acted upon. 29 Though appreciative of Barbour and Rolston, Peters feels their programs fall short of explaining many unanswered questions simply because they fail to develop an adequate notion of a Trinitarian God. For him the Eternal Incarnation of God as Personal can only come about through a Trinitarian God. Indeed, such a paradigm begins to effectively explain how God might relate in a locally specific manner, and furthermore how we might interrelate each locality with every other historical locality through His eternal simultaneity. In this way every situation and action God experiences is able to inform His influencing response in

26 (1990), p.112.
27 The pluralistic hypothesis within such a theory might go as follows: If indeed God Himself manifests Himself directly in a particular historical tradition in a singularly universal and unique manner, then outside the felicitous and living knowledge of this manifestation He would simply express His influence in a relevant contextual manner through immanent influences and dynamics. When disparate contexts and forms of life begin to interact, the more explicit transcendent manifestations will begin to influence, evolve and enrich cultures foreign to it through its immediate appeal to the existing immanental forces already active within it, analogia spiritus. We might contrast this with the Neo-Kantian pluralistic hypothesis of John Hick which relegates God an sich to the noumenal that results in a plurality of equally veridical historical manifestations (phenomena). The latter, I would classify as historical relativism, as well as the category of “closed pluralism” suggested at the end of the second chapter.
every other historical situation. Nevertheless, there are still outstanding issues that beg greater clarification.

Even though a divine incarnation into local action, which is then responded upon accordingly, might begin to suggest how God interrelates all situations felicitously, this still leaves unexplained how humanity authentically relates across this divine dynamic with a Personal God. Humans, ‘bound within the temporal’, can only respond in ‘yea or nay’ to God’s Word and action (of which it is the goal of this thesis to overcome). In all situations God is able to perceive equitable (moral) responses for human action based on His Eternal purview, but according to Barth, all human involvement lies posterior to God’s becoming aware of the situation and predetermining the appropriate action and response for human acceptance (or not). Though the human situation and desires are indeed here considered within God’s preeminent activity, this is a divine deliberation from which human beings are dynamically excluded. Barth suggests humanity must simply “acknowledge” God’s Word or action within the situation, and in one respect, as we will see, this is agreeable. In faith, the human merely responds after the fact. “Self-determination comes about when God is honored by the creature in harmony with God’s predetermination instead of in opposition to it.”30

Granted, for Barth this predetermination issues from His Eternal nature which through His perichoretic relationship with Christ encompasses all ‘local incarnations’, but it is unclear how this appropriates any authentic possibility of human being as co-creator or being constituted in genuine mutual reciprocity to God.31

For example, how do we understand later event B informing God’s action and influence on earlier event A when A is part of the causality which produces B? In such an equation, it would seem God must know the future before it happens, and this is what I am trying to avoid. For me, it seems these perennial theological issues begin to unknot when we begin to consider how God is Person, the nature of gestalt formation, and the notion of person as perichoresis. One historically viable theological discussion that exposes the perichoresis of time and eternity is that of immanence and transcendence.

**Immanence and transcendence**

The theological discussion concerning the immanence and transcendence of God has been exhausted to the point of frustration and ambivalence. My basic thought is that most contentious issues within this discussion will find resolution only in a better understanding of time (Eternity) and causality. We will only unify these predominate categories of the

30 *CD II/1*, p.674.

31 This reveals Barth’s misappropriation of Kierkegaard’s ‘infinite qualitative difference’, which he appropriates between God and humanity without God-Man. With the knowledge and advent of God-Man, Kierkegaard maintains the qualitative difference between time and eternity, though now they are both analogically inclusive in both God and man. It was because of this understanding by Barth that inhibited his clean break from Hegelian dynamics.
'immanence' and 'transcendence' of God and His interactive presence in the world into a unified complementarity when we reconsider and augment the contemporary anthropological paradigm that fails to acknowledge the complementary aspects of human temporal and human eternal dimensions. Any understanding that emphasizes either aspect of God or His relation to humanity in exclusion to the other does so because of an insufficient understanding of human existence itself. Our concept of God can become restricted in our failure to penetrate the fullest possible understanding of human existence, which includes remaining open to the possibility of human nature as expressed in Jesus Christ. To the extent certain aspects of human experience can be correlative related to the Eternal dimension of God's activity, this might help in our efforts to properly relate these traditional categories of immanence and transcendence. With this in mind, we will now continue to explore this topic within the idea of personhood and relationship.

The contemporary moral crisis in human thinking has created a whirlpool of activity surrounding traditional notions of volition, ethics, and self. As the pursuit of self drives deeper into and through the former configurations, these former theological and anthropological distinctions have begun to blur within the complexity. Reconsiderations of human experience and moral action must penetrate deeper into the interstices of the divine-human moment. If we are to obviate the rightful charges of late-modernity, we must theoretically expand our understanding of what occurs within the subconscious and 'liminal' dimensions of human experience. If Christianity is to survive as we traditionally experience and understand it, we must likewise deepen the understanding within its doctrines.

In some form or another most contemporary notions of theological anthropology have begun to re-situate human freedom and the divine-human 'point-of-contact' from the immediate focal consciousness of self into more holistic understandings of human experience which include not only reflexive and prereflexive aspects, but the implications of being constituted socially, and perichoretically. By prereflexive, again, is meant that process of cognitive formation by which all relational contingencies which converge behind, within and in front of the conscious meaning and intentional locus of self reflexively come to exist. My primary moral hypothesis is that true moral 'action' transpires within the prereflexive process of awareness antecedent to conscious reflexive response, and that this is fundamentally where God and human person effectively relate. As previously suggested, the human condition which opens to meaningful, authentic, and true relations within the world is established within our relational disposition.

To the extent the person is willing to venture all, establishes the prereflexive level of relational openness, which then includes the Power which posits self (Christ/Spirit)—the source of truth and beauty. Kierkegaard argues that the infinite venturing into relationships will convict us of our wrong decisions and guide us into ones that are more adequate. An
open disposition, or "inner infinity," allows that eternal Power to eventually guide us to truth and establish us in felicitous relationships. Kierkegaard speaks here of an immanent force within human beings. When our interest in less than expedient activities and relationships take place, it is not so much the interest that is wrong, but the selective suppression of various aspects respective of the relationship, most notably that interpenetrating Power and source of goodness. It is suppression not interest that distorts such reflexive actions and desires. Therefore, such categories as reflexive and prereflexive states of dialogical relations, in moral action or otherwise, will have a tremendous bearing on our understanding of immanence and transcendence.

'Immanence' and 'transcendence' in moral teleology

Hegel: Geist as telos

In a comparative study of freedom in the thought of Hegel and Whitehead, George R. Lucas argues that the Kantian view of "moral teleology is ultimately external to the moral process itself." In other words, the teleological impress within the world-process, the aims and purposes by which moral and meaningful intentions come about, are considered to be external to the world and world-processes themselves. Lucas, however, tells us that Hegel insisted "the pattern or principle of organization of the world-process, be it moral or otherwise, must be "inner"—in other words, immanent in and in some sense generated by or dependent upon the very processes of development it enables." Completely within the process itself must lie the entire emergence of all teleological formations. The idea that a transcendent God who exists in some manner independent of or unaffected by the world-process and yet in teleological relation to such processes is unacceptable. With this, I am sympathetic, however, for Hegel, God exists within the world-process simply as Geist. And Geist is objectified in the world when individuals experience genuine community. Moreover, Geist or Absolute Spirit, is the immanent means within human experience by

32 Kierkegaard (EO2 141). The reader should remember that openness to the other never means openness to evil, only that such judgments are indeed made within the relationship, not imposed antecedently upon it. It is an openness that prereflexively comes into full relations to all the relevant factors and contingencies for the processing of gestalt and constitution of self-in-relation. An example, again, of closedness (not be confused with closure) would be particular suppressive mechanisms sedimented within one's relational disposition. The idea is that each human relationship is a reality in itself and is factored accordingly, always open to new information, open to the transformation or renewed openness in others, and most importantly open to self-transformation within the relationship. Openness excludes nothing, least not history, ancient or contemporary. In the case of suppression (sin), we suppress aspects of personal and corporate existence from open relationship. Through personal development we give them 'universal' status and incorporate them into our personal or cultural relational dynamics. By such universal retraction from the possibility of authentic relations, preeminently deciding good and evil anterior to relationship itself, one assumes the purview of God. As argued throughout the thesis, truth is in the relationship and we must therefore venture within it to attain the truth, which must arise 'immanently' and 'transcendently' from it.

which the individual emerges from subjectivism to participate authentically within the world-process, and, it is through Absolute Spirit that all entities are ultimately related.

In Hegel and Whitehead the knowledge of an entity is defined by its relation to the system in which it is configured (constituted), and with this I want to agree. For Hegel, however, the sum of the parts is *always* implicitly contained within the knowledge of the particular. In many ways, this dynamic resembles the static qualities of the hologram, in which all the individual particles of the holographic picture themselves internally contain the entire picture (thus allowing the picture to appear three-dimensional as one shifts their perspective). The particular relational juxtaposition of the person *within* the whole of the community will define (objectify) that entity. The question remains, however, can the individual or specific relationship within this Hegelian matrix ever exceed or transcend the definable sum of the parts within the existing socio-cultural configuration and this configuration's own "inner" processes in order to be constituted as self *wholly* in relation to it? To be constituted as a whole person in complete contrast to others and the world, and yet maintained within an interdependent process of interpenetrating relations, necessitates the dynamic of *perichoresis* within a dialogical communicational dynamic. This is the insistence of Kierkegaard.

Peter Hodgson, as one notable example of current Hegelian thought, attempts to define the emergence of freedom within the system as that ability of the system and its entities to expand in ever developing relational configurations of meaning. This takes place within the relational transfigurative praxis of culture, and within this praxis, *Geist* has its immanent interplay. Of primary interest, however, is the insistence that we consider this activity as completely immanent. If all entities are constitutive exclusively of Absolute Spirit, in other words holistically connected, then we can consider the world process and the figurative processes of all its entities as immanent within the whole or the parts. Never in Hegel is this *Geist* connected with a transcendent God as Person independent of or even in personal relation to the world-process itself, and in Hodgson, there is a strict prohibition against any such considerations.

**Hegelianism: a scheme constituted in contrast to classical theism and faith**

Such Hegelian themes emerge in reaction to concepts of God which attempt to personalize a transcendent deity. Such a God is both internally active (self constituted) outside the world process, and thus relates interventionally as such. As mentioned, this is a personal God who specifically speaks 'into history', unidirectional. Words and meaning are constituted within the individual or community who must simply choose. The Hegelian critique generally decries this as an unacceptable divine 'interventionist' activity unnaturally imposed upon the world, and anything but personal. In the end, both these positions are limited in their traditional expression. The concept of a God who is external to the world...
(personally and only interventionally active within the temporal) and personally constituted outside of the historical process is indeed injured by the Hegelian critique. In consideration, such classical expressions need further development and articulation.

A preponderance of former classical theories, generally Platonic, have left themselves open to being interpreted as presenting an eternal God who, because He is timeless (outside spacetime), is able to supply the world with timeless truths and telos. The world becomes an unfolding (or 'dictation') of salvation history, preeminently predetermined from outside the world-process itself, which seriously diminishes any claim of freedom and genuine agency within the world. Although recent neo-orthodoxy has attempted alternative contemporary expressions of God's transcendence in relation to time, the primary point is that Hegelian and process theologies were developed in reaction to the anterior classical configurations of a timeless God.

Variously, Hegel and Hodgson ultimately de-personalize God and place him in the midst of the world as the trans-personal or inter-personal Geist of the world that is entirely coexistent with the world. God and the entire world-process must emerge together in order for all particular entities, as well as the whole, to be free and authentic within their becoming. However, in Hegel's and Hodgson's reaction to what they interpreted of classical theology, they felt it necessary to exchange the personal predications for more fundamental and less personal attributions. Nevertheless, Hodgson continues to struggle in his attempt to express any coherent concept of God in non-personal predication, while constantly falling back unto 'anthropological' predication. Moreover, he fails to consider alternative dual-aspect conceptions of a personal God who might indeed be able to relate with a dual-aspect world trans-historically and yet from within the narrative of history itself. I suggest that in reaction to undeveloped classical theology they drag the complete notion of God into a temporal sequential understanding of history. For Hodgson, no aspect of God in any way experiences the future or teleological formation in such a way in which to affect persons and events accordingly before that future or telos. For the sake of mutuality and due to inadequate anthropological structures, God is completely bound to time and history in much the same traditional manner as they conceived human temporality. Therefore, God can only be constituted (reflexively) as a transcendent Person in relation to creation as a whole rather than to specific individuals and times, and consequently, humans can only experience God's influence immanently. In this respect, the mystery and dynamic of perichoresis affording

35 It should be mentioned that my understanding of Hegel at this point is derived from Kierkegaard, Hodgson, and his general use and treatment throughout process and Kierkegaardian literature.
ontological Incarnation bringing the Eternal into time is unacceptable and unrecognizable to them.

**Alternative perspective**

In contrast to both classical and Hegelian perspectives I would like to suggest an alternative perspective that considers a fundamental paradigm shift in anthropology. Rather than relating the 'immanent' and 'transcendent' activities of an Eternal God to temporally constituted humanity, we must consider the possibility that a bipolar humanity is constituted in analogical perichoretic reciprocity to a bipolar God. Yes, there is an 'infinite qualitative difference' between God and humanity, and because of Christ’s divinity it also lies between Him and humanity. However, due to Christ’s and the Spirit’s immanent-transcendent relation to humanity the ‘infinite qualitative difference’ lies not between God and humanity, but between the eternal and time; and therefore, it is to be found within God as Person and God as Trinity, and redeemed humanity as person and humanity as community, all four dialogically constituted in perichoresis. And, this is why there will forever be a *moment* within our dialogical natures in which the Paradox, that Power which constitutes us in relation, mediates our transition from the Eternal into Time, and the Spirit from Time into the Eternal. They do the same for the Father, as Each are perichoretically constituted Persons in relation to each other and the world.

*This in no way changes that God is Eternally constituted in relation to time and human existence is temporally constituted in relation to the Eternal.* This alternative thesis attempts to expound many of the qualities within the theologies of Barth and Moltmann, while attempting to enrich their anthropological perspective and notion of human as spirit. We will investigate this subtle twist shortly. First, however, it is necessary to take a brief look at Barth’s understanding of time.

**Eternity of God as Gestalt, and the Christological perichoresis of time and Eternity**

Karl Barth in *CD II/1*, develops a Boethius-like position of eternity as ‘pure duration’ (*reine Dauer*).37 “What distinguishes eternity from time” for Barth, says R. H. Roberts, “is that ‘origin, movement and goal’, past, present, and future, ‘not yet’, ‘now’, and ‘no more’, rest and movement, potentiality and actuality, and so on, are all held in God’s being, his eternity in a pure present.”38 “Eternity,” says Barth, “is the essence of God Himself, . . . [and] is not in any way timeless.”39 It is ‘simultaneous present’. Barth’s notion of Eternity is in no way vitiated with the static qualities endemic to Platonic notions of eternity, and yet this dynamic of Eternity is contrasted with “relative time,” which is

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37 (608ff). By ‘pure duration’ is meant divine simultaneity (*Gleichzeitigkeit*) if we understand this as one simultaneous occasion or event with no loss of causal and defining relations, i.e. an event in all its interrelational fullness (transcending the sequential aspect).


39 *CD III/1*, p.67.
defined as a "one-way sequence and therefore the succession and division of past, present and future, . . . of origin, movement and goal." In Christ, these aspects of relational dynamics perichoretically interpenetrate. In this respect, Barth’s notion of time and Eternity begin to reflect respective aspects of a divine dynamic ‘Gestalt’ in which ‘figure’ as temporal causal sequence or differentiated ‘times’ (potential ‘local incarnations’) are set in perichoretic complementarity with the ‘ground’ of Eternal causal singularity. For Barth this is an intensely Personal and Christological complementarity, one which is similar to but, as we shall see, not fully commensurate with Kierkegaard’s synthesis of time and Eternity.

Within this relational perichoresis, human time is given the possibility of being real Time in relation to the ‘Eternal ground’ through Christ and the Spirit within the human gestalt process. This produces the possibility of human kairological existence creating the ontological dynamic of meaningful ‘times’ and the narrative quality of life, the kinesis of past, present and future in singleness of duration. God’s Eternity likewise takes on a temporal consciousness or ‘figure’ within Trinitarian Gestalt. Within the Christological event, time and Eternity are perichoretically transformed in their coming into existence as relationship.

Roberts, however, simply concludes that Barth’s Christological temporality is incoherent. Barth’s prohibition against natural theology simply re-casts the old distinctions of transcendence and immanence into an alternate theological ‘metaphysics’. His unifying structure fails to end the discontinuity between his ‘new construction’ of reality and that which Roberts contends is still external to it.

Time, instead of being or substance as such, becomes the medium of relation and disrelation between God and man. . . . As we have seen, this reality is a single one which brooks no rival or opposition. It either exists and demands submission in the ‘acknowledgment’ of faith or it cannot exist for those who refuse to grant its totalitarian demands.

I am sympathetic with the general thrust of Roberts’ assertion, and for all its erudition and perspicuity my ultimate concern is the extent that Barth’s Dogmatics fully institutes Kierkegaard’s complementarity of time and Eternity. Roberts, however, in effectively noting Barth’s construal of time as a medium of relationship, fails to fully realize Barth’s “logic” and use of the perichoretic dynamic (of which Moltmann is to some extent more appreciative). The Christological event with its irreducible structure of the time-Eternity

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40 Ibid., pp.67-8.
41 For example, Ibid., p.66, “Even the basis of creation in God’s eternal decree is not a non-historical pre-truth, for this eternal pre-truth obviously has a historical character in the bosom of eternity.” Consequently, “not even the pure eternal being of God as such is non-historical even in its eternity.”
42 R. Roberts (1979), pp.144-5.
43 Barth’s “Nein” to the ‘vestigium Trinitatis’ was directed in reaction to 19th century Protestant Liberalism. His latter work The Humanity of God expresses the personal and structural nature of this reaction, thus acknowledging and framing the continuing work ahead. Though Moltmann has
complementarity and personal *perichoresis*, is Barth’s starting point for us. Time is the
medium of relationship between humanity and God and (this) relationship as Christ is the
ground of space and time.44

Extending Barth’s own ‘logic’, and certainly Kierkegaard’s, provides us with more than
the ‘acknowledgment’ of faith.” It provides instead an actual participation in and
affectation of the inner life of God.45 As pointed out earlier, if the dynamic of *perichoresis* is
correctly and fully understood this obviates the Neo-Platonic dualism of Augustine’s
*vestigium trinitate*. My goal here is to complement the progressive understanding of the
*perichoresis* of time and Eternity within the Godhead in Augustine, Boethius and finally
Barth with a reciprocating anthropological dynamic of *perichoresis*.

‘World-making’, narrative, and gestalt faculties within human existence

It might be helpful at this time to present a dynamic model within human action in order
to make clear the experiential aspects of gestalt, and then analogically relate this to how the
*perichoresis* of time and Eternity might be thought of as active within both humanity and the
Godhead. When a dancer conceives and begins her leap or movement within the dance, a
fully imagined movement comes to mind from the beginning to end of the leap or
movement. This provides the impetus and condition for the corresponding series of
movements within the maneuver. This process of gestalt formation is human spirit, the
process of coming into holistic response (figure against background, focal conditioned by
tacit).

Human spirit here represents the result and function which formulates all aspects of
human existence and possibilities into a ‘world’, narrative, or totality through which we
intentionally relate as person with the world, for example, the dancer’s abilities, aesthetic
desires, environment, in short, all her relational factors and contingencies, are all
teleologically configured into an intentful, purposeful response. Similarly gestalt is, “an
automatically perceived pattern or configuration whose component parts are spontaneously
organized into a coherent whole,”46 and the prereflexive process by which this shape comes
to formation. Human as spirit through prereflective awareness generates ‘sudden’ gestalt.47

developed in a different direction, the dynamic of *perichoresis* is presented as the ultimate structure of
relationship and reality that each are struggling to express.

44 Cf. also, T. F. Torrance (1969b) and (1976).
45 Cf. Barth’s insistence that Christians “do not make or feel or know themselves the contemporaries
of Jesus. It is not they who become or are this. It is Jesus who becomes and is their Contemporary”
(CD 3/2, p.467).
46 This definition, drawn from T. Torrance (1980), pp.137f., goes on to explain that, unlike most
psychological understandings, this human function is inclusive of the “intentional effort in
perceiving,” which is likewise intensely pivotal within this study.
47 The prereflexive gestalt formation represents a transtemporal ‘causality’ and holistic process of
interrelatedness during awareness and de-liberation or ‘reflection’, which then creates the ‘sudden’
reflexion of conceptual gestalt. The “pre-“ in prereflective indicates the causal asymmetry of the
Contrast: Hegel and process theology as temporally linear

Process theology analogously describes God as the eternal prehensive or primordial consciousness of the world-process itself, which dialectically conditions the ever-emerging concrescence of history. In this way, divine consciousness and world unfold concurrently. Such an idea, however, is contingent upon both the eternal and divine prehension being sequentially limited to an absolute notion of time. This necessitates a ‘material’ notion of synthesis within the dialectics, in other words in each moment a concrescence is materially concluded and re-opened to or liberated for the next (aufhebung). For Hegel or process theology, God cannot ‘know’ or experience in any way the future relative to event A, during event A, because for God the future after A, is in no way happening for him while locally constituted in event A. This pulls God completely into time in a manner similar to the existing anthropological miscarriage in understanding of human temporality. Here, omniscience means that God and individuals ‘know’ only that which has happened and can be potentialized, nothing more. It is determined within such systems of thought that God and His action is conditioned at any given point only by what is happening up to that point. Nothing future is in retroactive causal relation to its past. In a moment we will consider how God Himself might be thought of as having focal and tacit aspects of knowledge in relation to His temporal and Eternal dimensions respectively, which create the possibility of transtemporal causality or mutual conditioning within our experience and knowledge. First, however, for analogical purposes, we must consider how we perceive, experience and understand the synthesis of temporal and Eternal aspects at the human level.

Causal dimensions within the human temporal experience

Based upon the earlier studied principle of irreducible complementarity*, Loder explains, “there is no chronological sequence implied in the actual relationship between the two modes of explanation or between the realities to which they point. Hence, causality in the classical sequential sense is denied as a universal principle.” At this point, a preliminary delineation must be made between the sequential causality within temporality and the transtemporal (holistic) mutual conditioning within human experience. I wish to distinguish between the phenomena of sequential ‘causality’ and the holistic transtemporal relatedness between events which transcends sequential understandings of relatedness. For example, the gestalt process within human thought, specifically a dance ‘movement’, is not constructed through a linear order, sequential process, or by inductive logic. By definition relationship as a whole upon the dynamic, which is the person as agent of gestalt or reflexion. Francis Watson notes, “the vertical dimension of the divine image is not prior to the horizontal in the sense that the relation of the individual to God is the primary source of his or her personhood, to which a horizontal, human relationality is then added” (1994), p.115, i.e, though the ‘vertical dimension of the divine image’ is the efficient cause and source of the relationship the relationship is nevertheless constituted immediately inclusive of the ‘horizontal’.

alone the gestalt process itself is not sequential in its formation of narrative or movement. Its amalgamation process is purely relational and seemingly instantaneous. That such 'shapes' contain sequential movement is merely because the temporal is a factored contingency within the existing relational factors being collated, it does not characterize the process of formation of gestalt which is 'instantly' transtemporal.

Considering again the dancer's movement, within the gestalt process clock time moment 1 was not considered before moment 2, even though m 1 comes before m 2 within the 'performed' sequence. And though m 1 comes before m 2 in the sequence the possibility of m 1 within the gestalt was contingent upon the possibility of m 2. In fact, within the formation of gestalt, and in a very real way (ultimately as final cause), m 2 causes m 1 as much as m 1 does m 2. Just as m 2 is constituted by its transtemporal relation to m 1, so m 1 is to m 2. Therefore, m 1 cannot exist within the gestalt process before m 2; the dancer's movement comes into her mind in a singular flash of transtemporal interrelated network of mutual conditioning. Each moment within the movement is born from a complementarity of both its sequential contingencies and possibilities, and the 'transtemporal' gestalt (telos) in which it was born. This simple but important activity of human kinesis and gestalt reveals two differing dynamics within human temporality; gestalt relation (m 1 itself is constituted in part by m 2, therefore m 2, in part, is causally related to m 1), and 'causal' sequence (m 1 unfolds historically before m 2). 49 One is transtemporal relatedness; the other is a linear and sequential relatedness. Each is experienced within the appropriate dialogical/dialectical cycles established earlier. Nevertheless, though this distinction seems redundant, it is these distinct aspects within the dynamic of human gestalt which can be correlatively related to similar distinctions within a Trinitarian notion of God's relationality, thus providing the possibility for analogous relational associations.

**Reciprocating temporal dimensions within the Trinity**

We can think of God as not outside time in His relation to the world and yet this does not negate the possibility of His transtemporality in relation to history (which includes retro-temporality or causal conditioning). 50 Within human thought this prehensive process generally involves smaller units of 'time' strung along together. For God as a Person (specifically the Father), however, constituted Eternally and interactive with all points of history concurrently, this 'imaginative' prehension might be understood as a divine Eternal

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49 Though similar, these are not to be confused with the Greek philosophical categories of actuality and possibility.

50 Cf. J. R. Lucas (1993), p.236. By retro-temporal is meant: occasion A historically happens before occasion B, however, the process toward actualization of B is in some way causally affective in (able to influence) the process toward actualization of A.
Gestalt or singularity. I suggest it would be similar in many ways to human gestalt, but different in others.\textsuperscript{51}

God as Person is likewise constituted as a differentiated unity. The traditional Judeo-Christian notion of God entails the spoken or begotten contingency of the Logos (\textit{dahbar} and Christ); and yet He is constituted as Eternal entirely inclusive of all history. This latter Eternal aspect of God, which is considered by Barth as both “simultaneous” or “durational,”\textsuperscript{52} analogously parallels the dynamic of gestalt developed earlier. In this respect, the Eternal process of God’s Gestalt is attentive to the particular things, individuals, and societies \textit{within} this Trinitarian de-liberation or formation of the Eternal Gestalt. As with the dancer, the particulars of the dance must all be co-related and co-constituted. Such an Eternal prehension of God (specifically the Father) would be determinately real because God is, as God, constituted Eternally—\textit{transtemporally}. For Christ this is a reality at all points within His history, and Eternally within His tacit awareness at each occurrence.

In such a dynamic, God experiences all of history \textit{happening} concurrently. He does not \textit{know} any-‘thing’ in history before it happens. Similar to the prereflexive process of awareness, however, by which human gestalt is processed and suddenly emerges, so too is God’s awareness of all history (as Eternal, as Spirit, total). But, just as in human de-liberation, which takes place within gestalt formation, so too God relates to all history transtemporally influencing the most felicitous set of interrelations that will produce a society of co-creators free and able to relate with Him mutually and perichoretically as He relates within Himself. If we hold to Kierkegaard’s understanding of personhood as a model, this de-liberation process of the infinite awareness of God or human’s, respectively, cannot materially synthesize with the finite reflexive conceptualization.\textsuperscript{53} Christ is that paradox and offense in which this happens. Again, both the infinite and the finite are held in simultaneous synthesis in existence as “an absolute relationship to the absolute “telos” and a relative relationship to relative ends.”\textsuperscript{54} Just as the dancer in full passion ventures all of

\textsuperscript{51} For example, we might think of the Father’s Gestalt formation as ground translucently laid over form, rather than form within ground.

\textsuperscript{52} \textit{CD} III/1, pp.66-70.

\textsuperscript{53} This is the Christological necessity of Kierkegaard and the primary themes of both \textit{Postscripts} and \textit{Training in Christianity}. “God-Man” is both God and human, and we are not God and neither is the Father human. We are, however, all mutually persons because we are differentiated unities perichoretically de- liberated and dialogically related within our respective communities, Trinitarian or cosmic.

\textsuperscript{54} \textit{CUP} 347-375. “The task is to exercise the absolute relationship to the absolute \textit{telos}, striving to reach the maximum of maintaining simultaneously a relationship to the absolute \textit{telos} and to relative ends, not by mediating them, but by making the relationship to the absolute \textit{telos} absolute, and the relationship to the relative ends relative. The relative relationship belongs to the world, the absolute relationship to the individual himself; and it is not an easy thing to maintain an absolute relationship to the absolute \textit{telos} and at the same time participate like other men in this and that. . . . \textit{It is the relationship that is decisive} (my emphasis). The task is therefore to exercise myself in the
herself, every potential relational contingency and factor, into the de-liberation of the gestalt formation process, so are all the existent aspects antecedent to each ‘local Incarnation’ drawn into the de-liberation process of the Trinitarian Gestalt through the human Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Because of God-Man humans not only experience gestalt as personhood, but furthermore the possibility of their own prereflexive gestalt process transpiring in analogical relation to God’s similar formation—His own Eternal awareness and de-liberation. This level of interaction is *analogia spiritus*.

What is a mixture of the ‘ideal’ and the ‘real’ for the dancer as she unfolds the leap in time is immediately real for the Father, because He is constituted within the singularity of the Eternal, which is trans- even ‘retro’-temporal/causal. Faith is the degree one’s imaginative gestalt emerges in open analogical relation to God’s Gestalt—*analogia spiritus*. To the degree this happens, it transforms our imagination into faith, which is the tacit experiencing of the very *reality* of things future, a ‘present’ unfulfilled in our historic time, yet no less real. Faith is not the dancer’s psychological assurance of completing the movement while halfway through it, but instead an aspect of experiencing somehow the ontological reality of the leap’s completion before it is finished.55 In this manner faith is the human participation in the Eternal awareness and constitution of the Trinity.

Therefore, when the predominance of contemporary theological thinking affirms the historical ‘arrow of time’ my agreement must be qualified because of STR and the Kierkegaardian understanding of Trinitarian relationality. The world is drawn into Christological Time, but the causal interrelations in which this Time is constituted is in perichoretic relation to the process of divine Gestalt, and therefore, this Time and causal relatedness supercedes yet incorporates all ‘linear’ aspects of causality by drawing within all the open prereflexive response attitudes of humanity.56

Just as when prolonged awareness of a chaotic compilation of dots bursts forward into a meaningful picture, God’s Eternal Gestalt process (Father) dynamically experiences each moment of history ‘*unfolding*’ in complete interrelation, all at once. God’s open and *pregnant* Eternity (inclusive of all history) is related to every other *pregnant* moment in relationship to the absolute *telos* so as always to have it with me, while remaining in the relativities of life” (*CUP* 364-5).

55 This idea is likewise scientifically complemented by the more speculative developments at the quantum level of reality as suggested within concepts of ‘observer or consciousness-created reality,’ and the not so speculative Bell’s interconnectedness theory and theory of non-locality. “Non-local interaction links up one location with another without crossing space, without decay, and without delay. A non-local interaction is, in short, *unmediated, unmitigated,* and *immediate.*” Nick Herbert (1985), p.214. Herbert is concerned with only the ‘phenomenon’ as he ‘scientifically’ perceives it, therefore, the interaction can only be posited as “unmediated” (non-theological), nevertheless it is “immediate.”

56 Time is irreversible, but through its perichoretic synthesis within the divine relationship and thus the Eternal singularity, the relevant future ontologically affects a prior time.

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history. We experience this pregnancy as possibility, and optimally as faith. Nevertheless, because of Trinitarian perichoresis, God is constituted likewise in Time Christologically. Relationship at the level of analogia spiritus therefore transcends, yet includes, the 'perceived' causality of human history. Similar to the dynamics of human gestalt, this relational dynamic in God, His Eternal Gestalt, is the guiding teleological aspect of divine thought and, through Christ and the Spirit, the world-process. The difference with human beings is that they are finitely and sequentially contingent in selfhood, God is not. The Father is transtemporally constituted as Person. Nevertheless, this thesis affirms that the transtemporal prereflexive process of God's Gestalt concurrently includes the prereflexive process and de-liberation of every human gestalt process throughout history. It must be emphasized, however, that this transtemporality of divine Gestalt—this "simultaneity" of "duration"—incorporates the human de-liberation process of awareness into its own sequential and conceptual temporality—Time. God's Gestalt, however, cannot be defined by this totality of de-liberations (sum of the parts). Nevertheless, the Eternal Gestalt of the godhead is capable of relating to each point of history, not only as an 'imaginative' divine Gestalt, but as contextually real.

Returning to the dancer, she allows her imaginative gestalt to condition each individual moment throughout the movement, in other words any one single moment within the movement is conditioned by the overall gestalt and thereby actually interrelated with every other point within it. Yet, the gestalt itself is created inclusive of the possibilities of all the particulars; her own specifically trained capabilities, desires, distinct material contingencies, and all imaginable interrelational possibilities. So it is with God. Because His divine Gestalt emanates in dialogical relation to the Son, it both alternatingly conditions and is conditioned by the particulars of history and the trans-historical gestalts of humanity. Therefore, all prayer in which one fully ventures herself bears transtemporal causality, especially when prayer becomes unceasingly all of one's life ventured in existence.

The non-sequential causal nexus (interrelation) between divine Gestalt and human gestalt

If the divine process of Gestalt in some way offers to each historical moment and agency a 'teleological' conditioning which interrelates all that is happening transtemporally, including God's will, we are still left with an obvious paradox. How are we to understand the transtemporal conditioning upon a specific action or moment when that event itself is

57 This teleological impress is multidimensional in its formulation and emerges from a perichoretic complementarity bringing all things to bear upon the openness of each moment. Its multidimensional influence within each moment results from: 1) the nature of 'reality'—a perichoretic relationality which naturally interpenetrates all things as they have developed; in persons this dynamic is understood as love—authentic relations; 2) history, as the series of 'times' and choices in human history; and 3) the Personal will of God, which also Gracefully pulls our time into His perichoresis of Time and Eternity.
suppose to be a factor conditioning the earlier moments leading up to itself? In short, how
can we imagine a dynamic holistic causation (specifically retroactive affect)? How can the
Eternal process of Gestalt affect in some way the response of a person when that same
response by definition is itself incorporated into the Eternal Telos? This is where traditional
logic becomes circular and problematic in consideration of a teleological factor which is
inclusive of both God’s trans-historical purposes (the Eternal) and free human agency which
authentically affects God. However, the problem lies within the question itself, which
assumes that human experience and response itself is entirely constituted within the linear
sequential notion of temporality and the historical.

As discussed earlier, human experience contains hypothetico-deductive thought and the
moment of gestalt that emerges out of a prereflexive process, which furthermore is not
consciously constructed in an inductive or linear manner. This of course does not mean that
such thought is not logical or beyond inductive tracking retrospectively. As our earlier
investigations reveal (e.g., in emotions), it simply means the prereflexive process that
produces it is substantially subconscious, even instantaneous. The imaginative prehension of
the dancer’s leap within the execution exists in some manner not only before but also ‘in’
and during each moment within it. At each moment of the leap sequence the entire
execution is dynamically and tacitly held (perichoretically experienced), filling out the
meaning within each moment. In this respect, the human gestalt is ‘imaginatively’
transtemporal in producing a teleological (kairological) guide, unifying and directing the
existing ‘now’ into the future.

It is worth considering, at this point, whether or not the intermittent moments and
particular aspects that shape, form and condition the gestalt of the dancer can be considered
existent or ‘free’ in themselves. I believe they are, even though they are constituted in
relation to the whole. These moments and all their various contingencies according to their
respective natures ‘gave’ or ventured themselves within their process of openness to the
possibility of the greater gestalt. The whole, as gestalt, is as contingent upon the internal
character and nature of the parts as the parts are the whole. Likewise, the Gestalt process of
the Father is constituted in relation to the Spirit and Son through whom the Godhead relates
with creation, and through whom the respective gestalt processes of humanity are
interrelated and optimally correlated.

Phenomena of analogia spiritus and the perichoresis of time and Eternity
The theory here is that God’s dynamic structure of relations is analogically similar to
human relations. Human knowledge and information are formed and communicated at many
different levels of experience, some focal (conscious) and some tacit (subconscious), either
being not less real or unreal than the other. We might consider these same dynamic aspects
are analogically associated to those same related dynamic aspects of God. We have come to
recognize that the person is not simply a solitary subject, but a subject-in-relation-to-subject, just as recent and ancient Trinitarian models of God might suggest. Such social models shock the Modern mind in their affirmation of early tradition. Likewise, the perichoretic dynamic, incumbent with its dialogical structuring, suggests a communicative patterning and nature to relationality itself. Therefore, we might consider that the respective cycles or aspects of human relationship are analogically related to God’s similar activity, and they share information at the respective cycles. In other words, we might consider the ambitious venturing of analogia relationis be superseded with analogia spiritus in an attempt to relate the absolute to the absolute and let the relative fall within the relative. If we focus the nexus of the divine-human interaction upon analogia spiritus, we will be able to shift the nature of God’s relationship to creation from impositional-interventional to influential-interactive.

In this way, human existence is capable of being pulled, in a tacit manner, into the co-conditioning realm of the Eternal within the activity of Trinity Itself through the divine perichoresis. This is experienced through the community of the Spirit—God’s openness to the world (openness), and Christ—God’s constitution of the world (closure). God’s Eternal process of Gestalt is constituted in history through the Son and the Spirit, providing the dynamical ground for human acts of faith and freedom in co-ordination with God’s Eternal Gestalt through analogia spiritus. Just as a study of human emotions (spirit) reveals a complex dynamical process of actual interrelations and emergence of new structures of life, all primarily active on the tacit level of experience which inextricably ground emergent focal awareness, knowledge, and experience, so we (optimally) become actively related to this same process within the Trinitarian relationship.

In the open prereflexive awareness, the individual ventures into the reciprocity of analogia spiritus. After this highly active exchange and reciprocity of ‘information’ with our ‘passive’ gaze, and with decisiveness, we traverse the moment in which Christ transforms and constitutes us in existence. Reciprocatively, this co-constituting from within the divine relationship itself historicizes God within His Eternality. Just as a human’s focal engagement is conditioned by its tacit emotive structure of being holistically constituted, so God’s local incarnational relations are condition by His Eternal dynamical awareness. We can only consider the possibility that God is ‘Eternally’ aware, and yet mutually interactive when constituted in relation to humans at various points of history, if humanity is likewise drawn into this transtemporal causality.

58 Analogia relationis tends to infer a relating of the Absolute to both the absolute and the relative, leading to overindulgent assessments of existing understandings within theological dogmatics, and a failure to rely upon how God is more deeply active in providing human tradition with continuity through perichoretic dynamics.
Ultimately I am suggesting within this prereflexive activity between human and divine spirits that human spirit is analogically (perichoretically) drawn into the eschatological ‘development’ of telos within the Eternal singularity during awareness and de-liberation. Again, we cannot consider this dynamic singularity as static or ‘timeless’. This concept is closer to an eschatological rendering of kairos in contrast to the linear sequential aspect of time expressed in chronos (and the sequential nature of history). The Eternal relates to and includes the dynamic transtemporal relatedness of all events. At this level all notions of apparent sequential causation and simultaneity must be relationally (temporally) relativized. The perichoretic relation to the dynamic of the Eternal creates the kairos aspect of relatedness or meaningful period of duration, the chronos aspect of time is simply a factor of relatedness within the kairotic. This is also true for God who in all Persons of the Trinity experiences in their own way this aspect through perichoretic relationship to Christ’s humanity. In this respect, we relate not so much in chronos, but with chronos. The experience of chronos or the linear aspect of time is a relative cosmic aspect of relationship grounded in our relatedness to Christ. Nevertheless, we cannot equate the Eternal dynamic and activity that transpires during awareness with the typical use of kairos time. I use it here to help characterize this dynamic of ‘simultaneity’ and ‘durational’ aspect of activity.

**Interrelation within the Eternal: Aristotelian material and final causality as casual aspects constituted in relation to the Eternal Trinity**

We are now ready to return to our earlier queries. How do we describe and understand this causal connection of the Eternal moment within the person? And again, how can we legitimate and understand the currently counter-intuitive possibility of a retro-temporal conditioning within history, in other words how incident A can be affected by the ‘whole’ when it itself is considered part of the ‘whole’; or, how a future event which is contingent upon a previous event can itself affect in some way that previous event? Again, the problem arises in projecting our traditional human understanding of time and causality upon the entire godhead, as well as upon all aspects of human experience. This is not to negate the potential realness of our experiencing sequence, but simply to caution against its being universalized, and the projecting of this understanding into the concept of the Eternal (as Hodgson and process theologians have done).

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59 One should refrain, at this point, from imposing upon this discussion the categories and distinctions which characterize the German discussion of "Heilsgeschichte".

60 It has been suggested, the cosmic linearness of chronos, the global historical sequencing, can be physically related to the spacetime “frame associated with the cosmic expansion” of the universe (William L. Craig, 1991), or the cosmological existence of background radiation (posited as an option by Drees, 1993). Although much of this is laudable in its consideration of the macro relations, however, in the end Drees concludes that no such hope for a physical recovery of time will be fulfilled (p.337). In this respect, real time is Christ’s Time, and therefore, always the property of the relationship—His creative action within each specific relationship.
According to this theory, each relationship and interaction is already emerging within the dynamic Eternal (Gestalt). Optimally, when a person in time prereflexively opens in awareness to their immediate relations, announcing their “inner infinity,” they come into relation with the Eternal Power via *analogia spiritus* which creates and mediates interrelations with all other such processes already happening within the transtemporal singularity of the Eternal. For Kierkegaard, the Christological event that creates and constitutes the relationship itself synthesizes (“juxtaposes”) this Eternal process of felicitous interrelatedness into the situation. It is this Eternal dynamic itself which through *perichoresis* creates the space and time in which to create relations as we now experience them, transforming sequential moments into *kairological* units of interrelations. Nevertheless, there still seems to be a specious causal circularity when a later event, caused in part by an early event, in some way affects the earlier event. How is it possible for a later event or moment to have an effect through the Eternal upon an earlier moment?

The apparent circularity of time and causation is the logical result if we consider each moment or new state the material sum of the preceding moment being combined together with the possibilities that emerge from the individual’s prereflexive relation to the Eternal. This new state is then technically included into the Eternal, hypothetically then affecting the original moment. The problem with this understanding however is the ‘linear’ causality understood to be materially within the Eternal. Notice that any retro-causal affect of the second moment upon the original moment is considered to have happened through the Eternal in a manner linearly or sequentially causal (fig. 1). In this casual model the absolute (E) and relative (m₁) materially synthesize. However, there are no such sequentially causal connections within the concept of transtemporal singularity (Eternal) here being considered. *Never does the perichoresis of time and Eternity become materially synthesized.*

In our conventionality we no sooner decry the fact that the second moment is a product of the original and therefore unable itself to affect the original when we realize that the second moment likewise arises within a co-conditioning relation to the Eternal. In other words, the second moment itself is not solely the product of the Eternal and the original

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61 “By virtue of the relationship subsisting between the eternal truth and the existing individual, the paradox came into being. . . . How does the paradox come into being? By putting the eternal essential truth into juxtaposition with existence. Hence when we posit such a conjunction within the truth itself, the truth becomes a paradox. The eternal truth has come into being in time: this is the paradox, [however,] if the individual does not existentially and in existence lay hold of the truth, he will never lay hold of it” (*CUP* 187, my emphasis). Kierkegaard’s concern for the how of truth over the what is his insistence that the absolute relate directly with the absolute. “The task is therefore to exercise myself in the relationship to the absolute telos so as always to have it with me, while remaining in the relativities of life” (365).
moment, but it too is in a direct co-conditioning relation to the Eternal, and therefore, the prereflexive process leading to this second moment is able to happen in synchronous causal relation to every other prereflexive process which is openly drawn into the Eternal throughout history. The prereflexive processes of every moment are, via analogia spiritus, able to emerge together in mutual conditioning or causal interrelation through His creating action, transtemporally. Therefore, this

Eternally related prereflexion of the second event itself is immediately ('always already') in relation, not directly to the original moment, but, to the human and divine prereflexion of the original moment. Furthermore, a more correct understanding would then be that the product of the Eternal and moment1 lead to the product of, not simply moment2, but the Eternal and moment2 (fig. 2). Therefore, it is the original existing moment (situation) combined with a degree of prereflexive awareness of the Eternal, which is in relation to the prereflexive 'Eternal of the second existential moment' (and every other relevant prereflexion interrelated within the divine Gestalt, notwithstanding God's own will) which produces and is constituted into the second moment (situation).

Such an equation is forwarded in an effort to keep the reader from falling into the conventional pattern of axiomatic and abstract thinking, which is to materialize the synthesis of time and Eternity. This is the heart of Kierkegaard's insistence upon keeping the infinite and finite from material synthesis, which does not diminish the possibility of truth or historical continuity. It merely brings such continuity into the relationship (making it relative) and regulative to that living Power which constitutes the relationship (this Power being a Person would then suggest an anthropic principle active within the intelligibility of creation).

This adjusts the local and contextually relevant incarnational construals of Barbour and Rolston in which God is indeed active on both sides of the ledger, eternal and temporal, universal and particular, acting and being acted upon. God does act in specific and knowable action within the relativity of time. Their construals, however, restrict human activity within the "temporal," "particular" and "act" leaving undeveloped the analogous human aspect of existence on the other side of the ledger in a manner befitting Kierkegaard. For them God unilaterally takes the transaction within Eternal consideration, and then communicates accordingly back into existence. This, however, brings us back to the linear circularity problem stated above.

These are schemes which allow the obtrusion of a Hegelian type material syntheses in order to obviate the 'offensive' possibility of the Eternal being brought into human existence
itself, a shortened anthropology. The problem results when the synthesis is thought to transpire outside the individual and the existential relationship. In this understanding, the Eternal becomes vitiated again with unidirectional temporality. In most Hegelian schemes (and process thought) the eternal which is synthesized into any given moment is inclusive of information only up to that historical point but never future to it (fig. 3). For Kierkegaard humans have an analogical capacity for their own “inner infinity” to be related to the infinite and Eternal aspect of God’s act and being. I have endeavored to situate this aspect of experience in the prereflexive moment before conceptualization during the de-liberational (‘reflective’) process of awareness leading to human gestalt. It is here that the Eternal interrelation of all things transpires through the Spirit and Christ. It is here that all acts and all creation are predetermined from the Eternal, and our self-determination is freely and felicitously formed interactively with God’s Eternal will. Moltmann tells us this is the special dimension given by the experience of the Spirit. In the Spirit we transcend the present in the direction of God’s future . . . This future dimension of freedom has long been overlooked, theologically too, because the freedom of the Christian faith was not understood as being participation in the creative Spirit of God . . . Freedom means the unhindered participation in the eternal life of the triune God himself, and in its inexhaustible fullness.

When human being announces its “inner infinity” by venturing full reconstitution out of the relationship, its personal perichoretic dynamic is drawn into prereflexive relations with the Eternal processing of the Trinity where conceptual reflexions are optimally (pre)determined. Through Christ, who abides ‘Now’ within the Trinitarian activity, humanity and creation are being pulled into this divine de-liberation as we are being guided into relating with each other as He relates with the Father and Spirit. On the human side, this activity is apparent in an intersubjective dynamic within dialogical relations, which is why the how (“mode,”

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62 This again refers to the primary thesis of Kierkegaard that we never synthesize the infinite and the finite in anything other than human existence (the immediate relationship). Furthermore, he insists that something of this absolute and eternal dimension of life is dynamic and active within all humans. It is a grace that is untouched by and transcends the material, temporal and relative aspects of our experience in the world. “The eternal in speaking about the highest assumes calmly that every man can do it” (Works of Love 89). This contingency is always a dynamic factor within the existential synthesizes that is human being. That it never becomes a material synthesis is assumed in Kierkegaard’s more radical insistence that: “From the God himself everyone receives the condition who by virtue of the condition becomes the disciple, . . . one human being, in so far as he is a believer, owes nothing to another but everything to the God” (Philosophical Fragments 126-7). It is something that cannot be passed between individuals, but must be born from within. Kierkegaard defies Hegel’s “converting the whole content of faith into the form of a concept” (Fear and Trembling 24), which will always be unable to explain how faith got into the individual. In this respect, the condition is analogia spiritus.

“condition,” *analogia spiritus*) is considered more fundamental for Kierkegaard than the what.

I believe much of Moltmann’s work is a corrective to Barth’s relative neglect of the Spirit in deference to Christology concerns.64 Nevertheless, as McFadyen has adequately argued, personhood by nature necessitates these two dialogical “bipolarities” of “call and response”,65 and I believe that they are valuable for understanding Kierkegaard’s *existential*, or what I am calling relational or perichoretic, synthesis of the finite and infinite which defines personhood. More is going on within these prereflexive processes then has previously been acknowledged and worked out.

Understanding this dynamic, for example, is the key to understanding divine providence and human freedom. Kierkegaard’s insistence that “no human being can give an eternal resolution to another or take it from him,”66 throws the Eternal decisiveness and predetermination into the intersubjective *moment* and prereflexive relationship with God. Timothy Jackson tells us,

Faith, hope, and love, for Kierkegaard, are akin to passive potentials in finite individuals. They may not be intrinsic to human nature as such, but they are obtainable by human nature aided by grace. . . Yet even as divine gifts, they must be accepted and built up; faith, hope, and love cannot be necessitated—not even by God. Humans are to assume that the potential for love of God and neighbor is present in all human beings; “true greatness is equally accessible to all” (*FT* 81).67

Human subjectivity is thrust into the interactive creation of faith through God’s grace; and the idea of predestination without such consideration, for Kierkegaard, is “a thoroughgoing abortion” that explains nothing.68 Therefore, we can now meaningfully consider the following hypotheses.

- **God’s relation to humanity in Christ and the Holy Spirit opens up the immanent-transcendent possibility in which the human prereflexive experience is analogically brought into dynamic relationship with God in His Eternal dimension—*analogia spiritus*. By drawing the human prereflexive dynamic into perichoretic correlation with His own preeminent activity of creation, God from Eternity establishes humanity in its own freedom and mutual relationship to Himself.**

- **Thus, relativizing our notions of reality and simultaneity is accomplished in a relational dynamic in which reality is perichoretically constituted within the third term of the creating and emergent relationship, which is transparently contingent upon Trinitarian *perichoresis*. This dynamic is not to be thought of as creating a universal frame of reference in which all things as similar can be mutually related (*analogia entis*), rather a universal dynamic of relationality through which all things different can mutually and meaningfully relate (*analogia spiritus* within perichoretic relations).**

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64 Loder (1992), p.20, n.2.
65 (1990), p.121.
66 *Edifying Discourses* 382
68 *The Journals of Kierkegaard*, II 56.
Immediate theological implications

Such dynamics, returning to earlier themes, reflect the logic and dynamic within the gestalt and execution of the dancer. The dancer’s movements at each moment are woven meaningfully together through the execution (*chronos*) by the transtemporally configured gestalt (*kairos*). Every prereflexive process of awareness and de-liberation within human experience potentially affects and is affected by the whole series of prereflexive processes from within the Eternal causal interrelation which lies within the singular dynamic. In this way, *God is able, in a manner of speaking, to process His Eternal Gestalt in relation to the prereflexive processes leading to every human gestalt providing the possibility of free and filial human response.* In other words, though reflexion is a ‘gift’ given to the individual’s venturing into the relationship, the holistic activity of *analogia spiritus* within the ‘awareness process’ and the *moment* of transition create the “*fullness of time*” within relationship.

This is often understood in process thought, as the co-conditioning dynamic between the divine *Eros* and human *eros*⁶⁹. Many of the prereflexive relational dynamics within Cobb’s understanding of human concrescence can be affirmed within this thesis, however, I maintain these structures need to be further dimensionalized within the full and irreducible logic of *perichoresis*. I wish to consider two primary, but major, modifications to the Hegelian models of relationality. 1) The divine prehension and dynamic Eternal singularity is transtemporal not sequential, providing the possibility for each concrescence to be analogically constituted in transtemporal interrelation with God and the world. 2) Human self is constituted as spirit within a differentiated unity to divine Spirit (a Christological contingency). The theological differences that emerge are significant.

I conclude the major theological distinctions which these two changes bring about in contrast to process thought, the Hegelian theology of Hodgson and to lesser degree many of the panentheistic theologies, are; 1) the possibilities of an Eternal God manifesting Himself as a Person in relationship with temporal creation, 2) an ‘unfolding-telos’ within salvation history, 3) a human soteriological condition (criterion)—relational openness and epistemic humility, and 4) the possibility of Eternally established truth *within* each relative situation or interaction. In other words, to the extent we are felicitously constituted within the fullness of each relationship and situation—*moment*—we are able to make a stand *within* that particular relationship.

The implications are likewise significant and varied. A few of them are as follows. a) The human soteriological condition as relational openness extends the logic of *perichoresis* into history and human relations in a manner which obviates Roberts’ earlier concerns with Barth’s closed exclusivitic theological understanding of Christocentric Time. This would

suggest an inclusivism or open exclusivism based upon a developing knowledge of authentic relationship (similar to Kierkegaard's natural theology of relationship) which complements the exclusive expression of God's Word within the Church. b) Teleologically I suggest Loder's Kierkegaardian theological anthropology goes a long way toward satisfying George Lucas' insistence that "the pattern or principle of organization of the world-process, be it moral or otherwise, must be "inner"—in other words, immanent in and in some sense generated by or dependent upon the very processes of development it enables."\(^{70}\) c) Such a theory expresses how truth and continuity in human relations are relative to the relationship and yet can be established Universally. It is appropriated as our holistic structuring (human as spirit) is analogically and irreducibly related to and conditioned by God's dynamic and holistic Eternal structuring. As one's sphere of relations grows, our former truths and conceptual meaning-frame(s) are able to correspondingly evolve and deepen accordingly. Dynamically interactive within this understanding of relational dynamics are the three aspects truth, grace and time/Eternity needed to corroborate Kierkegaard's dipolar conclusions in *Postscripts* in which paradoxically both subjectivity is truth and history is of emphatic importance and appropriately.

The variable upon which this entire theory, and Kierkegaard's, becomes viable is the notion that human agency itself is able to participate and be constituted in relation to the transtemporal dynamic of the Eternal, creating faith through *analogia spiritus*. Therefore, within the possibility of being *co-constituted* as a differentiated unity in perichoretic relation to the Eternal in God, humans are indeed generated by the very process of development of which they play a defining role. The basic structure of relationship by which this transpires, though fundamental to our nature itself through perichoretic relation to God, is the dynamic of *perichoresis*—love, which is a dynamic contingent alone upon the Triune interaction.

Humans are free and empowered in their contextual response to the world to the degree they are perichoretically constituted in ecological openness to all cosmic interrelations and God. We, in all that we are (context inclusive), are able to give or relate ourselves in each moment to God *within the formation of that Gestalt*. In this respect, human persons are able to analogically (numinally) experience and be experienced within the divine singularity. It is possible in this way for processes within events future to be prereflexively instrumental through Christ in shaping the entirety of one's life. Deep and significant perichoretic relations between God and humans are generally quite rare; however, limited degrees of *analogia spiritus* are essential. This relational dynamic is, of course, faith—tacitly experiencing the actual *hypostasis or reality* (essence) of one's current experience in irreversible causal connection (relation) with events future and past. Through participation

\(^{70}\) (1979), p.113.
with that ground which constitutes all relations we are drawn into the divine Trinitarian perichoresis and graced to experience the reality of an aspect of the future within one's own current processing of gestalt (and begriff).\textsuperscript{71} We can now redress our original teleological question before further inquiry into how the Eternal actually affects human experience.

**Teleological principle: immanent or transcendent?**

Hegel and Hodgson demanded that the organizing principle within the world-process be completely immanent, 'immanent in and in some sense generated by or dependent upon the very processes of development it enables.' And so it is. God perichoretically is never 'outside' Time, nor the world-process. The teleological impress itself is immanent within the emerging world-process simply because the world and specifically human nature are drawn (according to specific natures—in humanity a possibility by degree) into perichoretic relation with Christ who establishes such relationships within the Trinitarian Eternal quality of interrelation according to His will. If we remain consistent with our idea of perichoretic relations, and that we are to relate with each other and God in the same manner as Christ relates with the Father, then indeed we are both perichoretically maintained in individual difference from God, and yet indwell the relationship of His Trinitarian interactivity. We ourselves never bear a vestige of the Trinity as such, but through analogia spiritus, we are analogically drawn into His Eternal activity.

This Eternal factor of reality is 'complete' from the 'beginning', and therefore God is able to mutually and reciprocatively relate to persons everywhere along the personal or historical developmental spectrum from His perichoretic fullness as Person, simply because time and Eternity are constitutive of the perichoretic nature of persons. Unlike most strictly immanental theologies, a perichoretic theology presents a God in which the entire historical transtemporal reality dynamically and tacitly comes to bear upon each specific prereflexive de-liberation in historical relations (not just those 'up to that time'). Therefore, this is not a transcendent God who is constituted outside the world-process, simply because the world (humanity as co-creator) is 'immanently' drawn into his 'transcendent' relations, and God's 'transcendence' is lovingly ventured into the world's 'immanence' (through Christ and the Spirit). This presents the most significant point of distinction between the 'immanentalist' and 'transcendentalist', the concept of time and eternity. The distinctions of 'immanence' and 'transcendence' are classical distinctions that are produced within the subject-object or subject-subject understanding of relationship, which raises havoc with the idea of temporal humanity relating with an Eternal God. In perichoretic relations humans can be constituted

\textsuperscript{71} Just as in the establishment of hermeneutical continuity explained earlier, the certainty of faith's object or promise (meaning) is synchronic. Diachronically the certainty must take on an analogical character. Promise A in temporal context X is only diachronically equal or certain of being considered A' in X' through the analogical dynamic of analogia spiritus, A(X)=A'(X'). There can never be within this age a pure one-to-one correspondence diachronically.
in Time that has been Eternalized, and God in Eternity that has been historicized. Because they indwell the third term of the relational unity itself rather than the other, they authentically relate and their respective personalities are further intensified. This is a dialogical activity and it is irreducible as perichoresis.

When the dynamic of analogia spiritus is instituted into theological anthropology, we will begin to understand how an Eternal God who spans history in a singularity of prereflexive interrelated causality ‘immanently’ relates to humanity within its prereflexions and thus enables God to be appropriately constituted (Christologically) as ‘transcendent’ Person relative to and within each specific relationship. Because of God-Man, God does not have to be limited—brought ‘in here’, nor made distant, set ‘out there’. As Loder insists, we must affirm that God has opened mutual ground in which humans “must be a participant,” a ground in relation to Trinitarian dynamics by which we have been raised in Christ.

Neither the immanentalist nor transcendentalist succeeded in supplying the proper categories sufficient to understand a mutually related God and humanity. Both create innumerable and questionable ontological distinctions between God and humanity. Each had to emphasize in God a specific polarity and limit within His relations to the world in order to create a ‘coherent’ theological understanding.

The problem lies in a shared deficient anthropological paradigm. If, indeed, a fuller and richer relational structure exists within human relations, and the knowledge of this were to remain undeveloped, it is obvious that resultant theological configurations would seriously disfigure, limit and alter the concept of God. Mutuality in relationality necessitates perichoresis, and perichoresis necessitates mutuality of relationality. Both immanent and transcendent actions or aspects of God, as previously expressed, could be perichoretically active in God, if and only if, both aspects are in some way perichoretically manifested (contingent) within human experience. This necessitates of course a further dimensionalizing of our understanding of human experience. The purpose and conclusion of this study, therefore, is to encourage further study along these lines and suggest that such efforts will greatly advantage the theological program.

Theological ramifications of the human experience of analogia spiritus

1) Moral teleological impress and human soteriological condition

Considering the thoughts of Iris Murdoch in Enlightenment and Alienation, Colin Gunton discusses the concept of authentic humanity. While acknowledging the necessary factor of community in constituting the person, he nevertheless challenges the concept of moral person as primarily ‘will’ within a purely reflexive and socialized relatedness. He refers to Murdoch’s anecdotal rendering of a woman who is able to change completely her attitude toward her daughter-in-law through mere “moral reflection without change of
outward behaviour.” The idea is that “there is something prior to willing, a passivity that must precede activity if the activity is to be authentic.” Gunton frames this passivity by Murdoch and Simone Weil’s understanding of “attention” as

‘a just and loving gaze directed upon an individual reality.’ It is only as the woman gives her full attention to what is actually there that possibilities for action become apparent. Or, rather, not possibilities at all, for it may well be that moral attention leads to a response in which choice is precluded: ‘If I attend properly I will have no choices and this is the ultimate condition to be aimed at . . . . This is something of which saints speak and which any artist will readily understand. The idea of a patient, loving regard, directed upon a person, a thing, a situation, presents the will not as unimpeded movement but as something very much more like “obedience.”’ When a situation is understood—and it must be allowed that it may not be—then the right action will be known and, in a sense, imposed. Reality will show us what we ought to do.

This provisional use of “obedience” and the concept of “imposition” will be elaborated upon in a moment, but first let us focus on Gunton’s concern of coming to “reality”. His moral argument is that

freedom is the outcome of true understanding: “not strictly an exercise of the will, but rather the experience of accurate vision which, when this becomes appropriate, occasions action.” It is both freedom from and freedom for: “It is in the capacity to love, that is to see, that the liberation of the soul from fantasy consists.”

The conventional tendency to oppose the passive and active functions of human experience, Gunton thinks, must change in favor of a more unitary understanding of freedom and knowledge. This parallels our investigation on the emotions and the inseparability of emotive response (love) and knowledge (Alison Jaggar). Likewise, Moltmann insists that “reason has to be woven into the fabric of the feelings, and consciousness has to be assimilated into the experiences of the body.”

The direction suggested by Gunton is that we must come to terms with these prereflexive functions and activities of awareness. Functional at this level of experience is an underlying ontological premise of relationality—the fundamental desire to be constituted authentically in relation to others. If human nature is foundationally ‘wired’ up as such, then Gunton and these others are right, moral reflection is first a matter of responding to such a call and seeing antecedent to ‘willing’ or ‘doing’. The fundamental desire and constant impress to perichoretically relate provokes the woman into greater awareness. In this case, she ventures (risks) her existing understanding. Such a seeing (awareness) frees ourselves from the habitual protective behaviors, patterns and reactions in order to perceive more clearly into our relations, thus regaining or expanding our ontological interrelations. Seeing is passive, however, how passive is ‘passive’?

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72 All references from Gunton (1985), pp.74-75.
74 Ibid., p.75.
Gunton quietly, and perhaps inadvertently, informs us that “the woman” gave “her full attention.” This giving is obviously a willful activity, in other words she could have remained closed. Furthermore, within the gaze, just as within our emotive states, lie all sorts of possible prereflexive activity within the reciprocity of *analogia spiritus*. Therefore, what Gunton is attempting to express is not that this ‘passive’ function is itself volitional; merely that moral response ultimately lies within the passive function, the *how*, of awareness rather than the conventionally understood reflexive or active responses (the *what*) of human relations. The conventional understanding of the will is the conscious analytical adjudication and deductive deliberating of competing desires and therefore choosing the correct tradition or self established norm. To drive deeper into these intuitive insights of Gunton and the others we must articulate a more expansive configuration.

If Gunton’s implications are right, the woman does have a prereflexive ‘choice’ within her relational disposition. The morality of her relationship has to do with her openness to venturing into the full reality. To the degree she is willing to relate in truth she sets herself up for transcending her existent relational inhibitors and ignorance. This opens her up for guidance into alternative understandings of the situation. The factors, which previously inspired resentment, now open to reconfiguration within a more holistically motivated gaze—*analogia spiritus*—in spirit and in truth.

Sin is the refusal to see and relate freely to reality. Repeating John Milbank, “if all that ‘is’ is good and true, then no positive reality can be false as a ‘mistake’, or as ‘non-correspondence’, but only false as deficient presence, embodying the short-fall of an inadequate desire. Now desire, not Greek ‘knowledge’, mediates to us reality.”

As previously mentioned, when one refuses to openly relate or wholly see reality, they bifurcate their soul in order to functionally relate their ‘world’ to reality. This bifurcation of spirit or self produces competing desires because one side of the individual ontologically desires authentic whole connection (conscience), and the other bifurcated ‘self’ produces conflicting desires, which are ultimately insatiable. The latter desires are empty, unrelenting and demonic, with the ability to become complete ‘personalities’ and lived ‘worlds’ themselves. The former gives greater fullness of life. However, the decision between competing desires is in many ways a misnomer. This type of moral deliberation, as Gunton suggests, is “demonic”. *True moral action is antecedent to the creation of desire.* In the battle between conflicting desires, the greater desire will always win. Human freedom, then, must be causally antecedent and prereflexive to desire itself. Although the moral process seems reflexive, human reflexion is only the result of a prereflexive moral de-liberation, gaze, or

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77 Ibid., pp.73-4.
relational disposition. A series of reflexive ‘moral reflections and activity’ actually embody many prereflexive instances precluding each reflexive response. It can happen so fast that it all seems to run together. For example, when someone enters a common relational situation with others the individual will usually respond in a patterned, often predictable, manner. However, before a relational pattern is begun, there exists a moment of awareness, a prereflexive twinkling of the eye, where the individual is able to open to alternative responses. Once this moment has passed the developed pattern will usually dominate the response, removing the individual from freedom.

Therefore, we establish our level of moral de-liberation by how responsive we are to life itself (relationship) and how desirous we are for even greater fullness. Our disposition is a composite (development) of one’s relational history and sedimentation (Mcfadyen), and our willingness to enter wholly into the relationship and the appropriate possibilities, risk, suffering and shame. This fundamental impress for greater relations is operative in human as spirit, from the whole that is greater than the sum of the parts. The foundational aspect of Christian repentance, therefore, is not a formal choosing between two directions or desires, but the disposition with which we prereflexively enter relationship—the how. To the degree human spirit, fully opens to analogia spiritus, its awareness of the situation will be conditioned by the presence of God in it, transforming our awareness and action appropriately. The level of fullness of life, nevertheless, is a product of both our contextual development and existing relational openness. This human condition and dynamic is also necessary for translation of various forms of life into our own, and for the deepening or diversifying of our own relational structures. It is worth noting at this point concerning our satisfaction within the given socialized structures of relations within culture or the Church that risk, not caution, was Jesus’ most emphatic exhortation.

Therefore, if moral de-liberation precludes reflexive ‘decisions’ or praxis between conflicting desires, actions or beliefs, and ‘moral action’ causally precedes the development of immediate desires themselves, what actually establishes and transforms these? Humanly speaking, Gunton says the gaze. As clearly expressed in the Matthean ‘Sermon on the Mount’, our moral functions are antecedent to desire. It seems desires and emotive responses themselves are considered morally liable regardless of right or wrong ‘behavior’.

78 Kierkegaard suggests that the greatest unity is experienced in passion (CUP, 178-180).
79 This pivotal truth of the human condition for relational sanctification and growth of perichoretic relationality may be what is being expressed by Jesus in the ‘Parable of the Talents’ (Mt 25:14-30) in which the talents are here equated with ‘relational currency’. To the one who seeks ever-greater levels of fullness of life, more will be given. This expresses the relational paradigm of Kierkegaard in which socio-culturally all individuals are created differently and yet each is afforded the same relation with God, facilitating the possibility of dying to the existing structures of bondage and innocence, thus striving for greater levels of relational perichoresis. Cf. Timothy Jackson, “Arminian edification” (1998).
speech, and thought which results (i.e. as final acts are clearly understood within their total unity of response by an omniscient God).

When confronted with a moral dilemma, for example anger, we can override the immediate feeling or desire, then respond in a personally or socially prescribed manner immediately deferring the desire and emotion. Alternatively, signaled by the emotion, we can de-lererate on the situation, enter a gaze toward fuller awareness into the situation, and often a transformed emotive response produces the expedient conceptual response thus attaining relational equilibrium. When this happens we are then able to shift the triangulation of doing the ‘right’ thing because of an alternative (third) contingency being made focal (the social, religious or personal norm) to actually desiring to do the right thing in itself. The deferring action, though often temporarily expedient, is based on a triangulation in which we act, not because we intrinsically desire to do that specific thing, but because of another criterion (desire) which we have formerly deemed more appropriate than our immediate desire. The de-lererating action of increasing awareness and openness into the relational situation aims for an emotive (holistic) transformation to where we intrinsically desire to do the action in and of its own accord. Tacitly all aspects become contributors to transformed desire, but the desire is now focally resident within the specific relationship at hand. According to Jesus, the latter more holistic response is the moral imperative.

A moral teleological ‘imposition’ leading to personal transformation—‘obedience’?

From where and what within this relational logic does this relational teleological impress emerge? Furthermore, what is the relational structure or dynamic within such ‘passivity’? For Gunton, this impress and reconfiguration begins within the gaze and is simply the correct and desirable moral response in view of the more complete picture and collective possibilities, in other words, when human beings open to the truth, they will often be presented with a greater understanding and/or appropriate response. If the existing skills and narratives are not sufficient, the process will entail the appropriate development and relational transformation accordingly. Nevertheless, because this transforming gaze emerges out of a prereflexive ‘passive’ function of awareness, we reflexively experience the ‘transformed’ response as an ‘imposition’. ‘Obedience’, in this respect, is merely the enacted behavior of a ‘transformed’ desire or increased desire over another desire. The person is simply transformed by this Sovereignty of Good, which for Gunton is Christ in the midst of the relationship. At this point, Hodgson and the immanentalists decry ‘imposition’; and Gunton might respond, “so it is.” Therefore, how might we construe this divine-human interaction as not impositional or interventional?
I suggest the problem is that Gunton, with Barth, fails to express fully the internal structure and dynamic within this human 'passivity'. A more dynamic understanding must unfold concerning this teleological impress of which two aspects are worth noting. The first is that this teleological impress emerges from the relational nature of the Trinity Itself—Love. This results as an Eternal impress through Christ and the Spirit who hold together (create) all relations, and therefore "posit" within all nature and the world-process this perichoretic dynamic (love). Love is both the power of attraction, desire and unity toward the other, and, the instantiation and affirmation of the self in relation to the other. This dipolar perichoretic characteristic of God's love is the force that irreducibly empowers the world-process.

Secondly, the teleological principle or force within the world-process is active 'immanently' within prereflexive human awareness and experience through *analogia spiritus* (therefore in relation to the Eternal singularity). It is 'transcendently' constituted, however, in relation to God as Person revealed in Christ thus providing the adequate condition ('offense') for appropriate entrance into *analogia spiritus* (the "mode").

In this respect, the Word is not experienced *per se* in prereflexion but is constituted reflexively out of and in relation to the individual's prereflexive de-liberation. Therefore, to the extent this tensive differentiated unity is broken, Word and Spirit diminish.

*Analogia spiritus* within this thesis is more descriptive than merely 'gaze'. As has already been discussed, *analogia spiritus* does not produce a mere 'Christocentric' imposition. Here we encounter a dynamic similar to the human emotive dynamic. Within the woman's passive de-liberation she would not have 'received' the new relational state had she not already within de-liberation accepted the possibility; and furthermore, she herself within the moment was an active participant in the constructing of the response, just as our emotive states tacitly embody a host of complex desires and decisions subconsciously within them.

Within this analogical dynamic of spirits, the emerging singularity correlates the emergent processes of all desires, motives and relational contingencies throughout history. All cosmic interrelations are here felicitously de-liberated within the dynamic of God's Personal will and providence. In the *perichoresis* of time and Eternity, the human gaze of open awareness into each situation becomes an active party within the de-liberating dynamic of God's interrelating Eternal dynamic within the world. In this way, humans play a vital role in the defining, shaping and formation of the teleological impress itself (in Christ

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80 In order to believe in the "offense" of the cross, the ultimate paradox, necessitates a complete abandon and a willingness to be fully constituted within genuine relationship. Only in one fully willing to believe in such an event, were it indeed true (though beyond proof), is God able to create faith (the reality of such a truth).
Himself). The teleological impress within any given relationship is not just a universal perichoretic dynamic of love. It also inseparably contains not only the immediate relational contingencies and elements that are relevant to the relationship, but those throughout history that in some way or another are likewise relevant.

Therefore, though the product of the gaze emerges out of God's 'immanent' and 'transcendent' influence upon us, it cannot be considered impositional in the complete sense because the deepest longings of the individual are being 'heard', 'considered', 'agreed upon', and 'adjusted' within the Eternal interrelation of all creation through perichoretic relation and thus prereflexive participation with the Trinitarian de-liberation. Because God is Love He has made creation the dominion of humanity (His co-creator), therefore, His 'imposition' can be construed as nothing more than balancing (adjudicating) the dominion equitably amongst us and Himself. Because He is constituted Eternally His loving direction is perfect for producing the greatest degree of perichoretic relations possible in consideration of human freedom. His influence is often considered 'impositional' simply because of the suffering this process usually entails because of our existing misshapen desires. To the degree we can understand our immediate situation from the purview of God's Eternal dynamic, it instantly transforms our desires and actions into the range of what could be felicitously organized within that purview, even though it may be experienced as an 'imposing' because of our sin (existing suppression). Just as in all human emotive response, a complex and instantaneous dialectic is going on. Within the gaze itself we optimally venture our whole relational situation and concerns, 'see' and de-liberate the issue in the consequence of God's Eternal purview, and lovingly adjudicate and assume the appropriate course of action with God and all relational history, which re-configures and transforms our desires accordingly. Nevertheless, such an Eternal source inclusive within the person's prereflexion does not limit the potential response to one action. The action forthcoming emerges from a plethora of potential responses in which individuals themselves play a decisive role. The decisive action, however, is immediately taken up into the Eternal purview through the next dialogical cycle (thus becoming part of a potential series of actions, such as dancer's leap or an Eternal God's Gestalt of Love).

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81 This dynamic is playfully enacted in the novel Groundhog Day by James Magorian (Black Oak Press 1987), which plays upon Nietzsche's theory of eternal recurrence.

82 For example, concerning prayer, during analogia spiritus, various wishes and desires (or aspects of them) which emerge in human response may have their particular and sole contingency (origination) within the individual alone, in contradistinction to being originated by God's purpose in the matter. To the extent such desires emerge from a relationship in which one is willing to be fully constituted in relation to God they will have 'already' been reciprocatively considered and instantiated within God's Eternal providence. The true causal connection between God and humanity actively takes place within the prereflexive de-liberating gaze.
Perichoretically, the ‘transcendent’ aspect of God as Person is likewise active in the same manner on the Trinitarian side of *analogia spiritus*. The risen Christ, who is our ‘first born’ brother, mediates God to humanity, but not as a conscious being from heaven who is relegated to ‘sequentially’ operate within the Eternal singularity. He is a risen Person ascended to the *eschata* (parousia) interrelationally constituting all of history, which is accomplished through His perichoretic relationship to the Spirit of God and the Father. The *analogia spiritus* is to Him, who is in the ‘beginning’ and the ‘end’, as it is to us here, prerelative through the singularity of Spirit (tacit). This will be dealt with more fully in a moment.

We can use the strained relationship of Joseph and his brother to illustrate the potential complexity of the divine-human interaction. Having captured Joseph, the brothers considered his demise. In those reflective de-liberating moments of trying to decide what to do, God, within His Eternal awareness through *analogia spiritus* was able to influence their desires and thoughts being created within the brothers. This influencing was informed by the entire (trans-historical) situations of all concerned, as well as being sensitive to the relative relational dispositions of each throughout their respective history. Because of the degree of their relational openness at the time, God’s Spirit was able to penetrate and transform the immediate desire to kill Joseph into the more trans-historically informed desire that Joseph be sold into slavery to a foreign traveler. They were open to the suggestion (influence) of selling rather than killing him, but not open enough toward further reconciliation at that moment (without God becoming impositional). God, ‘tacitly aware’ of the relational openness they would have in the future, providentially orchestrated the greatest expression of love (authentic relationship) possible in consideration of each one’s existing openness (freedom). God only worked in the brothers lives to the extent they were willing to venture themselves for transformation within their respective relationships. The influencing ‘imposition’ was as if they had been able to ‘see’ tacitly the whole picture (which they eventually did; with appropriately transformed responses). We must at this point remember that within the prereflexion of God’s Eternal tacit awareness He is not acting specifically in a manner to bring about ‘desired results’, but the greatest equitable set of perichoretic relations, whatever they may be. God only helped them make their own decision were they able to see the whole story, which He does through *analogia spiritus*, and to the extent they were presently willing to see it.

This then shifts the onus of the human condition for sanctification from the immediate ‘static’ elements of the situations—decisions considering the existing interactions, desires, cultural and cultic norms—to the a dynamic level of openness an individual has toward all these and other emergent possibilities. God is only able to influence through this transtemporal causality at any given point to the degree the individual is open to such
perichoretic relations and transformation. We are never sure how this plays out in historical time or the degree of sincerity such openness embodies. Because of *perichoresis*, the ‘immanent’ and ‘transcendent’ influence and interaction of God with human persons is inseparable. The qualities of communication we classically attribute to either of these distinctions are inextricably bound within an irreducible dynamic of relationship.

Nevertheless, within the complex Eternal interrelated singularity of prereflexion there is no ‘imposition to determine a future result’, but simply a singular participation of transtemporal interrelations, to which humanity is invited. To the degree we refuse such openness, leaves us to become simply determinate reactions within the world, rather than co-creators.

God’s creative force and influence in bringing about co-creators is that the triangulation of motives would be progressively removed through the sanctification of His people, that we would be holistically constituted in co-relation with Him, *ourselves* desiring and acting in full knowledge, both focal and tacit (regardless of how history may or may not end). This necessitates an ongoing dialectic between creation being drawn by God’s ‘telos’ and yet all human personal and cultural development *as their own*. It is God’s desire that humans become co-creators empowered with all power and dominion to facilitate their genuine desires. However, because we are many the invitation must obviously be co-ordinated, and Christ is that facilitating Person and dynamic. To the extent each is *willing* to interrelate coordinately through the ‘possibilities of Christ’, were the ‘offense’ true, their ‘prayers’ and desires will be realized.

In conclusion, we must remember that though the Father knows the future, He does not know the future before it is happening. It is not as if He is a person passing information back in time before it is happening. The Eternal aspect of God does not focally ‘know’ as such. In the case of the prophet, he *numinally experiences* the Gestalt process and a significant future situation through *analogia spiritus* from within the Eternal singularity. This analogously creates a relevant knowledge significant to the contemporary situation. For Moltmann, this “creative and life-giving Spirit therefore arrives at consciousness of itself in the human consciousness.”

In much the same manner, the Word of God speaks into human existence.

2) Word of God and *analogia spiritus*

When our hearts become open to God, He speaks to us words, thoughts and meaning. His speech and its meaning, however, are constructed through no single loci within those who hear. Neither the text, the prophet, the numinal ‘experience’, the individual’s

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83 For example, when asked, “[do] you accept the historical Jesus?” Einstein, never a professing believer in the classical sense, replied, “Unquestionably! No one can read the Gospels without feeling the actual presence of Jesus. His personality pulsates in every word. No myth is filled with such life.” G. S. Viereck, “What Life Means to Einstein”, *The Saturday Evening Post*, 26 October 1929.

psychology nor the cultural-linguistic system play a ‘foundational’ role in meaning construction. The meaning is a product of the specific occurrence of all the above, fundamental only to the way God relates within Himself and in cosmic relations. God harnesses all dimensions of existence for His use. Nevertheless, does God speak literal words into our minds in the manner that is conventionally understood between people? Or, as suggested, is something much more complex going on within the communicational act, a more holistic exchange as hypothesized earlier, which I have been considering as spirit-to-Spirit (pan-linguistic)? For example, if we pray for direction does that proposition rise to God, where the petition is considered, and then appropriate words or experiences are then given in divine response? This again would be dragging a temporal linearness into the entire godhead.

Paul attempts in Romans 8 to express an aspect of human experience and relationship with God that transcends our focal conceptualization, even our existing linguistic structures. And yet, in prayer when Paul acknowledges the Spirit’s “groanings” on our behalf “which cannot be uttered” (cf. also 2Cor 12:4), we can only assume that the Spirit communicating with our spirit is able to communicate as such within the Trinitarian activity. Here we holistically ‘articulate’ to God through the Spirit (analogia spiritus) the entire meaning within our act of communication, yet beyond our conscious categorical development and definitive focal ability of expression. Part of the ‘unutterability’, I would suggest, has to do with transcending the individual’s actual spatial and sequential temporal context in the spirit-to-Spirit interchange drawing the existential concerns into the Eternal interrelation of all history and Trinitarian de-liberation (God’s ‘forming’ will). In our struggling to communicate with God something transpires prereflexively and holistically which precludes and transcends our focal conceptual reflexions though it is tacitly inclusive within felicitous communicative action and relationship itself (spirit-to-Spirit). In the end, meaning is never constituted solely in the Other, the text, or the self, but in the relationship between them.

As the Spirit of God relates in wholeness to human spirit within the prereflexive analogia spiritus—the Word of God is analogically and meaningfully created within the relationship, and optimally and appropriately in us. God’s Word is born within us, context sensitive, and yet within the reciprocity of analogia spiritus. Jean-Luc Marion tells us, the person then “sees from the point of view, not of the world, but of the exteriority of the world—between world and Gxd. He sees the world not to be sure, as Gxd sees it, but as seen by Gxd.’ 85 In other words, both the person and God become constituted from out of the relationship, but, noting Marion’s past tense, “as seen” signifies the prereflexive nature of

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85 Marion, (1991), p.129; Marion uses “Gxd” to refer to “the very God that no mark of knowledge can demarcate. . . . To cross out Gxd, in fact, indicates and recalls that Gxd crosses out our thought because he saturates it” (p.46).
the activity of *analogia spiritus* (gaze) — Gxd’s seeing, and Christ’s reflexive gift to us — our existent non-immediate “seen.”

It is not a question, for the “theologian,” of reaching that which his discourse speaks (well or poorly — what does it finally matter, for what norm in this world would decide?) of Gxd, but of abandoning his discourse and every linguistic initiative to the Word, in order to let himself be said by the Word, as the Word lets himself be said by the Father — him, and in him, us also. In short, our language will be able to speak of Gxd only to the degree that Gxd, in his Word, will speak our language and teach us in the end to speak it as he speaks it — divinely, which means to say in all abandon. 86

To the extent the individual wholly releases herself into prereflexive de-liberation is the degree the Word is created with the appropriate meaning, and beyond hermeneutical speculation. Note first, that this de-liberative dynamic is instantaneous — within the Eternal; secondly, we perichoretically receive the Word and respective meaning from the relationship itself (“that Power which posits self”). The Spirit deliberates one’s holistic concerns, human as spirit, and Christ reflexively constitutes the respective meaning of the Word from out of this relationship. The individual now optimally experiences the world as God would experience it were He humanly incarnated into that personal and contextual situation. For God this is a Trinitarian experience; for the individual, this becomes manifest in a transformational altering of self without deliberation. 87 The Words of God are foundationally produced through *analogia spiritus* incorporating and expanding both divine and human reflexive capabilities. 88 Nevertheless, the Word emerges from within the relationship inseparable from the meaning. Therefore, the words are both ‘transcendently’ God’s and become ‘immanently’ the individual’s (“I, not I, but Christ”).

To the degree one is wholly constituted in open perichoretic relation to God and the world the hermeneutical task and the question of truth-value is circumvented. This, however, we never achieve because of sin, our bifurcated social selves. Nevertheless, the dynamic is still the same, though disfigured. The Ancient Hebraic egocentric ‘arrogance’

86 Ibid., p.114.
87 We are considering here not the dialogical cycling of communicative praxis, or the process of dialectical reflection within the self (reason), but the *moment* between. Those numerous ‘moments’ within such dialogical cycling when awareness leaps into conceptual gestalt and meaning is constituted within the relationship. The dialogical hermeneutical task of establishing equitable meaning between relatants is not my immediate focus here. It is rather the nature of the process (holistic) that takes place within *analogia spiritus* and specifically the instantaneous and contingent nature by which our immediate gestalt (understanding) is formed.
88 Commenting on the Emmaus event, Marion tells us, “at the very moment of his recognition by the disciples, the Word in flesh disappears: ‘for it is to your advantage that I go away’ (John 16:7). For what? So that the Word recognized in spirit, recognized by and according to the Spirit, should become the site where those might dwell who live according to this Spirit, his own received from the Father... [they] discover themselves assimilated to the one whom they assimilate and recognize inwardly... This place — in Christ in the Word — is opened for an absolute hermeneutic, a *theology*” (p.151). God inhabits the Eucharistic site of humans who in “abandon” (p.144) give themselves to be constituted in relation to Him. Christ Himself was not satisfied until His disciples identified Him, not by flesh and blood, but directly from the Father (Mt 16:13-20).
emerged from this same dynamic and the belief in human as *imago dei* and the spoken *dabhar*. Because we are never constituted in complete wholeness, the hermeneutical task is perennially with us. Nevertheless, the point is that in the perfect divine communicative act, the Word and the meaning is constituted out of the relationship without remainder and without speculation. One might simply ask whether or not Jesus Christ (true humanity) ever failed to discern the motive, meaning or action of another or the Father. Within perfect relationship the eventual meaning, truth quality, and authority associated with the particular speech act emerges inseparably as one. The entire self as spirit in *analogia spiritus* is holistically related and transformed. This is, therefore, not just a word given to be hermeneutically deliberated upon, then acted upon, rather it is transformatively awakened within us.

To the extent one experiences the fullness of *analogia spiritus*, there are no secondary meanings in hermeneutical deliberation or deferred motivations in moral response within the specific relationship. Here, paralleling the Eucharistic event, the material presence or constituting action of Christ disappears in transparency as one then loves their spouse because they intrinsically feel love and desire for them. The divine speech act has a particular meaning because both speech act (including language) and meaning configure prereflexively within *analogia spiritus* and reflexively emerge as one within the relationship.

**Continuity in the Word of God in Time**

The Word of God or God's self-disclosure through Christ and the Spirit is a living expression that we always experience from within a specific relationship. Though these disclosures are multifarious in form, their dynamic is similar. If the self is spirit, and therefore perichoretic, it participates in that ground and dynamic that constitutes meaning for the self in relation to Eternity. This Eternal dimension is analogously synthesized within human existence in such a way that the Eternal Word will always become meaningful to each specific relational situation, and yet *still have continuity with its former utterance and meaning* even though one's meaning-frame may evolve and change. The Eternal ground upon which the Word of God comes forth extends behind and yet beyond all developmental categories, and transforms each relative situation to itself, and yet it speaks through the relative aspects of the specific relationship. This is what we might call the 'hermeneutical invariance theory', similar to Einstein's 'invariance theory' (STR), in which Christ, as that

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89 Duncan B. MacDonald, in *The Hebrew Philosophical Genius*, describes the irreducibility of the idea of personhood. "Our 'I think therefore I am' and the Muslim 'I will therefore I am' was for them 'I am therefore I am'—an expression of their egocentric subjectivity" (p.6).

90 Kierkegaard tells us: "If in relating itself to the individual's existence the absolute *telos* fails to transform it absolutely; the relationship is not one of existential pathos, but aesthetic pathos" (*CUP* 347). Relation to the absolute *telos* always results in a "transformation by which *everything in the existence of the individual is altered*, in and through his mode of existence, so as to bring it into conformity with this highest good" (348), my emphasis.
Power that constitutes all relationships, becomes the absolute continuity of meaning, as light is for spacetime. He is that invisible dynamic that meaningfully sustains and actuates in continuity all our linguistic development within the river of relations that are never entered twice. William James provides us with an example of the tacit nature and contingency of continuity through J. Trevor:

> These highest experiences that I have had of God's presence have been rare and brief—flashes of consciousness which have compelled me to exclaim with surprise—God is here! ... But I find that, after every questioning and test, they stand out to-day as the most real experiences of my life, and experiences which have explained and justified and united all past experiences and all past growth. Indeed, their reality and their far-reaching significance are ever becoming more clear and evident.

The deep experiencing of the numinal within our conceptual consciousness is a contextual and situational experiencing which has been constituted in tacit relation to the Eternal singularity. Therefore, when such experiences are felicitously remembered, they are always freshly re-constituted relative and relevant to the individual's developing meaning-frame, but their analogous continuity is a result of the simultaneity of the dynamic Eternal background within each new remembrance. In this way, our doctrines and dogmas are free to expand and deepen with ongoing conceptual growth and depth of experience, and yet still maintain their continuity with previous meanings-within-the-whole. Likewise, they bear the absolute source by which they may be relativized to all possible situations and purposes. Only the Word of God, a Person Himself, and the dynamic relationality He institutes and maintains within the world is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

3) Kingdom of God and Time

Another perspective in which the perichoresis of time and Eternity becomes apparent is God's establishment of His Kingdom. A common Christian understanding over the centuries depicts the Kingdom of God as a second 'universe' or existence that is separate but temporally paralleling and at times interactive with cosmic history. When one dies they are instantly with the Lord or continue in a 'soul sleep' in this paralleling existence until the end of history. However, in most contemporary theological understandings, which consider the viability of personal resurrection, there are no states of being temporally paralleling our history. In agreement with Barth, there is only the presence of God and His time.

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91 "To be sure, the life of the man Jesus has a beginning, and His time was once future. Yet this does not mean that it did not then exist. The life of Jesus has duration. ... Yet this does not mean that it was present only in its duration. ... The life of Jesus comes to an end and therefore it became past. Yet this does not mean that it then ceased to be" (CD, 3/2, p.463-4).
93 Moltmann tells us, "faith is the beginning of a freedom that renews the whole of life and 'overcomes the world' ... This faith is an experience which never again leaves the people who have once really been possessed by it" (1992), p.114.
Those who die, *immediately* awaken within the parousia, similar to Christ Himself. Thomas Torrance similarly suggests the ascension is the same event as the parousia.\(^94\) The consideration of soul-sleep is only a ‘perspective’ of those still in history. In a moment, one is instantly gathered into the presence of God, at the end of creation, in a ‘new universe’.

**Christ ensarkos constituted in perichoretic relation to the Eternal**

Karl Barth argues that Jesus Christ *ensarkos*, not *Logos asarkos* or *decretum absolutum*, was with God in the beginning and was the election of God.

Before all created reality, before all being and becoming in time, before time itself, in the pre-temporal eternity of God, the eternal divine decision as such has as its object and content the existence of this one created being, the man Jesus of Nazareth, and the work of this man in His life and death, His humiliation and exaltation, His obedience and merit... In and with the existence of this man the eternal divine decision has as its object and content the execution of the divine covenant with man, the salvation of all men. In this function this man is the object of the eternal divine decision and foreordination. Jesus Christ, then, is not merely one of the elect but the elect of God.\(^95\)

Therefore, the transtemporal Jesus Christ *ensarkos* is the elected, chosen, and first risen of many, upon whom all creation is ontologically contingent. In fact, this paradoxical insistence of Barth, that “the man Jesus already was even before He was,”\(^96\) implies the previously expressed Trinitarian dynamic—that somehow Jesus Christ as historical person was existent with God from the beginning of Creation. How can we better understand this dynamic reality? Christ *ensarkos*, being the first to ascend *as person* into both the ‘new world’ and the presence of God, not only ascended unto the parousia, but unto the beginning of Creation.

Although the man Jesus is with God in the beginning of history, how does Barth understand this divine relation being “*before* all created reality, ... all being and becoming in time, ... [and] time itself?” This Barth, is struggling to express the ultimately inexpressible relation between Time and Eternity, and the Barth of the hardened “*Nein.*” This I believe is the Barth that is still struggling within the residual influences of classical anthropology. The same Christ *ensarkos* who is ‘before’ all time is the same Christ who attends the parousia. Christ *ensarkos* does not experience life ‘before’ all of history in the sense that His pre-determination by the Father and His perichoretic instantiation within the Eternal happens *in toto* prior to the block of linear history (creation).

Yes, Christ is pre-determined, and this happens within the “pre-temporal eternity of God.” As the Eternal, however, is perichoretically drawn into Time through Christ, this pre-determining becomes essentially active within the infinite prereflexive de-liberations of the Trinity in Christ who is in dialogical relation with creation. In the same manner, every

\(^94\) (1976), also cf. Barth *CD* 3/2, p.464.
\(^95\) *CD*, 2/2, p.116.
\(^96\) *CD*, 3/2, p.464.
constituting moment of personhood and relationship from the beginning of history is pre-determined in relation to Christ’s constituting action within its own prereflexion. All this is accomplished through the transtemporal activity of the resurrected Christ. Christ’s consciousness of history perichoretically takes place within the Eternal Trinity and, therefore, such experiencing and consciousness would probably be described as taking part in the Trinitarian Eternal Gestalt process through the Spirit. Therefore, all happens as a “predetermination from all eternity”97 as so elected providentially in Christ. Eternity has come into our midst, in the moment between our dialogical alternations.

Therefore, it is doubtful the concept of ‘before’ accurately describes the relation of Christ ensarkos to the block of history itself. John Zizioulas thinks:

Our continuity, therefore, with the Christ event is not determined by sequence or response based on distance; it is rather a continuity in terms of inclusiveness: we are in Christ, and this is what makes Him be before us, our “first-born brother” in the Pauline sense. . . .

[n.39:] In a linear type of “Heilsgeschichte” the “before” indicates a part of history—a period preceding another one—just as it happens with historical consciousness as it is known especially in modern times. But if the historical consciousness is decisively determined by eschatology, the “before” is comprehensible only in terms of the “last,” the final. . . . It is obvious that all this makes no sense in terms of linear “Heilsgeschichte.”98

In effect, because of an undeveloped theological anthropology, Barth has dragged the historical sequential notion of temporality (of causality with simultaneity) into the Eternal dimension of God where Kierkegaard insists on an infinite qualitative difference and argues a synthesis which can only happen within the perichoresis of the person in the dynamic (existential) relationship—the Now. Though it is right that Barth temporalizes God’s Eternal dimension he speciously at times re-incorporates the temporal quality of sequence and simultaneity within it, rather than simply transtemporal causality, which leads to an incomplete inclusion of humanity. Nevertheless, all that Barth ultimately seeks within his understanding of a pre-existent Christ ensarkos is attainable in a resurrection to the beginning of and ‘before’ every Time and every relationship He creates and constitutes. Eternity and His creative activity within our midst.

The Trinitarian community of the Father and the Begotten Son are perichoretically constituted from these ‘beginnings’. The Father could be seen as only in relation to a historically and personally developing Son whether physically on earth or resurrected. From a Christological perspective, each aspect of history constituted in Time and perichoretically to the Father and Eternity is predetermined from within His every prereflexion within His dialogical relation to the world, which takes place from His awareness into and thus the beginning of every relation. For the Father, personally constituted in Eternity and perichoretically to the Son and His Time, all is predetermined transtemporally from the

97 CD 3/2, p.484.
98 (1985), pp.182f, latter emphasis mine.
beginning of history. But, we ultimately misread Barth by positioning the Trinity in a historically linear manner 'before' creation, which projects our linear sequential qualities of time into every aspect of the godhead and transtemporal causality, rather than just the Christocentric aspects. The Son's relationship to the Father is the Father's de-liberative formation of His Eternal Gestalt. Nothing, however, is won or lost in separating the 'existence' of the Trinity from the block of history in a block sequential manner. To do so protract the reciprocal error in the concept of God evident in Hegelian and process theologies.

The primary point for Barth is that Christ's election is causally antecedent within all history, and preeminent within each relational (historical) event; or as Zizioulas suggests, Christ is our inclusiveness, our possibility of including each moment within the Eternal singularity. This then brings up the possibility that the antecedence of such causality is simply the prerreflective de-liberation of analogia spiritus, which presents itself within the 'possibility' from which every human response proceeds.

'Immanence' through inclusiveness into the Eternal singularity: analogia spiritus

The general and biting criticism against dogmatic theology is that, because it is unable to satisfactorily account for an aspect of God's 'immanence' within the world, it removes God to a wholly other status, thus diminishing the possibility of mutual relations. The perichoresis of time and Eternity, however, reveals how 'immanent' dynamics within cosmic relations can be reciprocally active with a 'transcendent' God, in other words what Barth considers 'transcendent' is made 'immanent' in analogia spiritus. An understanding of Christ ensarkos as socially and personally related to God (the Father) sequentially before the creation is only possible if; 1) He is causally instrumental in creating or constituting every moment and relationship for every prerreflective within history. This is accomplished within the simultaneity of His Time, Easter-time, and, 2) furthermore through Him, human possibility is in like manner prerreflectively drawn into it.

On the other hand, when Christ ascends into the presence of the Father, to the beginning and the end, every Eternal moment of history is drawn with Him. Likewise, because He

99 We do well to here remember Moltmann's earlier warning against imposing identical notions of personhood upon each Trinitarian individual.

100 CD, 3/2, p.464, "For as such, according to its manifestation in Easter-time, it is also the time of God; eternal time."

101 CD, 3/2, 466, "Jesus Christ belongs not only to yesterday, or to-day, or an indefinite future. He belongs to all times simultaneously. He is the same Christ in all of them." "This means that every choice and decision made in human history, and indeed in the whole course of created time, is subordinated to the choice and decision made in God's eternity before all created being and its time. . . . At this last and highest stage, the pre-existence of the man Jesus coincides with His eternal predestination and election, which includes the election of Israel, of the Church, and of every individual member of His body" (484-5).
arose to the Father the Eternal impregnated every moment of history. Christ is still the elect. Christ is still He in whom God is perichoretically constituted. And, Christ and the Spirit are those in whom all history is prereflexively brought into the Eternal activity of the Trinity, and ultimately given the possibility of "real time." This latter concept, as stated, would seem for the most part agreeable with Barth; however, a particular understanding of the internal dynamic in which Barth configured this concept seems problematic and in need of further development or clarification. Concerning Christ, Mary Cunningham explains that,

Barth's desire to protect the historical reality of the incarnation can . . . be seen in his insistence in CD IV/2 that Jesus is "not eternal as God is." He continues: "He is only the creature of God—bound to time, limited in other ways too, unable in his own strength to escape the threat of nothingness." He concludes that Jesus is "before all things, even before the dawn of his own time" because "this is what God sees and wills [CD 4/2, p.33]." To some, this suggests the person Jesus was socially active within the Trinity 'before' the block of history began.

It is obvious in his later years that Barth includes a more kenotic Christology, but he incorporates it with no small amount of paradox. As Macquarrie tells us, Barth's Christology is complicated and his extreme Christological statements are usually balanced by others. I would suggest that his original dynamic of time and Eternity, which was supposedly influenced by Kierkegaard, was never completely expressed or fully implemented throughout his theology. He identified the need for the 'infinite qualitative' separation of the infinite and finite, but more than likely because of his reaction to liberal Protestantism did not adequately posit this Christological potentiality perichoretically into that of humanity. As R. H. Roberts points out, this becomes for Barth "an eschatological crisis, a confrontation of the temporal by a consuming eternity . . . an eschatological annihilation of time by eternity." Barth, it is argued, confuses the categories and falls back into a Hegelian synthesis, failing to maintain the existential synthesis within the Christological (or relational) event. He, likewise, delimited the analogical interrelation of the human 'infinite' with the divine Infinite, which takes place for Kierkegaard by virtue of the God-Man event. Therefore, I would argue his greatest problems were his earlier undeveloped anthropology, which were to some degree later self-acknowledged as an over-reaction.

Barth's only argument for how Jesus Christ existed "before the dawn of his own time" is simply because this is "what God sees and wills." Again, Barth becomes partially misunderstood because of this sequentially interpreted concept of "before." I here argue that his formulations of God as "wholly other" and an over-generalizing "Nein" to the vestigium

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102 (1995), p.41
104 (1979), p.96.
*Trinitatis* resulted from his failure to follow through and develop Kierkegaard’s perichoretic understanding of human existence as a differentiated unity. On the other hand, it is doubtful that a more effective circumspect development and expression could have been constructed within the theological geography of his youth. A correction to such Monophysite tendencies, however, is now in order.

If Christ Himself, and therefore human experience itself, is constituted a differentiated unity of the temporal and the Eternal, we can assume two things. First, Christ *ensarkos* in some way includes within Him a perfect Eternal connection to all of history (though tacit and non-conceptual in nature). This adjusts the sequential temporal interpretation of Barth’s “before” into a wider frame of Christological (dialogical) prereflexions. Unlike Moltmann, Barth can be construed as projecting sequential historical time materially (focally) into the complete godhead, installing an eternal quality materially into a Docetic Christ. For Kierkegaard, the Eternal aspect of God is never materially (focally) temporalized as are the oft interpretations of Barth. Time and Eternity are perichoretically synthesized only in the existential relationship, which is the Person of Christ. Yes, time is perichoretically drawn into the Trinitarian relations and conditions each Person accordingly; however, this is accomplished through Christ *ensarkos* who is likewise constituted in His cosmic relations as well as intra-Trinitarian. Such a rendering, however, does not destroy the causal antecedence of which Barth insists is required for maintaining God’s prevenient grace (and His personal freedom). *We only need to reconfigure the concept of prevenience as the de-liberating process that Christ facilitates in His constituting of dialogical relations form within every prereflexive dynamic of human becoming spirit.*

Secondly, the Christological perichoretic relation to the Eternal is inclusive of every *analogia spiritus* which takes place prereflexive to or ‘before’ each *moment* of Creation (relationship). This again begins to reconfigure this notion of “before.” Because Christ *ensarkos* is ‘there’ from the beginning and perichoretically related to the Eternal, He is no less personally constituted within the Trinity than He is in relation to all history through the Eternal dimension within history that precedes every *moment* before the constitution (creation) of it. Barth concludes that “first He is not far from us in His eternity, but near us; not turned away from us, but turned to us; not indifferent or hostile, but gracious, the One who loves us. And second, He is not just hidden from us in His eternity, but also manifest.”105 This coming and call of Christ echoes within the dialogical dynamics of human relations as Barth struggles to express the ‘nearness’ of His Eternity that *is* open to us. And yet he lacks the anthropological language for its fuller expression. Indeed His Eternity is ‘hidden’ to our abstraction in reflexive cognition; however, it lies before and within it.

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105 *CD*, 3/2, p.552.
Through Him, we tacitly perceive Eternity within our prereflexive awareness—*analogia spiritus.* Within this perichoretic and existential synthesis of their relational transition, His Eternal presence becomes manifest to us in *this* Time, and for this Time. Likewise, all manifestations of God’s Word within history actually constitute Him *Personally* throughout history. This resounds in Francis Watson’s insistence that “it is more appropriate to see the revelation or word of God as located within the process of dialogue thereby initiated than to locate it solely in the statement that opens it.”\(^{106}\) The Father and Spirit relate only to a historically developed Christ, and there is no personal Christ consciousness as such outside Time.

**Predetermination of Christ**

Because of his *reaction* to 19th century ‘immanentalism’, Barth refused any systematic formulation of such a principle within his earlier Christological development. He insisted that all theological formulation must concern itself only with the living person of “Jesus Christ Himself as attested by Holy Scripture.”\(^{107}\) This “absolute singularity,” Barth insisted, was dependent “on its predetermination from all eternity.”\(^{108}\) It is this ‘predetermination’ which is offensive to the Hegelian sensitivities when considering moral teleological principles, and in many ways, rightfully so. However, we are able to make room for an ‘immanental’ aspect within our relations to God and still affirm His preeminence in all things if a perichoretic dynamic exists within human relationship that is prereflexively active de-liberating human existential concerns in relation to the Eternal dynamic of God.

This is a predetermination that all happens inclusively in and through Christ and his will. Yet, Christ *ensarkos* is the one taken directly into the Presence of God before the eschaton and therefore instantly becomes Eternally related to all of history. In this way, he is predetermined within each specific causal relation, that is, transtemporally predetermined and yet antecedent within each cosmic interaction.

**Panentheism?**

Does such a reconfiguration begin to suggest, in effect, a panentheism of sorts? If we consider the possibility that all relationships are in some way or another perichoretic, it might. This is not, however, the panentheism espoused by Hodgson or Hegel, which is unable to posit an Eternal God in personal relation to temporal humanity. It would be a panentheism based upon the prevenience of God’s grace through His dialogical relation with humanity, and therefore inclusive of *analogia spiritus* within the prereflexive gaze.

Panentheism as in Hodgson or process theology rejects the view of God’s differentiation as Person from the world, and thus severely modifies the classical attributes

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\(^{107}\) *CD* 4/3, first half, pp.173-4.

\(^{108}\) *CD* 3/2, p.484.
of impassability, omniscience, and eternity. Here God is completely drawn into time in order that He might be mutually affected by the world, and therefore, his omniscience is limited to past and present. In this manner, God and the world are co-emanational within history, and God is considered completely 'immanent' within the world. If, however, we can describe panentheism as a co-emanation whereby 'God in history' does not 'know' the future before it is happening and therefore conceptually emerges Christologically in relation to history, while in tacit perichoretic relation (synthesis) to the dynamic singularity of Time through His Eternal dimension, then this study's thesis is panentheistic. Whereas the former notions bring all aspects of the godhead into time, Barth insists that Time enters the godhead through Christ, through constitution into existence. Therefore, if we posit humanity as mutually perichoretic in nature, and consider the Eternal mode (seinsweise) of God as transtemporal within the Trinitarian dynamic, then mutual relations are possible between persons and Persons within the dialogical relational dynamics suggested within this thesis. In other words, most panentheisms draw the entire godhead to its 'natural' knees because of its anthropological presuppositions. This theologically necessitates we limit God to sequential temporality; whereas this thesis suggests that God may be able to perichoretically draw the person into affective relations with His Eternal dimension through the activity of the Trinity.

God in history is Christologically constituted and conditioned, and therefore God never focally 'knows' transtemporally any more than the dancer 'knows' within the formation process of gestalt. The dancer only focally 'knows' at gestalt, and only tacitly during the formation of gestalt. Though Christ as Logos within the world is never constituted in the world outside His contextually appropriate Word, He is always constituted in tacit synthesis with His teleological character (relationality) because of His Trinitarian perichoresis. In this way, God has always proleptically related to the world as Person. The Father, figuratively speaking, knows only the Son and through the Son a world. Because every moment of history so enters the Eternal intimacy and singularity of the Godhead through 'Christ in us' we can consider God and Creation panentheistically interactive as dipolar persons to the degree of authentic relation to a dipolar God, and therefore, as persons mutually related co-creators. Though this thesis differs with some of the recent trajectory of Keith Ward, it is consonant with the relational dynamic he suggested concerning the development of value:

The creative pursuit of values is itself the work of God, in which both the subject's apprehension and the object's presentation of material for apprehension must be taken together for the value to be realised. This is a radically different view from that of the Thomist concept of an immutable self-complete being; but it seems to be a direct implication of Christian belief in God as Spirit. . . . The historical process must thus be seen as the

109 "He was and is there first, the One whom God has elected and willed, who is there in being. And we in the world, and our being and existence before Him" (CD 4/2, p.33).
progressive realisation of new values, all grounded in the mysterious beyond of God, yet realised only in the interaction of subject and object. . . Man is the vehicle for this continuing historical process, which is the action of God, in contributing to God's general purposes in specific and contingent ways. 

For Ward, values emerge within human existence through the "creative loving contemplation of objects" (Gunton's 'gaze') and requires a respondent "obedience." Values and virtues are not simply a gift of God, but are relational qualities that perichoretically emerge from the felicitous relationship between humanity (true humanity) and God. And though Ward may likewise lack complete anthropological or adequate relational expression, he attempts to place the point of divine-human contact at a more immanent and pervasive interactive level in human existence. For example, "prayer, too, is not the influencing of a master-mind who can fiddle with the predestined course of things. It is the openness of minds to each other at a deep and often unconscious level." Therefore, through some sort of prereflexive activity of human person (as spirit), God (as Spirit), the individual, the church, and history are drawn into reciprocating relation and, in a sense, co-emmanation. 

In the end, however, the definition of panentheism is a configuration that is unable to be completely associated with perichoretic dynamics. Such panentheistic terms as 'contained within', 'indwell the other', or conversely 'existence independent of' resist a formal fit within perichoretic dynamics. Much the same, however, must be leveled at Classical theology. Because of the irreducible tripartite structuring of perichoretic dynamics the typical subject-object distinctions that often define the discussion of panentheism become blurred.

4) Barth and Hegel's missing link: analogia spiritus

Amid the construction of Barth's dogmatics he concludes that eternity itself is not timeless. Eternity, he claims, is "the simultaneity and coinherence of past, present, and future." And again, eternity is "the immediate unity of present, past and future; of now, once and then; of the centre, beginning and end; of movement, origin and goal." This transtemporal dynamic within Barth is of course what enables the personhood of God in Christ to tacitly exist from within Eternity, and yet be focally constituted as such in Time. Therefore, the material difference between Barth and this thesis is primarily anthropological.

Barth's development of analogia relations, forwarding our thought as it did, nevertheless limited the possibility of his anthropological expressions. Analogia spiritus is an attempt to expand his internal logic, which some have designated as a dynamic of

111 Ibid., p.226.
112 CD 3/2, p.526.
113 CD 3/1, p.67.
Because I believe this dynamic was never properly extended within his anthropology it produced a rigidity within his dogmatics which rendered *analogia relationis* materially irreducible, leaving much of the implied ‘immanent’ aspects unexpressed and underdeveloped. This understanding of human persons ultimately leads Barth into a theological quagmire, which wagers a soteriological universalism in exchange for God’s total freedom. This leaves us with no immanent dynamics through which we can meaningfully, mutually, and genuinely move and interact in faith with God. His constructions tended to lose the freedom and mutuality of human experience in relation to an impositional God.

Because of *analogia spiritus* human inclusion creates and sustains human freedom and relational mutuality with God, in other words, though humanity is contingent solely upon God’s personal action for this dynamic, humanity is existentially capable of analogical correlation with God in *totum*, even though human relations to God within history are blurred, and limited. The relation that sin restricts within the individual nevertheless mutually and analogically relates to the fullness of God. In *analogia spiritus* there is technically no determined imposition of God’s Word that lies outside the predeterminative de-liberational interplay of spirits within the Eternal, which *then* results in a Word manifest. In agreement with Barth, however, this can be humanly suppressed. As His bride, the Church not only follows His lead within the bridal dance, but because of what she is and how she gives herself within the dance, she definitively conditions the shaping of His Eternally emergent lead.

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114 Because something (e.g., personhood) is irreducible does not conclude our inability to understand its constitutional nature being the product of two distinct sources (Kierkegaard), nor the value of what knowing these sources might be able to teach us about God and ourselves.

115 Though I acknowledge Bouillard’s Bultmannian proclivities, and Bultmann’s understandings of ‘pre-comprehension’, which is not to be confused with *analogia spiritus*, Bouillard makes a point when he insists against Barth that though the objective possibility of faith resides in the divine unilateral movement, “the subjective foundation of its possibility resides necessarily in us; otherwise it would not be our certainty” (1969), p.39. I am uncomfortable with Bouillard’s consideration of a subjective foundation placed so squarely in natural theology, and would prefer to install a divine preeminence even within the intersubjective and prereflexive interaction of *analogia spiritus* as well. Nevertheless, I appreciate his insistence that human persons are ‘active’ at this fundamental level of dialogical dynamics and interaction with God.

116 "To do Barth justice," says Torrance, “it must be said that his stress upon the infinite qualitative difference between God and man was intended to throw into sharp relief the fact that while there is no way of man’s own devising from man to God, there is indeed a bridge between man and God created through the invasion of God in his Godness into time and human existence and his activity within them” (1984), p.286. Though I agree with Torrance’s assessment here, which is inferred form Barth’s later work, and though I also affirm his conviction of God’s preeminence, the point of my thesis here is that we must push the ‘point of contact’ further into the heart of relational dynamics—*analogia spiritus*—where God retains His preeminence, humanity retains its integrity and freedom of personhood in relation to that preeminence, and there exists a relationality of mutual import.
Because human is perichoretically spirit it can relate to the world as a differentiated unity. It can be fully constituted in relation to the world rather than merely emerge as part of it, or as a determinate reaction to it. There is Eternity and infinite possibility in our hearts. Optimally we are co-creators of and have dominion over creation itself. How is it that humans are to have dominion over creation if they cannot somehow be constituted in whole, as spirit, in differentiated unity to it? Therefore, for humans to merely have spirit rather than be spirit\textsuperscript{117} compromises person as perichoresis in mutual relations to God and its dominion potential over creation. An aspect of human relations to the world must be able to be framed from ‘beyond it’, or more properly, as self in relation to the whole of it and its potential.

In conclusion, it is therefore suggested that further exploration into analogia spiritus will provide for the proper adjudication of the above tension and a more complete expression of what Karl Barth was on to in his rediscovery of vital orthodoxy and its irreducible dynamic of perichoresis. The explication of perichoresis is the pivotal issue, not just as a theological dynamic inherent within the Trinity, but just as importantly as a dynamic active within the constitution of human existence itself. It is an attempt to enter further into the logic and activity of Kierkegaard’s moment.

And now the moment. Such a moment has a peculiar character. It is brief and temporal indeed, like every moment; it is transient as all moments are; it is past, like every moment in the next moment. And yet it is decisive, and filled with the Eternal. Such a moment ought to have a distinctive name; let us call it the Fullness of Time.\textsuperscript{118}

\textsuperscript{117} Gunton’s conviction that humans have rather than are spirit is, I believe, primarily concerned with maintaining the contingency of humanity upon God’s personal sustaining action of human spirit. With this, I heartily agree. The point I wish to emphasize on the other hand is that human nature without spirit to that extent ceases to be true human, just as all persons are necessarily constituted in dialogical relationship; therefore, regardless of source and contingency, in this respect, human beings are spirit, and are relationship. Cf. Gunton (1993), p.188.

\textsuperscript{118} Kierkegaard (PF 22).
Chapter 6

The perichoretic and redemptive relation of Christ to the world: The complementarity of Church and culture

In the previous chapter, we considered a paradigm of perichoretic relations in order to express the mutuality within the divine-human temporal relationship, one in which the divine and the human were considered analogically and dialogically correlational with respect to both the temporal and Eternal. This was an attempt to explicate what Moltmann considers “a perichoretic understanding of the different modes of time, which interpenetrate one another qualitatively, and cannot simply be quantitatively separated from one another,” which furthermore, takes place as a unique dynamic within the human soul.\(^1\) Through Christ and the Spirit, the world and specifically humanity are drawn into this principally Trinitarian dynamic. The response of the human person and human socialization is an ongoing and ideally progressive process throughout history, regardless of how history may develop, disintegrate or end. Before closing this study, I would briefly like to consider the relationship between the Church and culture, and Christ’s relationship to each in light of dialogical relations and perichoretic dynamics.

The Old Testament narratives reveal a people of God that are progressively drawn into more intimate and evolving relations with God and between themselves.\(^2\) Even for Paul sanctification was a progressive process (2Cor 3:18). After the advent of Christ and the new and universal advent of the Spirit of God, our personal, ecclesial and cultural development continue to transform over time. I have attempted to reveal how this creative and sustaining Trinitarian activity of Christ and the Spirit is analogically and ontologically active within the dialogical dynamic of humanity; one in which God began by dynamically instituting, imposing and revealing laws and structures within cosmic and cultic relations through His personal intervening and sustaining action. At the same time humanity, immanently endowed through its contingency to God (\textit{analogia spiritus}), was drawn into ever-greater perichoretic states of relation. As creation, and specifically humanity, through the grace of Time develop in such interrelation with itself and God, the earlier divinely sustained structures (law) were developmentally and progressively drawn into humanity’s own

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\(^2\) For example, this is evident in the progression of sexual practices toward monogamy. During the time of Abraham, Judah was in no way morally suspect for his involvement with a harlot (Gen 38). By the time of Moses, sexual relations were primarily restricted to marriage. In the time of Abraham a brother need only inseminate a dead brother’s childless wife, rather than marry her (Moses). Jesus advanced the relationship to monogamy.
relational dynamics and fullness of action (the heart). Though creation is a long way from such eschatological goals, all humanity is perpetually called through *analogia spiritus* into ever deeper perichoretic relations, and such eschatological realities do indeed constitute themselves analogically and perichoretically within our current existence. This seems to be the intention of Christ’s relations not only to the Church, but also to the whole world through His Church and His immanent and sustaining cosmic relations to it.

H. Richard Niebuhr in *Christ and Culture* attempted to express the various ways we might understand this enigmatic relationship between Christ, the Church and culture. Are there commensurable points of contact between the Church and culture? Furthermore, what effect do each have upon the other? My original claim was that the current crisis in metaphysics, the growing discomfort within culture toward religious meta-narratives, and the current growing irrelevance of historical ecclesial structures of thought for existing culture, have created both a desperate need and greater opportunity for more pertinent common ground between Church and culture. I would like to reconsider Niebuhr’s prophetic insights in light of perichoretic dynamics. Moreover, from this discussion I wish to discuss the complementary dynamics of relational sanctification within the Church and the relational evolution of culture.

3 Moltmann explains (1981), pp.203-222; “God unceasingly desires the freedom of his creation. God is the inexhaustible freedom of those he has created. . . By virtue of friendship with God in the Spirit, we have the chance to influence God and to participate in his rule” (pp.218,221).

4 Cf. Col 1:20, that it pleased the Father “through Him to reconcile all things to Himself”; and also 1Cor 15:20,22-25, “but now Christ is risen from the dead . . . even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ’s at His coming. Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.” The language in both passages suggests that the risen Christ is proleptically engaged in an ongoing sanctifying cosmic process through which He, as the first resurrected, is active in an orchestral manner through His personal rule, authority and power to bring all things into their own equitable and mutual relation to the Father. At this point “then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all” (1Cor 15:28).

At this time, Bonhoeffer tells us: “Now the objective spirit of the church really has become the Holy Spirit, the experience of the ‘religious’ community now really is the experience of the church, and the collective person of the church now really is ‘Christ existing as church-community’. It is beyond what we are able to conceive now as to how it will come to pass that all become one and yet each keeps their own identity. All are in God, and yet each remains distinct from God. All are united with each other, and yet distinct. Each possesses God totally and by themselves in the grace-filled dual solitude (Zweieinsamkeit) of seeing truth and serving in love, and yet never is solitary because they always really live only within the church-community. We walk by faith, but we shall see—not only God but also God’s church-community. We shall no longer merely believe in its love and faith, but see it. At every moment we shall be aware of God’s will to rule (Herrschaftswille) and implement it within the realm of the church-community. Here the realm of Christ has become the Realm of God. . . . No longer repentance and faith, but service and sight. Here the weeds are separated from the wheat; the age of the historical church in all its affliction has passed away. God will wipe away the tears from all eyes. The victory is won, the Realm has become God’s” (1998, pp.288f).
H. Richard Niebuhr

In his concluding chapter, Niebuhr argues that four relative aspects affect being a Christian in any culture. "They depend on the partial, incomplete, fragmentary knowledge of the individual; they are relative to the measure of his faith and his unbelief; they are related to the historical position he occupies and to the duties of his station in society; they are concerned with the relative values of things."\(^5\) Therefore, our acts and understanding of faith "are made, it appears, on the basis of relative insight and faith, but they are not relativistic. They are individual decisions, but not individualistic. They are made in freedom, but not in independence; they are made in the moment, but are not nonhistorical."\(^6\) Our faith cannot be expressed independent from the "nature of things and the processes of nature."\(^7\) In this respect, Christ's relationship to His Church is to some degree inclusive of cultural relativities.

Niebuhr presents various understandings of this relationship, two in particular are the paradoxical (Luther) and the transformative (Calvin). He admits we must settle with loose categorizations and acknowledges overlapping characteristics. Notably, he places Kierkegaard's thinking within both. The paradoxical relationship or 'dualist' model considers human culture as godless, however, the Church must live within culture and therefore God in grace sustains it. Nevertheless, "God has revealed Himself in Christ, but hidden Himself in His revelation; the believer knows the One in whom he has believed, yet walks by faith, not sight."\(^8\) Though cultural aspects are constitutive, they can never be directly associated with faith, nor can any progress of culture enable any progress within the faith action of the Church.\(^9\) Likewise, a 'Christian culture' is no less destitute than a pagan one, and faith is something within culture that does not directly affect it. Niebuhr says this "position makes sharp distinctions between the temporal and spiritual life,"\(^10\) such a position, therefore, tends to be non-sectarian.

Conversely, in the conversionists understanding, Niebuhr presents Christ as the transformer of culture (Calvin), although they maintain a strong distinction between Church and culture. The world is considered a prologue to what Christ's work is attaining; however, unlike the earlier model in which culture was evil, here culture is perverted good. "Eternal life is a quality of existence in the here and now."\(^11\) "Spiritual and natural events 'are interlocking and analogous.'"\(^12\) Here the fall is not so much a historical event as it is our

\(^5\) (1951), p.234.
\(^6\) Ibid.
\(^7\) Ibid., p.235.
\(^8\) Ibid., p.157.
\(^9\) Ibid., p.165.
\(^10\) Ibid., p.171.
\(^11\) Ibid., p.195.
\(^12\) Ibid., p.197.
current bifurcation and "falling away from the Word."\textsuperscript{13} In this respect, "variety brought disorder . . . because men mistook their partial contributions to truth for the whole truth."\textsuperscript{14}

Therefore, each culture within the Church in its own way is transformed into Christian life, from degree to degree. However, because the Church was a distinctive transformed culture, it tended to establish a sectarian relation with surrounding non-Christian cultures.

Either way, our expression of faith is both partial and culture laden. This does not mean, according to Niebuhr, that we are without an absolute.

They can accept their relativities with faith in the infinite Absolute to whom all their relative views, values and duties are subject . . . They can make their confessions and decisions both with confidence and with the humility which accepts completion and correction and even conflict from and with others who stand in the same relation to the Absolute.\textsuperscript{15}

Therefore, if God sustains all persons, then our primary mission is simply to facilitate the constant removal of all relational distortions in our lives and in those of others.\textsuperscript{16} If indeed, we are all endowed with a desire to relate authentically, the removal of any distortions within the our own or the other's own thinking will eventually move them closer to that Power that constitutes them.

If I consider [another] in his value-relations to all his neighbors and also in his value-relation to God, then there is room not only for relative justice but for the formation and reformation of relative judgments by reference to the absolute relation. The relation to the Absolute will not come into consideration as an afterthought . . . but as a forethought and a cothought that determines how everything is done that is done to him and for him.\textsuperscript{17}

Niebuhr was convinced that our relative values within their well suited contexts can indeed be related in \textit{phronesis} to another's within their respective context, through both of our respective relations to the "absolute relation." Most significantly, he acknowledged that this "absolute relation" transpires prereflexively ("forethought") and analogically ("cothought") within the relationship and thought. "In our decisions we need to go beyond what is intelligible and yet hold fast to it."\textsuperscript{18} This is an indirect and yet stark acknowledgement of \textit{analogia spiritus}, in which the relative particulars within their respective wholes are analogically relatable through irreducible perichoretic relationality. In this respect, no relative \textit{what} in itself bears universal correspondence, significance or meaning. However, the manner of our relations, \textit{how} we relate (the degree of wholeness), is analogically relatable to the Eternal \textit{how} of the relations within the Trinity. The \textit{what} of faith assumes its universal force and ultimate commensurability with that of others through \textit{how} it is constituted.

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., p.200.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p.227.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p.238.
\textsuperscript{16} McFadyen (1993), pp.454-455.
\textsuperscript{17} Niebuhr (1951), p.240, my emphasis.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., p.243.
Luther, according to Niebuhr, was sensitive to the stark distinction between God and humanity. He attempted to express that aspect within the dynamic of Christian faith that transcended all our relativities and furthermore seemed untranslatable into any universal conceptual or cultural structuring. Yet, this Eternal dynamic remained a paradoxical potential within, but not connected to, any culture. To establish any connection between Christ's work and culture would be, for Luther, to destroy the one clear distinction that existed between the Church and culture.

Calvin's emphasis, on the other hand, was upon that aspect of faith that transforms the whole person and analogically one's actions and meanings within social interaction and therefore culture. The redemptive activity of Christ in the world and His Church provides sanctified configurative ordering to what is already good within the world. In this respect, we can consider the primary distinction of the Church to be its sanctified life as a culture itself in relation to surrounding worldly cultures. To separate our cultural and spiritual lives was to deny the fullness of Christ's contrast to the world and His Church.

Why these two understandings emerged in such distinction is much more complex than I am here able to engage. Notably, however, each was eager to separate and distinguish between two various aspects of what this thesis presents within one irreducible dynamic. I would suggest that the appropriate understanding of such a dialogical relational paradigm that could have properly synthesized the two concerns into one unitary dynamic had not yet sufficiently emerged within theological discourse. The first aspect is that of the prereflexive experiencing in the process of awareness (the eternal dimension of relations). We experience this wholistic dynamic process of analogia spiritus, which transpires within the 'indwelling' of the relationship itself, in a way we cannot fully explain within our personal or social intellectual and conceptual structures. This is the movement of spirits, of whole persons in relationship, which create and communicate more than the relative developed structures and existing sum of the constituent elements can communicate. Here, creation out of nothing occurs. Luther knew this dynamic well and marked it as the primary site of God's work in persons. This modality of perichoretic dynamics was irreducible to any cognitive structuring.

The second aspect of dialogical relationality was the reflexive constituting of the individual as a finite, whole and temporal person-in-relation. This represents the conceptual gestalt in which our previous structures and forms of life are transformed within the immediate relationship. This is a movement in which the personal and cultural structures having been taken into open relationship and are linguistically constituted within the moment of transition into knowledge by the constituting dynamic of Christ. This dynamic in creation and humanity was emphasized by Calvin.
This leaves us with Luther consigning faith to a dimension in which we relate absolutely to the Absolute and relatively to the relative. Considering this aspect of faith, Abraham’s possibility of faith equates to that of any other time. And so it is that all persons are able, within the call, to venture all within the inner infinity of self to a fullness of faith. Conversely, Calvin emphasized another aspect of faith, and by so doing, provided us with a developmental process of relational sanctification within the Church. This idea, likewise, parallels the social progress that is evident within the relational and social evolution throughout history. In their positive assertions on these matters, I would affirm both Calvin and Luther were right. If, however, our sanctified actions within the Church are to be transformed from out of an existing stage of human cultural development, are we to consider Abraham’s relations to his community and God deficient in some way to those possible today? When viewed through the dynamic of perichoresis the answer is both yes, and no.

The complementarity of relational sanctification and relational evolution

Perichoresis is presented within this thesis as an irreducible dynamic with a tripartite structure that maintains the integrity of the polarities of a relationship, while allowing each to be constituted from within the forming mutuality of the relational unity itself. Though the relationship itself becomes a dynamic third term through which the respective individuals analogically interpenetrate, creating the emergent world of the relationship, it does not obliterate in any way their individuality or their developed forms of life. Rather it intensifies them within the genuineness and emerging mutuality of the relationship. Within the dialogical bipolarity of relations, God’s relation to us analogically pulls us into interactive relation with his Eternal dimension, and, in grace, communicates iconically through our developed communicational structures. In one dialogical movement of faith relations, we are both on equal footing with Abraham himself, and yet in another sense the potential of fullness of life within our faith experience and articulation now exceed those of his time. The dynamic of analogia spiritus within awareness and the extent to which we fully engage and venture ourselves is a matter of personal possibility that we universally share. This aspect of our relationship is only recognizable in our willingness to be transformed within authentic relationships, when and to the degree such authenticity confronts us. For Kierkegaard, according to Timothy Jackson, this universal access, equal responsibility, and human freedom are available to and in every individual, and is unaffected by our contextual situation.19 This aspect within our relationship to God transcends all cultural distinctives and

19 "A number of themes characterize Arminianism, . . . three related ones are central to Kierkegaard’s corpus: 1) a commitment to universal access to the highest things, over against belief in double predestination of Christ’s limited atonement for the elect, 2) a commitment to equal responsibility before the highest things, over against strong versions of sacerdotalism or spiritual collaboration; and 3) a commitment to human freedom, against fatalistic doctrines of irresistible grace or an overly rationalized account of moral and religious commitment." Jackson (1998), p.238.
represents God's activity in the life of every person.\textsuperscript{20} As such, Abraham's venture was as complete as any today.

This disposition establishes \textit{how} we enter and become aware of the call to relationship. Once engaged we enter the \textit{process} of awareness and \textit{analogia spiritus}. From out of this active process of awareness, personal closure takes place in which the individual is conceptually constituted according to developed cultural and personal contingencies, the \textit{what} of the relationship. The cultural relativities, which conceptually shape the relationship, comprise a fusion of complex forms of life that continually evolve into ever more satisfying forms of life. Today, these forms of life are far more conceptually and experientially articulate and expansive than those of Abraham's day. Abraham tacitly and analogically experienced the same fullness of God's action and self-disclosure toward him, which is a universal potential throughout history. However, continued relational development allows us to express and experience this same faith-producing relationship with God, as well as our genuine relations with others, at fuller and more realized levels of perichoretic interaction.

Within the ongoing evolution of relational development, greater conceptual interactive articulation differentiates us from our embeddedness within the world, which enables greater interpenetration within our relationships.\textsuperscript{21} This interdependently expands our social context, increasing the breadth of our cognitive experiencing (awareness), which creates a greater capacity for intimacy and fullness of life. Within this increasing context, the dynamic of \textit{perichoresis} creates greater integration while preserving the integrity of the other's distinctiveness.

Within the prereflexive experiential and awareness mode, the degree of personal wholeness or presence within our relationships corresponds to our openness to God as well. As Moltmann tells us: "We are in God and God is in us whenever we are wholly there, undividedly present."\textsuperscript{22} This variable is one of relational sanctification, the degree to which we are wholly set within the relationship.\textsuperscript{23} To the degree we are wholly present and

\textsuperscript{20}Philosopher Michael Gelvin is convinced that the concept of worship and gratitude is a universal condition of human existence which is "grounded on a spectacular acknowledgement, a surrender to a truth far greater in its meaning than all possible doubt." In \textit{Spirit and Existence}, p.79.

\textsuperscript{21}Again, Kegan reminds us: "Each new evolutionary truce further differentiates the self from its embeddedness in the world, guaranteeing, in a qualitatively new way, the world's distinct integrity, and thereby creating a more integrated relationship to the world. Each new truce accomplishes this by the evolution of a reduced subject and a greater object for the subject to take, an evolution of lesser subjectivity and greater objectivity, an evolution that is more 'truthful'" (1982, pp.294).

\textsuperscript{22}(1992), p.211.

\textsuperscript{23}If indeed the desire to relate is most fundamental, and that greatest desire is for God, it would seem the possibility of one venturing their \textit{whole} self into such perichoretic relations can only happen to the degree the individual is in some way first assured of being related to perichoretically from \textit{both} within and beyond one's immediate relational world. The freedom to venture the self for complete and total transformation within any relation comes about only in the event of Christ's sanctifying movement of grace to the individual. Only the 'offense' of the Absolute Paradox is \textit{both} from within and beyond.
undivided we experience a corresponding degree of *analogia spiritus*, upon which our emergence into conceptualization becomes grounded. This *how* of relationship, Luther's primary concern, transcends the relativities of culture; and again for Luther, this aspect of relation within faith presented the distinctiveness of the believer, and ideally the Church, in contrast to culture. It is indeed transformative, but in an intra-paradigmatic manner. It brings depth of experience and sanctifies our relations within our cultural structures.

The cultural relativities, in which we are constituted within the reflexive mode of conceptualization, constantly undergo evolutionary development. These are progressively transformed by ongoing relational activity in open relation to the compelling analogical forces of perichoretic relations immanent within our relations. The Word, Christ the transformer of culture, mediates this transformative dynamic constituting persons-in-relations from within the oneness of the relationship. This Christomorphic dynamic creates mutual forms of meaning for those within the relationship—establishing the *what* of relationships. This dynamic action of Christ progressively transforming the existing cultural structures was, for Calvin, the distinctive between the Church and culture. In this respect, transformation was interparadigmatic.

From what has been developed within this thesis, we might consider that both Luther and Calvin each emphasized an aspect of the perichoretic dynamic respectively because it was needed in order to maintain a distinction between the Church and culture in consideration of the existing relational paradigm in which they operated. Perichoretic relationality, however, incorporates both these dynamics within one irreducible dialogical dynamic. Furthermore, depending on how we define the Church, it is difficult to clearly separate and attribute relational sanctification to just the Church, and relational evolution as the sole dynamic of culture. Because all relations are to some degree perichoretic (ontologically interpenetrating), the redemptive activity of Christ in the Church has a sanctifying affect upon all society (1 Cor 7:12-15). In fact, if the relational concept of *perichoresis* is to be strictly applied, I believe *both* the Church and culture have positive and progressive effects upon each other, as well as negative. One, motivating holistic sanctification within the other, and the other motivating the evolution of relational structures within it respectively.

The evolving of relational structures in culture and the deepening of our understanding and practice of love within the Church are constantly emerging from its Edenic innocence and sin (sin being the reluctance to move out of innocence when the relational context is appropriate for growth). Existing social and ecclesial structures are slow in their evolution and sanctification respectfully. Though we may tacitly experience the fullness of faith and God's movement toward us, it can never be experienced or expressed in ways that extend too much further than the existing relational structures and dynamics within our culture without
falling into meaninglessness. Therefore, though Abraham may have experienced the same openness and willing response to God within his faith action, he could not relationally experience the fullness of life that accompanies the potential interaction of faith today. For example, it has only been within recent human history that we have begun to evolve from patriarchal forms of marriage into more perichoretic or unitive marriage relations. Though it was possible for Abraham to experience a similar fullness of passion and love with Sarah, their relationship could not have attained the fullness of life that is possible within marriage today. Such progression it would seem is fueled by both the immanent desire and greater release of perichoretic forces due to the growing unity (sanctification) within persons ability to wholly enter relations, and the continued redemption of relational structures, which emerges from the complementary relationship between the Church and culture. I would furthermore argue the non-necessity of considering, for example, the patriarchal style of marriage inappropriate or technically sinful within its suited context. It can be considered a stage of innocence within the appropriate developmental progression.

Both the process of relational sanctification and relational evolution stimulate the other's progress, both our lives with God in contrast to our social lives, and the Church's relational sanctification in contrast to our culture's relational evolution. Each aspect of the dialogical bipolarity forms a dialogical complementarity, in many ways reflecting immanence and transcendence respectively, through which Christ's redemptive work is accomplished. The Church's and our own relationship with God is made fuller as the understanding and experience of the natural and social relationships around us develop. The expectations of culture, amazingly enough, also motivate greater ecclesial sanctity. Ideally, the call to genuine relationship through the constant re-contextualizing call and love of Christ should be enough to produce the needed freedom and release from existing structures to facilitate increasing perichoretic relations within the Church, but it is not. The Church constantly struggles with its ecclesial and institutional closedness to change and transformation within relations. Therefore, the natural and social relations within our various cultural institutions, which experience greater freedom from the 'impositions' of existing 'revealed' religious and 'accepted' moral structures are more sensitive to the immanent desire for and existing lack of greater perichoretic relations (fullness of life). Though the unquenchable longings and 'desire for more' within these non-ecclesial institutions almost always result in perversion, their unfettered insistence ultimately becomes the prophetic and deconstructive eye that uncovers the Church's unwillingness to develop from its existing stage of relational innocence. When avoidance and dissociation result in
contrast to such exposure, the innocence of the Church becomes her sin. In perichoretic
relationship to the natural forces of culture, the Church is stimulated into its ongoing Jacob-
like wrestling with God for fulfillment of the immanent-transcendent impress and desire for
such perichoretic relations on earth as it is in heaven, which lie analogically foundational
within our existence.

Together this dynamic complementarity becomes the process through which God’s laws
emerge within our hearts. Interactive order and full perichoretic relationship cannot come
about without ongoing fluctuations and chaos. The roles are not strict, and if either fails to
remain open to the process of sanctification and progress it will fall into obsolescence. In
other words if the Church in fear retracts into its oft postured sectarianism, culture will
attempt its own re-structuring (e.g., psychoanalysis). God will not be mocked, and God’s
love (authentic relationship) will be expressed, appropriately defined, and manifest within
the world. The same dynamic is active within our relationships to each other. If the existing
church fails to maintain its ongoing sanctifying and transformative relations with God and
others, a new one will emerge out of the perichoretic relation between what is left of it and
culture (reformation).

We cannot strictly segregate the Church and culture in reference to the Eternal and
temporal; their relational structure and dynamic are analogically the same. Therefore, what
is the fundamental Christian distinction? Can we point to a soteriological criterion by which
the genuine Church and believer can be distinguished within the broader cultural relations?
As I have been suggesting, I believe this distinctive is the willingness for open perichoretic
relations, the willingness to be wholly transformed within authentic relationship to the whole
of existence (openness to the activity of Christ within our midst). As McFadyen begins, it is
the Church’s living relation to Christ that frees it for re-contextualization and transformation
within genuine relationship—love. Therefore, to the extent Christ is truly active, openness
to genuine relations will be progressively evident. This, however, takes foundational shape
at the level of analogia spiritus. Moreover, this is why Christ designated the proper
identifying and knowing of Himself by others, which is traditionally forwarded as the
Christian distinctive, to a more foundational soteriological dynamic. “Anyone who speaks a

24 When Robert Waller’s heroine in The Bridges of Madison County says at her death that the four
days of her adulterous relations amid her otherwise morally and socially acceptable marriage were the
four days in which she was most fully alive, he has leveled a biting and well critiqued challenge to the
Church. This is not to consider adultery as a possible alternative, but neither can we dismiss the
totality of what this woman experienced as completely demonic. The cry of the human heart longs for
an intimacy that the present relational structuring cannot provide. It is the business of the Church to
affirm all that is good, wherever we find it, and correspondingly help others and ourselves to
wholeness, exposing the faulty relational structures within each of our own specific relational context
and thinking, and finally to relate what Christ means and gives to such situations. When wholeness is
attained, the immanent-transcendent presence of Christ will have its redemptive effect.
word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy
Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come” (Mt 12:32).
Through the *irreducibility* of the perichoretic relationality we can begin to understand this
paradoxical contention of Christ.25 As I have endeavored to argue within this thesis, the
Spirit and Word are active in one irreducible communicative dynamic. Dialogically,
however, the spirit (awareness) is antecedent to the word within the knowing event, and
comprises a holistic dynamic that ideally presents the whole of the individual in relation to
the whole of what God communicates, which transcends, but does not obviate, the
relativities of our faith.

*How* He was known was foundational. Without the proper *how*, the *what* becomes
redundant (Mt 16:13-20). He even placed the primary fundamental criterion for salvation
upon *how* He was ‘believed in’, and this as foundational and antecedent to His being
believed in. Words and propositions, actions and relations, all is nothing but to the extent it
is whole. If indeed *analogia spiritus* is the preliminary site upon which all our
conceptualizations take shape and meaning, that fundamental degree upon which we wholly
and singly enter that possibility of transformation in relation to the Other, then it would only
be logical that any resistance to this aspect of God’s dialogical interaction would be
foundational to all other subsequent and relative aspects.

If Christ is not known through the experience (encounter) of the Holy Spirit, which is
only known by our spirit, and the *willingness* to wholly venture into authentic relations, He is
not, in truth, known. One would do better “who lives in an idolatrous community prays with
the entire passion of the infinite, although his eyes rest upon the image of an idol . . . [This]
one prays in truth to God though he worships an idol.”26 Therefore, neither ‘acknowledging’
Christ, nor personal activity and ‘commitment’ within the Christian community, is
soteriologically fundamental or antecedent (Mt 7:21-23); rather, the individual must be
willing to wholly receive and engage these things in *their* completeness. If indeed the human
spirit is willing, and to the degree it is willing within its well-suited context, the appropriate
Word will manifest itself accordingly, all things considered. In other words, if the human
spirit is truly open, Christ will be meaningfully and appropriately identified.

The issue of truth, in this respect, depends upon the individual’s *willingness* to remain
relationally attuned, which necessitates an openness within the Church to wisely listen to its

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25 D. Hagner tells us Christ’s insistence that “Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him,” is a difficult passage that does not exactly encourage optimism in the exegete (1993, p.347). Furthermore, W. Davies and D. Allison say, “Matt 12.32 has no obvious meaning . . . We remained stumped” (1988, v.2, p.348); and U. Luz (1989) finds no explanation satisfactory. To date, no commentary has presented a satisfactory meaning to Jesus’ enigmatic utterance despite the body of biblical literature that seems to infer the opposite.

culture, and continue to wrestle from its always existing innocence. Because of His Eternal
Trinitarian relations Christ is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow, however, our
understanding and experience of Him is not. Christ’s perichoretic relation to the world
respects the autonomy and dignity of each person, and in grace provides the space and time
to transform. Can the Church do no less? Only God’s relational dynamic of perichoresis—
love—remains changeless in our holistic experiencing. Our tacit experiencing of the Eternal
within our hearts is changeless, and this is what characterizes, backgrounds and facilitates a
continuity in both our knowledge of God and our relationships at all levels.

Within Christianity Christ has always been understood at the center of God’s self-
disclosure to humanity. If, however, we are to relate with each other and God, as Christ
relates to the Father—in perichoresis—then it is expedient that we begin to consider more
deeply the role of human as spirit, and the necessary inter-modal (seinsweise) activity
between human as spirit and God as Spirit that is reflective of perichoretic dynamics. The
Persons of the Godhead come to consciousness in relationship to each other, not after they
are conscious persons. Barth’s trinitarian model of the Godhead set the stage for a
contemporary deeper development of human personhood within theology, which led to a
more complex social expression of personhood in Moltmann and Pannenberg. A new
theological paradigm of humans as persons-in-relation began to emerge (in consonance with
the rest of the humanities); one in which we are beginning to understand human
consciousness as emergent only within a social and indeed perichoretic consciousness. We
began to witness in human personhood and society a holistic dynamic, a mode of existence,
if you will, that was both holistic and prereflexive. It is now beginning to be recognized as
the ground or background upon which all social and personal forms of life are developed,
maintained and given meaning. This thesis has endeavored to posit a concept of analogia
spiritus as the dialogical dynamic ground upon which all discourse, interaction and
movement thrust us back repeatedly.

I have suggested that within the perfect perichoresis of the Trinitarian Persons, they
analogically interanimate within their respective dialogical bipolarity (openness/awareness),
though the manifestation of each Person is distinctly unique within itself (Moltmann). In this
respect, though they are distinct Persons their consciousness cannot be completely separated,
just as we are beginning to learn that each human is not completely separable from his or her
living culture and society. To a significant degree our consciousness results from who we
are as individuals. Though we play a responsible role in our actions with others, as spirit, in
relationship, our consciousness is likewise connected to and conditioned by those with
whom we relate.

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This dynamic, together with Kierkegaard's understanding of the self, help explains Paul's enigmatic description of the sanctification process in Romans 7.

For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. . . . For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members (15-17,22,23; my emphasis).

Kierkegaard tells us we are a relationship unto ourselves, but furthermore, we are only a negative relation until the relation becomes a positive third term by being in relation to either that Power which constitutes us as a relation unto ourself, or another. If in reflection we wholly relate unto ourself, in the purity of heart and one will, we are constituted in perichoretic relation with that Power which constitutes us; our "inward man" as Paul says. This is the "conscience" of every person of which Paul speaks (Rm 2:15). On the other hand, when we are constituted as a third term in relation to another, we are constituted spirit in relation to the socialized spirit of the community, with all of its suppressive mechanisms and contracts of distorted relations. These two ways of being spirit create the struggle, and because perichoretic relations necessitates an interpenetration and interanimation, as well as maintaining the integrity of the individual, we are to some degree those with whom we relate. We cannot completely separate ourselves from them, and its not completely necessary to do so. Paul tells us that if we are genuinely aware and sincerely acknowledge these "fleshly" patterns of social behavior within our relations, we have done what is needful for the process of sanctification to begin or continue, despite our immediate sinful behavior. Our hope lies in the transforming light of Christ. As these incomplete relational structures are revealed and sincerely acknowledged, which is evident in true sorrow and brokeness of spirit, they will within relationship be transformed and evolve with time, simply because of His immanent and unrelenting call within and between us all. Nevertheless, because culture and faith interpenetrate we must be satisfied that our transformation is from "degree to degree" (2Cor 3:18). This warrants more than anything humility in our relation to culture.

**Conclusion**

This thesis has endeavored to argue that perichoresis reveals itself as a distinctive dynamic within every aspect of human experience and thought. It is admitted, however, that the notion of perichoresis herein is preliminary and that such recent attempts by Moltmann, Gunton and Loder in theology, and, in various ways, Gergen, Shotter, Kegan and Loder/Kierkegaard in developmental theory have only just begun to suggest and identify such a dynamic as fundamentally inherent within all reality. If worthwhile, its potential and critical explication no doubt lies before us. Nonetheless, I have considered its vital role as

27 Eph 5:13, "... all things that are exposed, are made manifest by the light, and become light."
foundational within various discourses and suggest that paradigmatic shifts accordingly are needed in order to facilitate further development in all these discourses. If indeed a theory is merited by the amount of data it explains and the unifying, even transformative, effect it has on formerly disparate traditions of thought, then I suggest the relational dynamics of perichoresis, its tripartite structure of relations (reality), and the fundamental concept of analogia spiritus be considered as viable directions of future development.

In closing, I list the basic anthropological hypotheses that have been theologically presented and considered throughout this study. I have ventured to argue that humans are constituted in perichoretic reciprocity to one another and as such analogically to God. How I have understood this, I review below. Following this, I summarize some of the potential advantages and possibilities of a perichoretic relational view of reality that were suggested within this thesis.

♦ All relatedness (relatedness) is dynamically constituted within some degree of perichoretic differentiated unity, which is irreducibly grounded in the sustaining action of the Trinity.

♦ Human persons mutually relate with God, who is a Person constituted Eternally within a relationship to spacetime (i.e., in relation to Christ); and to the degree humans wholly and felicitously relate with nature, self, others and God, they are mutually constituted in spacetime in relation to the Eternal and to this degree within perichoretic relations.

♦ The fundamental constituting force within human nature, therefore, is the desire to relate perichoretically.

♦ The perichoretic relational dynamic of differentiated unity consists of dialogical cycles in alternation: an analogical ‘infinite mode’ of opening awareness into relationship, and a reciprocating closure from out of the relationship constituting the individual respectively within a finite mode and social context.

♦ The active divine-human causal nexus is initiated and therefore located within the human prereflexive process of awareness and the moment of transition to reflexive response. In dialogical terms, this is considered the open cycle of relationship.

♦ Each stage of human development is conditioned by the previous stage, yet the ultimate meaning within each stage emerges from the quality of the differentiated unity within each relational occurrence. In this respect, the stages to come bear upon the present in a futurity that is real-ized within the transformational process or ‘moments’ between prereflexion and reflexion. The transformational dynamic within the person is itself able to be transformed in analogical relation to that Power that posits it and seeks to coordinate all such transformations with those of all Others.

♦ God’s relation to humanity in Christ and the Holy Spirit opens up the immanent-transcendent possibility in which the human prereflexive experience is analogically brought into dynamic relationship with God in His Eternal dimension—analogia spiritus. By drawing the human prereflexive dynamic into perichoretic correlation with His own preeminent activity of creation, God from Eternity establishes humanity in its own freedom and mutual relationship to Himself.

♦ Thus, relativizing our notions of reality and simultaneity is accomplished in a relational dynamic in which reality is perichoretically constituted within the third term of the
creating and emergent relationship, which is transparently contingent upon Trinitarian perichoresis. This dynamic is not to be thought of as creating a universal frame of reference in which all things as similar can be mutually related (analogia entis), but rather a universal dynamic of relationality through which all things different can mutually and meaningfully relate (analogia spiritus within perichoresis).

In conclusion, I summarize a few of the possible implications of these hypotheses that have developed throughout the study.

1) We might characterize the existing frenzy within the current hermeneutical debate as opposing insistences upon the immanent or transcendent characterizations in the construction of meaning. This generally presents the primary locus and construction of meaning as either the reader or the text respectively. A perichoretic hermeneutic rejects either emphasis. Any one emphasis immediately exposes the dualistic paradigmatic structuring of subject-object relationality. Perichoretic relationality, however, offers an alternative dynamic not presentable within such a dynamics. The necessary tripartite dialogical structuring within the unitary dynamic of perichoresis insists upon the mediational dynamic of the relationship as the third term, providing the holistic and preeminent activity of analogia spiritus. The meaning is never completely within, nor the sole property of the text or the reader, rather it lies within the relationship itself, and is then analogically extended into the constituent others respectively. Indeed, all of what the constituent members are within themselves is present within and bears upon the resultant meaning. What this is, however, means nothing outside the immediacy of the occurrent relationship. When the relational purview extends or shifts, the what is analogically transformed accordingly. The creating and sustaining activity of the Spirit and Christ (the how and way) make possible all emergent relationships. Ideally, all meaning arises from the perichoretic world of the specific relationship in all its new complexity, a new creation, with new and transforming possibilities. The meaning for everyone within the relationship is foundational upon this constituting dynamic, which never allows sole ownership of meaning to any one constituent in itself. This does not denigrate the rational nature and the complexity within our meaning and relations; rather it cautions and defers our hermeneutical project to both a more complex and, in another way of thinking, simpler functioning. To the degree we are holistically present and inclusive within our relations, we can depend upon the simplicity of the fullness of life we experience between contrasting understandings. On the other hand, reason is alive and well within perichoretic relationality. It becomes, however, a far more complex operation of deduction than previously acknowledged, a complexity that cautions our dogma and recognizes the active grace and perichoretic nature within its foundations that are relationally contingent. The truth always emerges from within the relationship. Moreover, the relationship is always contingent upon and to some degree influenced by the constituent members and the activity of analogia spiritus and Christ.
2) The notion of perichoresis as an anthropological dynamic begins to speak deeply to our moral dilemmas. If indeed we can correlate the dialogical distinctions of awareness and conceptual constitution to Kierkegaard's modal distinctions of human existence as eternal and temporal respectively, then we must continue to shift the onus of our moral deliberations from the what to the how of beliefs and relations. It would seem appropriate to fundamentally assess morality by one's disposition of openness to the Other, that is, are we truly willing to be transformed within genuine relationship. The what of belief and social action, their accuracy and rightness, will develop accordingly, primarily in retrospect to how.

3) A relational ontology of perichoresis would seek to obviate the former metaphysical emphasis of either substance in diverse relations, or the contrasting emphasis of relations creating relative substances. Rather, it would in some way present an irreducible complementarity and dynamic of substance-and-relations through the preeminent perichoresis within the Trinity. I suggest that such development would ultimately overcome the postmodern criticism of repetition and reason, though it will re-configure our current understanding of how reason and continuity function.

In this respect, we are presented with a modified emergentist view in which all things constantly become new within the unique event occurrence, and just as dynamically, established in analogical continuity with the past and future. To be spirit is never simply the repetition of former patterns of relationship, but the existential creation of meaning which contain relational configurations that are analogous to those formerly developed within that tradition. Ideally, relationship is never merely a patterned response, but a new and unique occurrence that is created as the constituent persons are transformed accordingly within mutual and meaningful relations. Such a dynamic necessitates a tripartite structure to relationality—a mediating perichoretic dynamic between the relatants, and a holistic dynamic of analogical interaction upon which our communitive structures of social intercourse are emergent and dynamically embedded.

This begins to better explain the Christian notion of creatio ex nihilo, which resists the deistic and Newtonian understanding of a Creation as a container model in which God in one specific moment created all that is (substance) before history as a block began. Within this understanding substance exists and only its formation and action (form) are all that transpire from that moment forward. By interjecting Eternity into the ever present moment, Kierkegaard portended the coming Einsteinian revolution, the relativity of time, and the peculiar dynamic of emergence within thermodynamic theory, which calls for a new irreducible dynamic in reality that insists time and eternity be considered two "related

aspects of reality." This opens for humanity a new and radical notion of freedom because of God's relation to us, contrary to the assumptions of Sartre's notion of theological anthropology. The *perichoresis* of time and Eternity begins not only to suggest a direction for further paradigmatic re-structuring in this area, but places the creative *moment* everywhere within time.

4) The *perichoresis* of time and Eternity within anthropological considerations begins to open up the theological space for a new and more expansive explanation of how indeed prophesy and faith are instituted within the Church, and furthermore, how human freedom might be considered dynamically co-active within God's preeminent and ongoing act of creating. In fact, every chapter within this thesis leads to and ultimately depends upon some sort of perichoretic theory of time and Eternity within personhood as socially constituted. If indeed true mutual relations exist of a personal nature between God and humanity, such a dynamic must be active within human relational dynamics, as well as the Trinity. If we view as absurd the technical possibility of relational dynamics which allow us to consider the tacit awareness of human existence being analogically and dynamically drawn into relation with the Eternal activity of the Trinity, then we must likewise be willing to view as absurd the current developments of physics and thermodynamic theory. They both present the same relational conundrum and necessary relational dynamics (however you want to interpret them). The biblical notion of faith and prophecy as a proleptic movement of the future into the present, together with the freedom of humanity in authentic personal relations with God, necessitates a dynamic like *analogia spiritus* through which God and humanity are able to be mutually co-constituted as whole persons in analogical relations. This must be set in contrast to Hegel's concept of Absolute Spirit and process theology, both of which diminish the personal nature of God with which humanity might genuinely relate.

5) When Christ prayed that "they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us" (Jn 17:21), this was ontologically realized within every moment of Creation. The answer to this prayer was the proleptic decree, "Let Us make man in Our image" (Gen 1:26). When we can begin to conceive of how Christ's petition was 'ontologically' and relationally antecedent to the decree itself, then we can begin to fully understand the *perichoresis* of time and Eternity, and the corresponding relativization of simultaneity that must now be considered within relational causality. With this decree, the fundamental and constitutive nature of humanity and the call to fullness of life became the constituting desire to relate perichoretically. Herein lies the common ground of all humanity. All people not only desire to relate, moreover, there is inherent within such desire

a particular kind of relation, one that is admittedly evolving and emerging within our ongoing development and understanding, but one that is likewise immanently evident within our disgust in the lack of its realization and our simple desire for more. Our disgust and despondency is so deep that when we feel we have lost all hope of attaining it, we often times consider life not worth living.

Because of God's relationship to all persons, we are perichoretically and therefore, immanently and teleologically (transcendently) drawn into ever greater expressions of love—perichoresis. Regardless of what we feel, it is always there; we can only suppress and misshape this primal desire which inhabits all relations. Such an infinite desire is longsuffering against our efforts to bury the freedom and creative dynamic through predetermined patterns of 'safety' by which we overdetermine our relationships. This infinite desire, which only finds its ultimate rest in relationship to God, is often sold into bondage as we purchase the socially patterned idols within our control—persons and things less than God. And though at present, the dynamic of genuine perichoretic relationality lies far from scientific articulation and verification, we must acknowledge to some degree the increasing social and psychological knowledge that is increasingly revealing the shape of such relational dynamics. Such growing insights are fueled by the complementarity that is human person (temporal and Eternal) and human society (Church and culture), with whom God relates at all levels each in its characteristic manner and emphasis. The ongoing dialogue of our fluctuating and conflicts of active social engagement will continue to expose our faulty structures of relationship and reveal what is genuine, what can be considered the perichoretic pattern of relationship (love). When faulty structures of relationship are appropriately exposed, we are convicted, simply because of the fundamental longings and desires within us all. Are we willing to let them be exposed? For the person who willingly ventures open and genuine relations, transformation is made possible when such exposition is coupled with sufficient grace and time. The Spirit and Word are dynamically irreducible, and yet their perichoretic distinctiveness sustains us as a differentiated unity. In this respect we are able to relate genuinely with others, and yet stand decisively in the moment of conviction within those relations.

This is the story I have struggled to tell. Though these examples are only preliminary in their indication of how a perichoretic paradigm of reality might begin to expand our knowledge, and though the knowledge and experience of such a dynamic will never in this age fully express that which is shared within the Trinity, I have endeavored to open the

31 Moltrmann insists that the passage, "You shall not make for yourself an image or any likeness," not only applies to God but to our relational interaction, love, as well. "Love fulfils the commandment, because it does not tie anything down to what was once reality, in the past. It throws open the new free spaces of the future" (1992, p.263).
reader to the explanatory power and potential of such dynamics, and furthermore, the concept of analogia spiritus. Because of the relative obscurity of these terms and concepts within former academic considerations, these are concepts that will no doubt be met with great skepticism. These are ideas, however, that are not completely new. Their manifestation and fecundity have been slowly emerging for a century and half.
Glossary

**ANALOGIA SPIRITUS.** An understanding of *analogia spiritus* is best understood in contrast with *analogia entis* and *analogia relationis*. The use of *analogia entis* describes a metaphysical view expressed most prominently in Thomas Aquinas in which fundamental and controversial universals are "before all things" (*ante rem*) in God, and also "in all things" (*in re*) by virtue of divine creation, and then "after all things" (*post rem*) in the process of knowing." Because humanity analogically participates in the being of God, universals are an inherent aspect within human conceptuality which is likewise simultaneously the product of the objective world. Therefore, there exists a relationship of analogical correspondence between the person of the Creator and that of the creature. *Analogia relationis* is an attempt to shift the ontological character of reality (*analogia entis*) into a relational dynamic. Humanity comprises a duality, based upon a relational synthesis of the subject and the other. Our ontological ground is our predetermining response to relate in synchronicity as God relates—love. The issue here becomes how we correlate a universality amid the relativity of variously constituted knowledge and relationships without prejudicing a new metaphysics with its Christocentric totalitarian demands (basic descriptions taken from Otto Weber 1981, pp.97f, 373, 411, 575). *Analogia relationis* is the primary trajectory of this thesis.

The ontological dynamic of *perichoresis* seeks to place the onus of relational interaction between persons and God at the level of *Analogia spiríitus*, which attempts to explicate more definitively the relational dynamic intended in *analogia relationis*. *Analogia spiríitus* is an analogy of spirits between God and human persons, spirit being the entirety of the whole person. It will be secondarily used to reference the same dynamic between persons that is facilitated by the creative action of *Spiritus Creator*. Loder tells us "we know the Holy Spirit as such only through the self as spirit; we know the Spirit only in his own medium, so to say. This suggests not a fusion or absorption but an analogy (1Cor 2:11, Rm 8:16, Phil 2:12f)" (1998, p.93). In this respect, the relative and socially developed aspects of the individual or relationship are just that, relative to their specific relationships. What analogically corresponds, however, is the dynamic of the centrality of the person to that of the Other. All relative aspects bear appropriate personal and social meaning through their respective relation to the analogy of the whole persons-in-relation. This circumvents both a conceptual dogmatism and conceptual relativism (perspectivism), and suggests a relativity relative to the specific relationship that emerges within a universal relational dynamic. This creates meaningful correlation* within the specific relationship that is felicitously and openly entered.

Because God's own constitutive process takes place within the Eternal, and because His whole being is analogically related to the whole being of human persons, *analogia spiríitus* is unimaginable and mysterious. Yet because it is reciprocal and interrelative with our spirit it conditions our developmental and transformative natures. Within this moment of *analogia spiríitus*, the immediate concerns of the individual enter the divine creative act. The process of *analogia spiríitus* effectively draws the person's existential concerns into the divine process of Eternal creation itself, and therefore, optimally the individual or community themselves are drawn into the process. Because *analogia spiríitus* is a holistic experience, humans likewise experience it in an undifferentiated manner—the *gaze* of awareness. This is a prereflexive holistic engagement that arises when two persons intend each other in co-awareness; a created unity that creates a relational field upon which all subsequent constituted language and actions take on meaning. Within this dynamic processing, the Power that constitutes the relationship likewise becomes a constituent member of the relationship. Here, we experience *de-liberation*, a process by which our existential concerns are holistically set before possibility itself as we are liberated from our frozen position in time and kinetically provided with movement and choice in dynamic relations, *within His creative action*. All this happens within the moment. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2Cor3:17), and upon this ground we are subsequently transformed (re-created) and set in genuine relationship*.

**AUTHENTIC/GENUINE RELATIONS.** Authenticity indicates the individual's full presence within relationships and the willingness to be re-constituted within genuine or genuine aspects of relationship. McFadyen says genuineness "must be understood in terms of an *orientation* towards a full and genuine mutuality of understanding rather than its present achievement. . . . A
genuine relation is nothing more or less than formal reciprocity in expectation and integrity” (1990, p.161). However, authenticity ultimately must reflect a particular notion of relational dynamics, which this thesis has posited as our emerging understanding of perichoretic relations, that which transpires within the relations of the Trinity.

**Awareness.** The initiating prereflexive process of a person entering relationship in which the person submits an aspect or totality of their presence to the choosing, composing and organizing of their relational world. This entails an interpenetration of one’s self into the constituting dynamic of the relationship itself. It is a process and state of relations associated with the person as or becoming spirit, person-in-relation. This takes place dialogically as a person, a relation unto itself, or socially in relation to another. In a broad sense, awareness is to be associated with experience, which is to be considered holistically inclusive of all forms of perception conscious or unconscious.

**Bisociation.** “The surprising convergence of two incompatible frames of reference to compose an original and meaningful unity; the basic unit of an insight, which may include several bisociations to form a complex of new meanings” (Loder 1992, p.309).

**Causality.** Two forms of causality are of specific and contrasting interest to this research, sequential or temporal causality (similar to causal determinism), and relational causality (a relation of mutual conditioning). The first places all causality within the linear dimension of time, i.e., deterministically speaking, A is not the specific cause of C, but of B, which then becomes the specific cause of C. On the other hand, the assumptions that A is the sole cause of B, is never conclusive. Hume’s criticisms of this type of causality stand to this day (Murphy 1990). In light of recent developments in physics and the necessity to relativize our notion of simultaneity, relational causation liberates our causal notions into a broader notion of relatedness in which time becomes a property of relational causality rather than causality happening in time. Spacetime becomes the dynamic of relations rather than the absolute container of relations. Within the interanimating dynamic of perichoresis it is difficult to say one thing or action strictly caused another. Causality in this respect, however, is not eliminated, rather things and actions emerge in a broad transtemporal* relation of mutual conditioning. In this respect, causality simply becomes dynamic interrelatedness.

**Complementarity.** Complementarity is the logical relation between two descriptions or sets of concepts applicable to a single phenomenon or object which, though mutually exclusive, are nevertheless both necessary for a comprehensive description of the phenomenon or object. In physics, the notion of complementarity was developed when it was recognized that a single model may not adequately explain all the observations made of atomic or subatomic systems in varying experimental contexts. For example, electron diffraction experiments are best explained by assuming that the electron has wave-like properties, whereas the photoelectric effect is best described by assuming it has particle-like properties.

The idea of two different but complementary concepts to treat quantum phenomena was first proposed by Niels Bohr (1855-1962). As Christopher Kaiser and others have suggested, complementarity has a richer, more subtly complex structure than most physicists realize. In particular, the sets of concepts referring to the same phenomenon or object do not necessarily exist on the same conceptual level; their distinctiveness yet interrelatedness together in a unitary whole is then preserved by a differentiated relationality maintained by the asymmetric character of the relations constituting the relationship between the two levels (re-edited from Loder 1992, p.310).

**Context.** “The system or network of relations which forms the environment in which particular relations and communications take place and within which particular persons live and act, representing at least one dimension of their lives” (McFadyen 1990, p.313).

**Correlation.** “A reciprocal or mutual interrelationality between two concepts in which neither can be derived from the other by extensive abstraction or deduction, or by logical implication or causal determinism” (Loder 1992, p.310).

**De-liberation.** Typically, deliberation means a careful consideration and weighing of reasons for and against. This is usually understood in a Newtonian sense as a deliberation of reason within the existing possibilities of reality. The hyphenation is intended to play the Latin ambiguity of de- against the idea of liberation. De- bears the possible meaning of either ‘of cause’—on account of, by reason of, through; or ‘of relation’—concerning, in respect to; or ‘of the whole’—from among, from out of. In this respect, de-liberation represents the process by which the individual is freed from the contextual deliberation (what is possible within the
ETERNAL, ETERNAL. A common use of eternal often signifies everlastingness and the non-

EQUILIBRIUM, EQUALIBRATION. Piaget’s equilibration process is more properly analogous to the integrated cybernetic activity of interlocking feedback systems, rather than to a ‘balance of forces’ as conceived in Newtonian physics. Piaget understands equilibration as a dynamic cognitive ‘process,’ a cycle of cognitive approximations to a state that is never totally satisfied, . . . (1) it entails active compensations to environmental change; (2) it operates to maintain internal coherence; and (3) it represents an ongoing search beyond current cognitive maturity (equilibration is thus a misnomer). A leading interpreter of Piaget, Hans Furth, describes Piaget’s mature understanding of equilibration as “the self-regulation of human knowing. It regulates the network of cognitive cycles and keeps them in more or less permanent balance (equilibrium). This balance . . . is open to the unlimited number of new encounters and perspectives deriving from the interplay of human actions (external and internal). Some of these encounters lead to disturbances of existing balances. In consequence, people experience conflicts or gaps relative to their given systems of knowing. The system which in the first place is responsible for the disturbances then responds in a compensatory manner and overcomes the disturbances to the point of essentially integrating them as part of the system. In doing this, there is a reequilibration, but not simply a return to the old equilibrated system. Rather, the compensation is at the same time the construction of an improved system. . . . Hence Piaget speaks of an ‘increasing’ equilibration. . . . For Piaget, ‘structure without function (genesis)’ was as incomplete as ‘function without structure.’” (Loder 1992, pp.158-9).

ETERNAL, ETERNAL. A common use of eternal often signifies everlastingness and the non-temporal (e.g., Plato), even the static pictorial notion of non-temporality. The understanding this thesis seeks to develop is one that transcends all notions of sequential temporality and simultaneity and yet maintain the transtemporal causality of mutual conditioning within a dynamic interrelational singularity.

EXPERIENCE. ‘Experience’ will be used in two ways within this thesis. These will be discernable contextually. The first, and most controversial use signifies a holistic perception of and interaction with all things, forces and actions both inside and outside the self that present themselves in some way within the specific relational occurrence. Because this is a process that always begins with totality and processes toward identifiable differentiation, its primordial perception of encounter is experienced in a tacit and inarticulate manner. This form or mode of experience is a prereflexive or tacit awareness that applies within the process of perception. The other use of experience signifies the fullness of factors and contingencies of the relationship (reality) that are drawn into the immediate focal meaning and conceptuality of the constituted individual. The degree of the first is established within the individual’s willingness to enter wholly into the relationship. The second is established through specific social and linguistic training.

FOCAL/TACIT AWARENESS. Summarizing Polanyi, Maben Poirer tells us: “. . . Polanyi claimed that the knowing process in man is necessarily constituted of two different and very distinct, yet interdependent and mutually supportive, types of awareness or knowledge, namely tacit awareness and focal awareness. Focal awareness . . . is that quality or type of awareness that all of us have when we focus our attention directly on some concept or thing, and this concept or thing is experientially present to us as . . . an otherness existing apart from us, and experienced by us as located in the forefront of our mind. . . . By contrast, tacit awareness is that quality or type of awareness which constitutes our background knowledge, so to speak—that is, background to what we experience focally. While in no sense is it the focus of our attention, it sustains our ability to have a focal awareness. . . . It is the product of all the explicit (focal) knowledge that we have accumulated throughout our life to date, and that we have managed to appropriate to ourself (that is, convert to tacit knowledge), and thus made part of what we call ‘our experience,’ as well as of all those other experiences and things that we have been aware of
in a less than explicit way, but which nonetheless have contributed to our formation and judgment” (1988, p.314-15).

FULLNESS OF LIFE. The relational product (multiple) of both the conceptual-linguistic development and the degree of experience that characterizes our relations. A quality of reciprocity measured by its capacity for greater differentiation and subsequent greater integration within perichoretic relations, i.e. the extent an interdependently mutual context is created in which separate identities are able to interpenetrate in greater differentiation and reintegration while preserving each persons distinctiveness—the greatest perichoretic relations.

GESTALT. “A German term for an automatically perceived pattern or configuration whose component parts are spontaneously organised into a coherent whole, e.g. in hearing a tune or recognising a face. In its origin gestalt is a psychological precept, that which appears to the perceiver rather than something having independent reality in itself. Polanyi takes his cue from Gestalt psychology in developing his concept of comprehension of a coherent entity in which we are subsidiarily aware of particulars within our focal awareness of the entity as a whole. He differs from Gestalt psychology in that it fails to reckon with the intentional effort in perceiving, which is open to training (e.g., with respect to appraisal and judgment), and fails to reckon with the external manifestation of gestalt which has an ‘ontological’ structure which can be ‘logically’ analysed and tested. Thus Polanyi rejects the phenomenalist assumptions behind the psychological analysis. His own concern with the ontological structure of perception is its affinity with the structure of scientific discovery, for which he offers neither a logical nor a psychological but an epistemic account. Discovery is a highly skilled activity dependent on personal powers of thought, both in the scientist’s intuitive apprehension of a coherent outline or pattern in nature, and in his use of it as a clue in subsequent inquiry into the hitherto unknown reality which has given him that anticipatory intimation of its presence. Scientific knowledge advances through the discerning and exploring of gestalten that are aspects of reality” (T. F. Torrance 1980, pp.137-8). Perichoretically, gestalt is the personal constituting focal conceptualization that results from and is tacitly supported by analo gia spiritus, our whole developed background of tacit inferences and interrelations in analogical relation to that supporting and correlative dynamic of God’s Spirit.

HOLISM. The idea that the wholes, or some wholes, are more than the sum of their constituent parts. In one respect, holism contends that nothing is what it is outside of its relationship to the whole. “I”. This is the aspect of personhood that represents the ‘transcendence’ of the person as one ‘outside’ the system of language and thought, the “Christ in us” that facilitates our being able to reflect wholly back upon our self—a relation unto itself. Perichoretically, this is the self as spirit, which is made possible by the immanent and preeminent constituting action of the Spirit and Christ, which creates and sustains human persons as individuals and community.

INTIMACY. The creation of a private exclusively focused relational ‘world’ with another person or thing. The Degree to which we wholly relate, and the extent to which each party has both expressed and experience the fullness of the other and themselves within the relationship. In perichoretic fashion, this signifies both the highest organization and consciousness (quality) of the person as well as the diversity of attributes of which we are composed (quantity), and most significantly, the dynamic interrelation of them all.

MEANING. All meaning results from the relations and dynamic by which they are constituted. Meaning is the shape of interrelation each thing and action has to each other. To the degree relations are perichoretic they are meaningful. In this respect, meaning is the shape of perichoretic relations. Therefore, the most meaningful and fundamental constitutive aspect of human persons is the dynamic of perichoretic relationality, which arises from God’s preeminent relation to humanity.

moment, METABOLE. The dynamic moment of transition from prereflexive awareness to conceptual gestalt or cognition, in which the individual is genuinely transformed in relation to the Other from within the third term of the relationship. For Kierkegaard this was a Pneumatological/Christological action through which the Eternal entered time and the person “escapes from the flight of the arrow of time” (Loder 1992, p.185) to fully participate in God’s creation of all things at once within the fullness of time (the Eternal). This is the dynamic in which Christ (‘He in whom all things are created and held-together’ Col 1:16) perichoretically and preeminently constitutes the individual within the unique relational occurrence. T. F. Torrance tells us, “the primary theological point to get clear, however, is the ontologically and temporally indivisible nature of the one epiphany or advent of the Incarnate Son of God in whom
all men and all ages are held together, without any detraction from real differences between different experiences or times” (1984, p.343). This, however, is not to be thought of as creating a universal frame of reference in which all things as similar can be mutually related (analogia entis), but rather a universal dynamic of relationality through which all things different can mutually and meaningfully relate (analogia spiritus within perichoretic relations).

Metabole. “Greek word for “A sudden blow,” implying an unexpected and irreversible change or division in life experience (Gadamer)” (Loder 1992, p.312).

NUMINAL. The dictionary defines numina as, “a presiding or indwelling divine spirit”; numinous, “filling one with a sensation of the divine presence.” Webster’s Dictionary (1990). This is similar to the use of Rudolf Otto (1923), in which encounter with God results in the human response which is, in itself, beyond description yet finds its best descriptive approximation in such terms as “holy,” “awfulness,” “overpoweringness,” “energy,” “wholly other,” etc. My use of the term, however, is not meant to contain such descriptions, rather it pertains to a prereflexive process of experience which, when in relation to God, Otto describes as “perfectly sui generis and irreducible to any other, and therefore, like every absolutely primary and elementary datum, while it admits of being discussed, it cannot be strictly defined” (p.7).

Where Otto is adjusted for this study is in his description of the experience of the numinal as a “mental state.” The numinal aspect of human experience in my use of the term will mean that process which is prereflexive of and yet constitutive of a ‘mental state’. Most Continental languages are not helpful at this point; Otto working within the elision of Geist (interpreted either ‘soul’ or ‘spirit’ in English) made it difficult to understand or express the numinal as anything other than as mental states. Here, the categories are too limited. For this study the numinal represents the activity of human spirit in the holistic process of constituting self in analogical relation to God’s Spirit. It must always be remembered that this term represents the aspect of human experience en totum, and in analogia spiritus, which is a prereflexive process within or leading to transition of self and reflexive response within relation. In the early pre-linguistic state of openness the person experiences no conscious predicative or differentiated elements or distinctions, rather it is the human (and divine respectively) configurative process by which all that constitutes self (which is always too complex to consciously articulate) is opened, collated, and ‘focally’ reconstituted again. This can be thought of as an infinitely rapid feedback loop in which the individual’s process of coming to gestalt takes place in correlation to God’s Eternal coming into Gestalt. The experiencing of the numinal is the degree the human prereflexive process transpires in active relation to God’s similar process from out of the Eternal. Nevertheless, as Otto asserts, it is experiential and within this thesis classifies as a tacit aspect of one’s immediate cognition and knowledge.

OVERDETERMINATION. “The coercive and complete determination of an interaction, a person, or a state of affairs which affords no room for independent, responsible existence and which therefore squashes autonomy and subjectivity” (McFadyen 1990, p.316).

PERICHORESIS, PERICHORETIC RELATIONS. The irreducible relational dynamic which maintains the integrity of the polarities of a relationship while allowing them each to be constituted from within the forming mutuality of the relational unity itself. For Kierkegaard, says Loder, “mutuality becomes a positive third term, not obliterating but intensifying the polarities,” and furthermore, “the reality of mutuality becomes self-conscious, or aware of itself as such.” This suggests an irreducible tripartite-aspect structure to all relationality in which a mediating dynamic of the relationship is created between its constituent parts constituting them in authentic relations respectively. This dynamic is perfectly experienced within the sociology of the Trinity and as such is principal to its growing emergence within the world and specifically in humanity as co-creator. Within the moment of transition it might be thought of as the Spirit in analogia spiritus drawing and enabling human entrance into an interpenetrating and interanimating relationship with the Other. Christ enables the individual to be constituted accordingly as person-in-relation.

For Moltmann this is a participatory relational dynamic “which is aligned towards, and dependent on, ever-richer and more diverse communication between the different open part-systems, whether their levels of organization are the same of different. Out of the accumulation of quantitative variety on the same levels emerge the possibilities of leaps into the new quality of higher levels of organization. It would seem that the universe contains within itself the trend towards the universal symbiosis of all systems of life and matter, by virtue of ‘the sympathy of all things’ for one another” (1985, p.205).
In developmental theory perichoresis is present in Robert Kegan’s dominate theme of *reciprocity*: “Reciprocity now becomes a matter of at once mutually preserving the other’s distinctiveness while interdependently fashioning a bigger context in which these separate identities interpenetrate, by which the separate identities are co-regulated and to which persons invest in affection supervening their separate identities” (1982), pp.253-4. Perichoretic relationality and the evolutionary development of relational intimacy is also well reflected in Kegan: “The popular psychological notions of greater differentiation and greater integration as goals are here given a substantive and justifiable meaning. Each new evolutionary truce further differentiates the self from its embeddedness in the world, guaranteeing, in a qualitatively new way, the world’s distinct integrity, and thereby creating a more integrated relationship to the world. Each new truce accomplishes this by the evolution of a reduced subject and a greater object for the subject to take, an evolution of lesser subjectivity and greater objectivity, an evolution that is more ‘truthful’” (p.294).

**PREREFLEXIVE, REFLEXIVE.** Prerelation is the precognitive dialogical modality of awareness that comprises the activity of configuring one’s relational ‘world’. This is person as spirit in which they interpenetrate the emerging world of the relationship. Reflexion is the corresponding action of being constituted socially person-in-relation. The person is transformed accordingly within the relationship, between the transition from prerelation to reflexion.

**RELATIONSHIP, RELATIONALITY.** Within the perichoretic theory of relationship, is the emergent third term that is created when two or more persons or things come within response awareness. From within this dynamic comes the possibility of emergent properties and qualities not before existent in the sum of the constituent parts of the relationship. This is a dynamic activity of the Spirit and Christ, in whom all things are created and held-together (Col 1:16-17).

Gunton distinguishes between two senses of ‘relational’. The first idealizing sense has to do with things being “known only in terms of their relation to us, or rather as they appear to us; the second, realist, sense, is that according to which things have their (objective) being in relation.” The first leads to relativism, the latter, and focus of this thesis, leads to relativity, and thus the possibility of authentic difference in unity—differentiated unity (1993, p.194, n.18). Cf. also **PERICHORETIC RELATIONS.**

**SEDIMENT/SEDIMENTATION.** McFadyen use it as: “the personal identity which has ‘settled’, ‘been deposited’ or ‘laid down’ through a history of significant relations. It is temporary and dynamic because it may be transformed through subsequent interaction, the effects of which may ‘fall out’ and accumulate around the personal centre already deposited” (1990, p.318). Within this thesis it will be used more broadly to include not only personal identity but the acquisition and development of various relational styles and ways of intending others.

**SELF.** “Such a derived, constituted, relation is the human self, a relation which relates itself to its own self, and in relating itself to its own self relates itself to another” (SUD 146) “If on the contrary the relation relates itself to its own self, the relation is then the positive third term, and this is the self. Such a relation ... must either have constituted itself or have been constituted by another. ... But this relation (the third term) is in turn a relation relating itself to that which constituted the whole relation” (ibid.). Within the perichoretic dynamic of relationship, we can understand this as the relation between the ‘self’ and the ‘I’ of the person. The person is here understood as inherently relational (social). In this respect we can associate the prereflexive presence and awareness of the individual interpenetrating the relationship, with the ‘I’. The corresponding conceptual constituting of the individual as differentiated person-in-relation (from out of the relation), we can consider as the ‘self’. McFadyen presents us with a description of this socialized constitution of self:

“A particular theory concerning the nature and structure of the inner personal core around which a personal identity is structured; a belief that one has a certain identity-giving internal complex. It is through the deployment of such a theory that one is able to centre one’s experience, consciousness and communication (and to do so in a socially appropriate and meaningful way), and so organise one’s life as a subject of communication able to interact with some degree of control and autonomy. ‘Self’ should therefore be understood as a means of organising oneself through a belief about oneself; as an organisational process rather than a substance or entity. The ‘self’ one takes oneself to be is a portable means of organising oneself in diverse times and contexts as a unified and continuous subject of communication—the same person” (1990, p.318).
SIMULTANEITY. “One of the surprising consequences of Einstein's special theory of relativity is that if two physical events separated in space are observed to occur at the same instant of time by an observer (i.e. they are simultaneous events timewise), the same two events will not be observed as simultaneous by a second observer in relative motion with respect to the first observer. Thus the notion of an absolute signification with respect to the concept of simultaneity must be replaced by a relative understanding of simultaneity” (Loder 1992, p.314), or, I might add, simultaneity becomes the sole property of the specific relationship.

SPIRIT. Loder tells us, “spirit refers to a quality of relationality, and it is a way to conceptualize the dynamic interactive unity by which two disparate things are held together without loss of their diversity” (1992, p.10). Human spirit is: “the basic polarization of cognitive modes represented by the bicameral brain; the self-transcendence or agency of initiative by which the ‘world’ is chosen, composed, and believed in; and the transformational dynamics by which that agency works toward the creation and composition of the ‘world’ in which the individual lives” (ibid., p.292). Finally, for Loder “the self is spirit when the pattern governing it is perichoretic” (ibid.). Similarly, for McFadyen spirit is, “the interactional dynamism of a person which occurs with the operation of the ‘self’ or soul which gives a specific form of identity in relationships by organising communication” (1990, p.319).

Therefore, spirit, whether divine or human, is the dynamic totality of self in relation, and the relationship itself must in some manner be considered spirit. Spirit likewise refers to that center of a person or consciousness which opens and organizes the constituting process of the whole of the psychic and bodily life in relation to the respective particularity (complexity) of the world. It comprises the dynamical process of awareness and holistic presence of the person through which either God is wholly constituted within His Trinitarian relations, and therefore to Creation. Similarly, human spirit entails the process of awareness and holistic presence through which human beings become constituted as a relation unto itself, and person-in-relation to the Other.

SUPERVENIENCE. Based on the belief that “that whole systems and their parts mutually condition one another” (Murphy 1996, p.144), supervenience is the relation between various and disparate levels of systems and logics. Higher level systems and systems of logic are supervenient over lower level systems. Only the logic within the higher level(s) can fully explain the lower level logic of an activity (e.g., the mind in relation to the body). This means that there is a “surplus of meaning in the higher-level terms, relating to context, to larger causal systems, that cannot be captured by means of the lower-level language” (ibid.). Anthony Flew tells us supervenient characteristics are “properties or qualities that depend on some other property or quality” (1984, p.345).

TACIT DIMENSION. “The unaccountable, inarticulate component in perception and knowledge, a basic unreflecting awareness of things in quite different from the clear-cut awareness we have when focussing [sic.] our attention directly on them. We always know more than we can tell.” (T. F. Torrance, 1980, p.145.) Cf. also FOCAL/TACIT AWARENESS.

TRANSFORMATION. “This key term does not merely refer to change in a positive direction. Rather, transformation occurs whenever, within a given frame of reference or experience, hidden orders of coherence and meaning emerge to replace or alter the axioms of the given frame and reorder its elements accordingly” (Loder 1992, p.316).

TRANSTEMPORAL RELATIONS. The dynamic relatedness of things and actions that transcend time, relatedness within the Eternal singularity of interrelations.

TRUTH. Truth is the degree a relationship is constituted in full perichoresis, which is to say, truth is a quality of felicitous relationship. Furthermore, truth is not the quality of a conceptual claim or action in relation to a universal criterion of being. Rather it is a universal quality of a conceptual claim or action within the specific relationship itself, i.e. the degree to which the claim or action is fully, appropriately or mutually understood and experienced within the relevant elements and contingencies of the relationship. Truth conduciveness is simply the willingness to be appropriately transform from out of genuine or genuine aspects of relations.

UNDISTORTED RELATIONS. Relations which recognize and intend both oneself and others as autonomous subjects of the relationship whose realities are to some degree independent of one another and which can only be known through their independent self-communication: the relationship is therefore engaged in recognition of the other’s independence and mystery and providing space in the relation for the other’s free communication (adapted from McFadyen 1992, p.319).
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