

THE USE OF RATIONALITY IN RELIGIOUS
AND METAPHYSICAL ARGUMENT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE USE OF RATIONALITY IN RELIGIOUS AND

METAPHYSICAL ARGUMENT

Abstract of Thesis.....p.p. I-II

Chapter One - Introduction

1. Foreword.....p.p. 1-5

2. Outline of Argument.....p.p. 6-17

Chapter Two - Bartley on Rationality

Section 1. - Bartley's View of Rationalityp.p. 18-22

1. The Problem of Rationality.....p.p. 23-26

2. Bartley's Approach to Rationality.....p.p. 27-30

3. An Alternative Theory of Rationality.....p.p. 31-33

4. The Value of the Alternative Theory.....p.p. 34-35

Section 2. - Critique of Bartley on Rationality ..p.p. 36-38

1. The Problem of Rationality.....p.p. 39-66

2. Bartley's Approach to Rationality.....p.p. 67-75

3. An Alternative Theory of Rationality.....p.p. 76-101

4. Recent Discussion of Bartley.....p.p. 102-109

5. The Value of the Theory.....p.p. 110-118

Chapter Three - Torrance on Rationality

1. Introduction.....p.p. 119-125

2. Torrance's "Theological Rationality".....p.p. 126-139

3. Torrance on Rationality.....p.p. 140-172

4. Critique of Torrance's Account of Rationality.p.p. 173-258

5. The Value of the Approach.....p.p. 259-261

Chapter Four - The Use of Rationality in Religious
and Metaphysical Argument

Section/

Section 1. - The Senses of Rationality

1. Two Senses of "Rationality".....p.p.	262-282
2. Two Senses of "Irrationality".....p.p.	283-308
3. Persons, Beliefs, and Theories.....p.p.	309-332
4. "Reason" and "Reasons".....p.p.	333-344
5. Senses of "Rationality" and Intelligibility"....p.p.	345-353

Section 2. - The Limits of Rationalityp.p. 354-357

1. The Natural Limits.....p.p.	358-384
2. The Situational Limits.....p.p.	385-407
3. The Social Limits.....p.p.	408-416
4. The Psychological Limits.....p.p.	417-423

Section 3. - Conclusionp.p. 424-426

<u>Bibliography</u>p.p.	i - xiv
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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

The problem which is concentrated upon is the breakdown of argument in religious and metaphysical contexts where the extent of disagreement appears so great that the possibility of change of opinion seems ruled out. Nevertheless, people do change their minds and views on what is claimed to be a rational basis. What is the use of rationality in religious, moral, and metaphysical argument?

This question is answered by examination of two accounts of the nature of rationality and the propounding of an alternative approach to the use of rationality in argument. W. Bartley III is a recent writer on the subject of rationality in the field of morals and metaphysics, who belongs to a notable school of philosophy. T.F. Torrance is a parallel theological writer, concerned with rationality in theology in relation to modern scientific theory. The views of rationality of both men are presented within the context of their whole position and emphasis. A criticism is presented which rests on three grounds. Firstly, that both fail to take sufficient account of the limits of rationality and some central concepts integral to rational argument. Secondly, that their own views are faulty because of internal difficulties and are inadequate to the complexity of the subject of rationality. Finally, that one unfortunate consequence of both positions is the impossibility of criticism by the removal of ground for the critic to stand on. These writers instruct both positively and negatively in terms of the concepts and emphases raised in relation to rationality and what is omitted, how and why they err, and the unacceptable result.

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The alternative suggested has two parts. A basic distinction between two senses of "rationality" is made, argued for, and related to synonyms and antonyms of "rationality". This distinction is then related to the various limitations which are necessary for appreciation of the nature of rationality in the actual practice of argument. These limits are the natural, situational, social, and psychological. Together the distinction and its relation to the limits of rationality form an account of the use of rationality in argument which deals with the limits of rationality and clarifies related central concepts, is internally valid and adequate to the complexity of rationality in actual argument situations, as well as showing not only that criticism is possible but also what the form of such criticism ought to be.

The thesis, therefore, seeks to present a method of approach in religious and metaphysical dispute, as well as in all argument, based on the role that rationality has in such disputes. Both what that role is and its practical outworking in the actual situation of disagreement are shown.

CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

1. Foreword

The introduction to the thesis consists of two parts. The first will be a description of the actual genesis and development of the ideas and arguments contained in the thesis. The second will be a summary of the thesis and the argument of the thesis describing the problem of rationality in relation to religious and metaphysical argument and the contribution to the concept of rationality of W. Bartley III and T.F. Torrance, offering a criticism of their work, and then seeking to offer a solution to the particular problem raised by their accounts. This will be presented in the context of an examination of the limits of rationality.

The idea for the thesis began with an interest in the nature of presuppositions. In philosophy of religion and morals and metaphysics it was very evident that there was great disagreement as to theories, facts and methodologies. The extent of the disagreement seemed so great as to allow no successful communication of one viewpoint to another and extreme difficulty as far as change of views was concerned. Yet it remained true that there were such changes from belief to unbelief and vice versa, from agnosticism to Christianity, from socialism to conservatism, from moral anarchy to fascism. How was this possible? It seemed first necessary to examine what was entailed in having a view, in holding a particular viewpoint. Thus attention was focused on Collingwood and Hare and the literature around these men and their views. We looked at presupposition and presuppositions with view/

2

view to clarifying what was necessary for a person to come to change his mind or views. It soon became evident that this field was too general and diverse, and in seeking to narrow its scope it became clear that certain presuppositions were more important than others. Those of ontology and rationality were the most obvious. The latter was the choice for concentration. It was so for without a clear idea of what the nature of the man who holds a particular ontology is, that same ontology falls by the wayside. Our attention therefore centred on what rationality was. This meant isolating particular views of rationality especially with reference to the history of rationalism as a philosophical doctrine. There was at the same time a desire to relate this in some practical way to the philosophy of religion and in particular to the area of apologetics. Given that rationality was of a particular nature could a case be made to show that religion was on exactly the same footing in fundamentals as morals and metaphysics? If so this would mean that religion could not be dismissed ab initio as meaningless nonsense but rather be subject to the same care and detailed examination as is afforded to moral theories and metaphysical views.

The search then began for material on the nature of rationality which was closely related to particular moral, metaphysical and/or religious views. W. Bartley III was an example of a recent writer in the area of morals and metaphysics who propounded a detailed view of rationality which is a somewhat rare phenomenon. He also is readily identifiable with a mainstream line of philosophical thinking based on the work and influence of Karl Popper. He therefore became the first subject of analysis. In light of his work and some of the emphasis on criticism he makes, Bartley's position was a useful foil to that of T.F. Torrance./

3

Torrance. Torrance affords an example of a recent theologian who puts this concern in a way that claims a close relation to modern scientific thought and research. Torrance offered an alternative view to Bartley yet dealt with many of the same sorts of topics as Bartley giving unity to any critique of both men presented in one work. Having therefore decided on the particular choice of material for criticism, I concentrated on what these men had to say on the nature of rationality and presented my critique in the following way. First of all, each man's view was outlined by quotation and reference to that person's own work and emphasis. I then sought to offer a critical analysis of their views with particular reference to rationality and the themes which they had stressed as important or which their accounts had dismissed too lightly.¹ Then some of these criticisms were looked at in relation to modern writers and their criticisms. Then I offered some areas of concern which were important to tie together in any account of the nature and scope of rationality.

Having criticised two authors and become familiar with the modern state of the debate vis a vis rationality it behoved me to offer some account of my own based both on the work of the chosen authors and in light of the criticism made.² For this purpose I therefore outlined a basic distinction which was essential for any account of rationality and for any argument, discussion, or communication. First of all argument for the basic distinction was presented and then it was shown that/

1. Chapters Two and Three.

2. Chapter Four.

4

that this distinction dealt with the many different levels and terms which are closely related to rationality in modern thought and discussion.³ This was the central novelty of the thesis the presentation of a detailed analysis of a basic distinction in the nature of rationality which is a sine qua non of any discussion or criticism of any view. Having argued for the distinction it was then related to certain limitations which are necessary for a clearer understanding of the nature of rationality.⁴

What is not attempted is the application of this distinction to one particular area of religion or morals or metaphysics. This is not because this is not the ultimate intention, but rather that it was more important to show the need for the distinction, to argue for the distinction, and to show how it related to what others have said in expressing the limits of rationality in practice. It is the eventual hope to go on to the next step and show how when this distinction is applied and the point it makes in relation to the limits of rationality to a particular problem in religion, morals and metaphysics, that discussion becomes clearer and we are not left with the feeling of aporia which characterises so much of modern philosophical and religious controversy. Until such time the distinction must stand on its own merits as necessary and important in relation to the writing on limitations in connection with rationality.

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3. Chapter Four, Section One.

4. Chapter Four, Section Two.

It is my contention that what this distinction in effect shows is that when we are confronted with a problem in morals and metaphysics this is in essence no different to any problem in religion and the same method of approach for clarification, criticism, and justification with a view to proof or disproof is used. Religion is thus no better or worse in intellectual status than morals or metaphysics.

My thanks are due to Professor Hepburn, Principal McIntyre and Professor Torrance. To Professor Hepburn for supervision and instruction in philosophical technique and approach. To Principal McIntyre for supervision and instruction in religious techniques and emphases, and to Professor Torrance who gave access to a great deal of material and spent a great deal of time in discussion and argument in an attempt to clarify his view. While it is true that without such supervision and help the thesis would neither be a thesis nor a piece of fairly sustained thought and argument, it must be acknowledged that the weaknesses and faults result from personal oversight or an unwillingness to be corrected believing that the point was important and had some sort of merit.

2. Outline of Argument

I have outlined the actual genesis and development of the thesis in general terms, but now turn to a description of the actual thesis in summary form, giving more details of how I set about thinking through the material from the choice of authors and the critique of this, and then the presentation of the development of my own view.

The starting point is the breakdown of argument and discussion between two people or views which are held in complete opposition to each other. It is evident that people do have different views about all or many of the issues which are accounted important in life - politics, religion, morality. Unfortunately the degree and scope of disagreement seems in practice to lead to the situation where argument is either beating one's head against an apparent brick wall of ignorance or unwillingness to see sense or the battering over the head of an unwilling and insensible protagonist with what one considers an impressive array of arguments and proofs. One tends rather to lose both the argument and the person in such argument, yet it remains true that people do change their minds, opinions and beliefs, though this does not prima facie result from argument, discussion, or criticism. It is my *suggestion* that this breakdown may in part at least result from a faulty analysis of the concept of rationality as it relates to a capacity which human beings have which separates them from the apes or the amoeba, and I shall attempt to show examples of this faulty analysis as it is found in the works of two authors in relation to rationality, and then seek to rectify this fault by offering an alternative way of approaching the concept of rationality and clarifying its content by looking at some of the limitations which are part and parcel of its nature.

Initially/

Initially two examples of the sort of disagreement in mind will be offered. Much of modern philosophy both in ethics and philosophy of religion leaves the reader with the distinct impression that the writers are at cross purposes with each other.⁵ Both sides accuse the other of failing to grasp what is essential, important, and relevant, and of applying false categories or of overlooking obvious facts which cast new and illuminating understanding on the issue at hand.

The first example is from modern ethics and in particular the debate between what may be called the Foot-Anscombe school and the Hare-Phillips view.⁶ Foot writing of Hare's "Language of Morals" says that, "A man is described as having imported a cactus, the first cactus, into his own country, and it is implied that he can decide which of the plants he shall count as good cacti, laying down criteria in respect of such things as size and shape. There is no suggestion of any limits to the criteria which can be the criteria of goodness in cacti, and Hare obviously thinks that this is quite an ordinary case of the use of the word 'good'. I shall argue that on the contrary, it is hard to find any genuine example of this kind, so that if Hare's account of the 'good' in 'good man' were correct then this use of the word would seem to be different from all other cases in which we speak of a good such and such. My thesis is not, of course, that criteria for the goodness/

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- 5. G. Warnock, The Object of Morality p.viii. Beardsmore, Moral Reasoning especially the chapter, "Common Assumptions".
 - 6. W. Hudson (ed.), Is and Ought, especially the following articles:- P. Foot's "Moral Beliefs", "Goodness and Choice", Anscombe's "Modern Moral Philosophy", R. Hare's "Universalizability", D. Phillips and H. Mounce's "On Morality's Having a Point". Also R. Hare, Language of Morals, and Freedom and Reason

goodness of each and every kind of thing are determined in the same way as they are determined for such things as knives, but rather that they are always determined, and not a matter for decision".⁷ Here Foot expresses the measure of disagreement and almost disbelief that any thinking person could offer such an irrelevant and simplistic account of the nature of moral judgement, but the other side feels equally strongly. Phillips in conjunction with Mounce when discussing Foot's type of view states, "For them, moral views are founded on facts, the facts concerning human good and harm. We shall argue, on the other hand, that moral viewpoints determine what is and what is not to count as a relevant fact in reaching a moral decision. This philosophical disagreement has important consequences, for if we believe that moral values can be justified by appeal to the facts, it is hard to see how one man can reject another man's reasons for his moral beliefs, since these reasons too, presumably, refer to the facts. If, on the other hand, we hold that the notion of factual relevance is parasitic on moral beliefs, it is clear that deadlock in ethics will be a common occurrence, simply because of what some philosophers have unwisely regarded as contingent reasons, namely, the different moral views people hold".⁸

The second example of this basic disagreement which denies that the opponent has either understood the problem or has any hope of solving the real difficulty on their own account - in other words which denies that/

7. P. Foot, "Goodness and Choice" p.p.215-6, W. Hudson (ed.), Is and Ought. R. Hare, Language of Morals, p.p.96-7.

8. Phillips and Mounce, "On Morality's Having a Point", p.235, W. Hudson (ed.) Is and Ought.

that the opponent has any genuine ground to stand on or evidence to bolster his view - comes from a recent work of Iris Murdoch.⁹ In "The Sovereignty of Good" she attempts to retrace moral philosophy on the grounds that there is something very seriously wrong with modern moral philosophy. "Her complaint is twofold. We have overlooked certain moral facts, i.e. 'that an unexamined life can be virtuous and the fact that love is a central concept in morals' (p.p.1-2), and we have allowed a particular philosophy of mind, typified by Stuart Hampshire,¹⁰ to condition our moral philosophy. Murdoch's task is to allow room for love and the virtuous peasant by casting doubt on the modern image of the moral man as a 'behaviourist, existentialist, and utilitarian' (p8)."¹¹ Here again we have the extreme degree of difference as to what constitutes the facts of the situation and with this the accusation that the other has overlooked what is essential for describing the true situation. When people disagree over the nature of the problem, the facts involved, the way to solve it, and the sort of solution which is desirable, their discussion is really a lack of discussion and genuine communication and there is and can be no hope of changing the other person's mind until and unless he adopts the different presuppositions which will enable him to see the problem as the other sees it, to appreciate the point and nature of the solution offered and thus to associate himself in assisting this to come about. Yet can this change come through argument and discussion alone? It is my contention that the problem in this sort of situation of disagreement is exacerbated by

9. I. Murdoch, The Sovereignty of Good.

10. S. Hampshire, Thought and Action, especially Chapter Two and his Ernest Jones Lecture, "Disposition and Memory"

11. Review of I. Murdoch, The Sovereignty of Good, Scottish Journal of Theology Vol. 25 No.1 1972.

by a faulty account of the nature of rationality and if the nature of rationality in relation to argument, discussion and criticism can be clarified, the ground will be clearer for real argument and discussion to take place in which there is both genuine communication and hope of persuading the other person to change his view and to accept what before he did not.

This is an attempt to understand rationality as it relates to argument between differing viewpoints and presuppositions. There seems to be little forceful or successful argument in morals, metaphysics, and religion, because each accuses the other of a kind of irrationalism, which fails to see what is crucial and stresses what is irrelevant or even nonsensical. This leaves the critic no ground to stand on, no basis for argument, and with the situation where he can say nothing because according to his opponent he does not appreciate the first or the last thing about his view of what the situation really is. The need then is for two things. Firstly an account of rationality which allows the critic some hope of being able to offer criticism and some room to hold a different and opposing view with integrity and the possibility of presenting his case in such a way not only that he is listened to but that he may persuade the other to change his mind and adopt a different view. The second need is for an account of rationality which is in itself adequate to the complexity of actual argument and discussion. A fuller account of rationality is sought not only as a means to assisting criticism and discussion, but also for itself, so that we may better understand what we mean when we use words such as "rational", "irrational", "reasons", and "reasonable".

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The complaint against W. Bartley III is twofold. It is that his account of rationality is in itself faulty and fails to do justice to important features of the nature of rationality, and that he leaves no room for the critic to oppose his view with any hope of success. There is a great deal wrong with Bartley's own view of rationality and it leads to an unacceptable conclusion in which the critic has no means of offering an alternative to Bartley's ideas. Bartley begins his thesis from the problem of the impossibility of rationality because it is limited by the choosing of ultimate views. This choice it is argued by others is an arbitrary one and Bartley sets out to show how the falsity of this account has arisen by an historical analysis of the main views of rationality and in particular the "tu quoque" argument which, he claims, leads to ultimate relativism. Bartley asks two questions. What are the limits of rationality in the choice of the rationalist way of life over and against all others? How is it possible to be a consistent liberal rationalist? He analyses Comprehensive and Critical Rationalism and claims to discover a "common structure to failure" which links justification and criticism. His solution is Comprehensively Critical Rationalism which eliminates justification and replaces it by criticism. The value of the approach as he sees it is that it removes the threat to rationalism by allowing the rationalist to be rational about his rationalism and removing from the irrationalist the rational excuse for his irrationalism. It also offers new opportunities for understanding by enabling the posing of more intelligent questions in a new spirit of tolerance which arises from understanding the nature of criticism. The main problems which become/

become evident in Bartley's account are that he omits certain crucial limits in his account, that his own account is inadequate and faulty as it stands, and that he leaves the critic no ground to stand on for criticism. His view leads to the situation where everything counts for it and nothing against it, and the danger with such open-mindedness is that it is really empty-mindedness.

T.F. Torrance offers an account of rationality but would strenuously deny that his theology depends on this view. Nevertheless his presentation seems to suggest just that situation. At the very least thought it will be admitted that he presents a view of rationality which is a departure from the main-stream of thought and writing on the subject today, though Torrance would argue that its roots lie firmly in past philosophical views as well as in modern scientific theory and practice. It is not my brief to argue these points but rather to examine his view of rationality as it is presented and to test its adequacy. The complaint against Torrance is exactly the same as that against Bartley. His own account is faulty in two ways. He omits many things which are crucial for an adequate account of rationality, and his own account is not internally valid. He does not make out his own case. But there is the corollary to this that his view leads to an unacceptable conclusion that the critic has no ground to stand on. A beginning is made by examining Torrance's stress on the necessity to distinguish clearly between the objective and the subjective. Torrance suggests that there has arisen a cleavage between theology and experience and the only cure for this is for theology to develop its own meta-science to express faith in today's terms. This entails a more adequate/

adequate conception of science, allowing theology to have its proper place as a science with its own distinctive subject-matter, a more adequate sense of connection which is sufficient to the richness and variety of reality, and finally a more adequate understanding of conceptuality which concentrates on the changing, developing, and stretching of language in the creation of new forms of expression adequate to the subject-matter of theology. For Torrance rationality is the core of objectivity in the sense that it is the capacity to be true to the nature of the object. We are rational then when we behave in a manner which is appropriate to what is not us, thus referring properly to reality. "What we know is to prescribe for us the mode of rationality we are to adopt towards it."

The criticism of Torrance rests on his failure to include crucially relevant features of rationality particularly related to the limits of rationality. It is suggested that his own account is faulty and specific details of the nature and extent of this faultiness are included in the text, and finally it is argued that he leaves the critic no ground to stand on. If you attempt to criticise Torrance's view you are guilty of failing to appreciate the true nature of the Object with which he is dealing, and in the place of that, you are guilty of subjectivism. The position of disagreement reduces to this:- instead of suggesting that religion is placed at a disadvantage because of the failure to develop new methods appropriate to the uniqueness of theology, it is suggested that what is required is not a different method, but the same one used with the same care and rigour which is applied when it is used towards other fields and areas.

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In other words, on my account, religion is no better and no worse than morals and metaphysics, whereas Torrance seems to be suggesting not only that theology is different but that it is in some way better because its subject-matter allows of no error if approached correctly.

It would be churlish and untrue to suggest that both writers are totally wrong-headed and have nothing worthwhile to say. The reason for the choice of these men is just that they do have a great deal to say and a good deal of truth in their accounts. They raise central issues and while I cannot always agree with their analysis, it is to their credit that they draw attention to much that is important and central in the understanding of rationality. The areas of agreement with their work will be evident when I present my own account.

To deal with the undesirable result of Bartley and Torrance's theories, that of leaving no room for the critic, it is necessary to examine the whole view of the writer as regards rationality to see why there was no scope left for the critic to attack their views with any hope of success. Therefore, the writer's material is presented as he expresses it with his emphases rather than my own. It is never the writer's apparent intention to leave no room for the critic, so it would be unfair to criticise solely on that basis, therefore to deal adequately with the views a more basic critique is offered to show the weakness of the views as a whole in relation to rationality. This means that fault is found with both the systematic view which does not leave scope for genuine criticism and with the detail of the view which leads to such unacceptable conclusions. Yet it is still true that I am able to draw from their accounts certain important features of rationality which are essential for genuine argument and discussion.

Having/

Having criticised others both in their account of rationality and in the result of obviating criticism, an approach to rationality which is in itself more adequate and also leaves room for criticism needs to be delineated. An account of rationality is needed which makes argument possible and potentially successful. To do this I first of all argue for a basic distinction of two senses of rationality. The claim is that this distinction is necessary for discussion to be able to be conducted and that it removes the difficulties of Bartley and Torrance's account. This distinction is made and argued for, then, it is seen how it also applies to irrationality. The distinction is then related to other notions which are part and parcel of rationality and in particular to persons and beliefs and opinions, then to reason and reasons, dealing with explanation and action in terms of willing, and finally intelligibility. It is shown that the basic distinction applies and is relevant in each of these areas. It is then shown how this distinction opens the way to argument and discussion when it is linked with the description of certain limits of rationality, the natural, situational, social, and psychological. The basic distinction provides, as it were, the bare bones of the approach to rationality while the examination of the limits gives flesh and blood to the account and to the notion of rationality, by bringing out important features of that concept. I here draw on other writers, but am offering a different sort of approach to rationality by means of examining the division of the general area of limits into four clearly defined areas because this is what is involved in the practice of argument, and these limits are and must be in the context of the two senses of rationality outlined/

outlined and the actual limits in practice. If rationality is seen in terms of the limits in argument and reasoning better appreciation of the nature of rationality will be gained.

In other words, an attempt is made to clear the way for discussion by making this basic distinction and by relating it to certain limits of rationality. The application of this distinction and the description of the limits form the background against which moral, religious, and metaphysical discussion may take place. Two opposing sides need not regard the other as irrelevant and meaningless, thus allowing no room for the critic to offer criticisms and genuine discussion and communication to take place. Rather the two sides may make the basic distinction and apply the different kinds of limits to their own views and that of their opponent thus setting out the areas of agreement and disagreement. This is obviously no easy solution to the rational man and offers no short cut, but rather a long, careful, detailed process, the outline of which is offered. It does mean, however, that in discussion and controversy another person's view will not be dismissed ab initio as meaningless, but rather subjected to careful and detailed examination. One begins with what is to count as rational in this situation by drawing clearly between the two senses the necessary distinctions and then clarifying the limits of rationality as they relate to this particular case. Then one may go on to actual argument and discussion and not vice versa. This entails that there is room for the critic and the opportunity to seek and express areas of definition and limits. It also means that the religious argument is no different from any other argument. Thus the task of apologetics is made easier because the form of the religious argument follows the same line as any other argument with/

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with the making of the basic distinction between the senses of rationality and the outlining of the limits in the particular case. Thus an account of rationality is offered which is true to the complexity of the subject-matter. This account of the basic distinction and the limits not only leaves room for discussion and argument, but actually paves the way for such discussion. It is an attempt to put morals, metaphysics and religion in perspective, in the sense that truth and falsity are not predetermined but rather are open for debate and discussion.

In other words, controversy, discussion and argument are made possible by an account of rationality which, while true to the complexity of the issues involved and refusing to oversimplify, nevertheless concentrates on the actual process of argument and discussion by seeing that the words "rational" and "irrational" cover a distinction which is crucial for discussion. That there are two senses of "rationality" and that these senses can be related to the limits of rationality, which gives content to the concept of rationality. This interrelation clarifies the process of how one goes about arguing and discussing. This is **not to say** that argument and discussion do not take place but that the breakdown of much argument and **the nature** **of successful argument are both as described.** One thus is able to do what Bartley and Torrance are not able to do both because of their theories of rationality and the effect in practice of their theories of closing the door to the critic by leaving him no ground to stand on.

CHAPTER TWO - BARTLEY ON RATIONALITY

Section One - Bartley's View of Rationality

W. Bartley III offers an example of a writer who is deeply concerned with the nature of rationality and the concepts involved in it. He writes in the general field of metaphysics and more recently morals and is well-known as a follower of Sir Karl Popper. He is a useful starting point for an examination of the use of rationality in religious and metaphysical argument because he deals with this very area and also he both raises central questions concerning rationality and stresses important concepts which are part and parcel of an adequate account of rationality such as criticism. The section of the thesis given over to the study of Bartley will take the following form. Bartley will be allowed to speak for himself in the sense that the presentation of his view will be in the form that he himself presents it with the same sort of emphases as he expresses. This will be by quotation and precis of his account. This will be in four sub-sections dealing with the statement of the problem as far as Bartley is concerned, the approach to that problem, his own positive theory of rationality, and, finally the value of the new theory of rationality which Bartley offers. This manner of presentation ensures that the writer in question is not forced into a false mould for the benefit of some ulterior criticism, but rather is fairly permitted to express his own view and emphasis.

In section two, there will be offered a critique of Bartley's view of rationality which will parallel the presentation of his own material./

material. Thus there will be the same sub-sections with the addition of material from recent debate on Bartley in various journals; the difference being that instead of presenting Bartley's views, these sections will deal with the criticism against Bartley. There is, however a general position behind the criticism of Bartley which needs to be stated. The complaint against Bartley and his account of rationality rests on three grounds. The first is that he fails to examine all the limits of rationality and instead concentrates on only one limit, that of logic, to the exclusion of the others. Without a clear picture of the various limits of rationality and the practical effect of these limits it is my contention that no account of rationality is adequate either to the complexity of rationality itself or to the work that rationality is called on to undertake in terms of argument, discussion, and communication.

The second ground of the complaint against Bartley is in terms of his own account. Bartley's own view of rationality, regardless of any discussion or lack of it in relation to limits, is in itself inadequate and faulty. Even if Bartley had dealt with all the limits of rationality and their importance, he would not have given an account of rationality which copes with the complexity of its nature. In Bartley's case this is a four-fold failure. His statement of the problem of rationality on the basis of the sceptical-fideist problem is not adequate to form the basis for a solution to a problem of rationality. But if this failure to make out a case for a problem concerning rationality on the basis of the sceptic and the fideist is set aside and instead Bartley's own presentation of the rationalist/

rationalist dilemma concerning the solution to the problem of rationality scrutinised, then it is clear that this dilemma is not a real one in the way that Bartley suggests it, nor does it require the kind of solution that he offers. Again, if this last criticism is set aside and it is accepted that there is a problem as Bartley presents it and that he shows a genuine dilemma, it will be argued that the solution Bartley offers is not in itself adequate to the problem as stated by Bartley. He does not solve his own problem on his own positive account. Finally under this heading of the general failure of Bartley's position, if these criticisms were ignored and instead it was assumed that all was well with Bartley's account both of the problem and the solution to that problem, then it is the case that the value of his theory is not what he claims it to be. Bartley's account of rationality is not satisfactory in the statement of the problem, in the dilemma it presents, in the solution to the problem and dilemma, and in the value it claims for itself.

The third ground of complaint against Bartley is that he not only overlooks crucial limits of rationality and presents an account of rationality which is inadequate, but also that his view leads to at least one serious consequence. This is that he removes from the critic the possibility of a serious attack and critique of Bartley's own view by taking away any ground on which the critic may stand and any basis from which the force of criticism may be felt. This is the sort of problem which was introduced in the last chapter when attention was drawn to the contemporary problems in moral and metaphysical debate where there is the refusal and inability to accept the other person's view/

view and right either to hold or to express something different and contradictory.¹ This is also the point of criticism which Watkins in particular levels against Bartley and this will become evident both in the general critique of Bartley and within the section devoted to recent discussion of Bartley.

The chapter devoted to W. Bartley III will first of all state Bartley's own position as he presents it. Then it will offer criticism based on three grounds - his failure to do justice to rationality by omitting the variety of limits of rationality, the faultiness of his own account even on its own terms, and the removal of room for the critic to offer an alternative to or improvement in Bartley's position. These criticisms will however be presented by integration into Bartley's own presentation rather than by forcing his account into the mould of the criticisms. This is done both to be fair to Bartley and his account as well as to show the weakness of his account as a whole at the same time as seeing why his view leads to the unacceptable conclusion it does lead to, namely that of excluding criticism.

Nevertheless, the work of Bartley has both a positive and negative benefit. He raises important and central issues and concepts concerning the nature of rationality which will be used in the presentation of an approach to rationality on the basis of a distinction between two important senses of rationality and in terms of an examination/

1. Chapter One p.7

examination of the limits of rationality as found in practice. As well as the positive gains from Bartley in the issues and concepts he discusses, there is the negative value which stems from learning from the mistakes which he makes and from seeing why he is led into these mistakes by the nature of the account he gives and the presentation of the problem on his own terms.

Bartley will serve as an introduction to the sort of discussion which is taking place about rationality in the contemporary scene. He will help delineate the kinds of issues and concepts which are considered important in modern debate, and he will allow the appreciation of the way in which rationality may be and is used in argument, whether this be religious or metaphysical. His account of rationality may be divided into four sections: the problem, his approach, his alternative theory, and the value of his theory.

1. The Problem of Rationality

William Bartley III states that "The problem of rationality is, in effect, the problem of the critical analysis of the appeal to the authority of reason".²

What Bartley means by the opening quotation is more clear-defined when he says, "This problem is whether some form of relativist existentialism is inescapable because rationality is so limited, logically as well as practically, that the choice between ultimately competing religious, moral, and philosophical positions is, in the last resort, arbitrary. For example, is an individual's decision to become a rationalist any less subjective, relative, arbitrary, irrational than an individual's decision to become a christian?"³

The concern expressed by Bartley is with the limits of rationality, which he characterises as the discovery that "according to one's theory of rationality, rationality is impossible".⁴ While aware that there are factual, experiential, scientific, existential, and practical limits to rationality, Bartley chooses to concentrate on the logical limitations, on the grounds that it "is sufficient without aid from other limitations, to perpetuate the aforementioned conflict between rationality and the theory of rationality".⁵

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2. The Limits of Rationality, p.13. Hereafter referred to as "Q"
 3. The Retreat to Commitment p.vii. Hereafter referred to as "R.C."
 4. "Rationality versus the Theory of Rationality" p.4. The Critical Approach to Science and Philosophy, M. Bunge (ed.) Hereafter referred to as "RvR."
 5. RvR. p.5.

This logical limitation is interpreted as the necessity to counter the philosophical positions of Scepticism and Fideism. Bartley believes that these threaten the whole conception and practice of philosophy and that they share a common argument and claim. He sets out to deal with this philosophical claim and to refute the argument on which both rest their claim. "The claim is that from a rational point of view, the choice between competing beliefs and positions and ways of life, whether scientific, mathematical, moral, religious, metaphysical, political, or other is arbitrary."⁶ This means that rational procedures can be used to prove the logical impossibility of acting or choosing on rational grounds between different world-views and basic attitudes to life. This claim threatens the very possibility of a rationalist being a rationalist on rational grounds. Bartley asks, "Is an individual's decision to become a rationalist - a rationalist of the Harvard pragmatist make for instance - any less subjective, relative, arbitrary, irrational, (even when it is considered from a rationalist point of view) than an individual's decision to become or remain a christian?"⁷ His task is to show that this claim is invalid and to achieve this he analyses the argument which supports it. The argument offered by the sceptic and fideist is an analysis of the usual rationalist defence of a particular idea. This analysis presupposes what Bartley calls the "tu quoque or boomerang argument, the dilemma of ultimate commitment, the problem of ultimate presuppositions."⁸

6. RvR. p.5.

7. Q. p.p. 14a-15.

8. RvR. p.6

presuppositions."⁸ This argument consists of three parts: "1. For certain logical reasons, rationality is so limited that everyone has to make a dogmatic irrational commitment; 2. therefore, the christian has a right to make whatever commitment he pleases; and 3. therefore, no one has a right to criticise him for this."⁹ The problem arises because "any view may be challenged with such questions as 'How do you know?' 'Give me a reason', or even 'Prove it!'" When such challenges are accepted by the citation of further reasons which entail those under challenge, these may be questioned in turn. And so on forever. Yet if the burden of proof or rational justification can be perpetually shifted back to a higher-order premise or reason, the belief originally questioned is never effectively defended. In order to justify the original conclusion, it appears that one must eventually stop at something not open to question, for which one need not provide reasons when demanded".¹⁰ The argument leads, the sceptic and fideist claim, to the problem of "ultimate relativism", for there can be no appeal to a common standard by the way the problem is presented. While the sceptic and fideist attitudes diverge at this point - the sceptic suspending his judgement concerning different viewpoints and the fideist irrationally committing himself to one or other view - Bartley stresses that "a position that cannot escape scepticism cannot refute fideism".¹¹

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8. RvR.p.6.

9. R.C. p.p.90-91.

10. RvR. p.p.5-6.

11. RvR.p.6.

The importance of the argument is seen in the implication that "the argument, if correct, implies that it is pointless from a rational point of view for men to argue rationally about their extremely different 'ultimate presuppositions' or commitments."¹² But it is not only pointless to argue rationally, it is also implied that "if, since the limitation is a logical one, all men share it, if no one can escape irrational commitment, then no one can be criticised rationally for having made such a commitment, no matter how idiosyncratic".¹³ Bartley has thus uncovered a rational excuse for irrationalism and with it, security for any irrational commitment from criticism.

Bartley's analysis of the problem of rationality, by examining the sceptical and fideistic claim and argument, presents two problems which he hopes to solve. The first is to ask "What the limits of rationality are when it comes to making a decision between the rationalist way of life and some other way of life".¹⁴ In other words, is a real rationalist possible even in theory? The second problem is: "How is it possible any longer for a man to remain a consistant-liberal rationalist?"¹⁵

12. RvR.p.7.

13. RvR.p.7.

14. R.C.p.p.92-3.

15. Q.p.15.

2. Bartley's Approach to Rationality.

Bartley's method is to seek to solve the rationalist problem by means of examining the crises of identity and integrity.¹⁶ Both of these terms are derived from adolescent psychology.¹⁷ The crises of identity involves one's conception of oneself and the crisis of integrity concerns the attempt to live up to one's identity and purpose and cope with the lack of success which is usually involved.¹⁸ Bartley applies this to the rationalist who, he suggests, suffers a continual crisis of integrity, trying to live up to an impossible standard of rationality. This is itself derived from a neglected crisis of identity by the failure to make clear what it is to be a rationalist in the form of a theory of rationality. Bartley claims that rationalists are over-committed to a notion of rationality which it is impossible to attain, and this leads to the crisis of integrity and allows the irrationalist to use the "tu quoque" argument.¹⁹

Bartley examines attempts to answer the sceptic and fideist argument, thus showing the need for his fusion of these attempts to solve the problem. Rationality has historically taken the form of a challenge to traditional authority; yet without falling prey to arbitrariness/

16. RvR.p.p.8-9; R.C.p.p.3,10,58.

17. Erik Erikson, Childhood and Society; Young Man Luther, p.14 passim; "Identity and the Life Cycle", Psychological Issues Monograph I, 1959.

18. RvR.p.p.8-9.

19. RvR.p.9; R.C.p.107.

arbitrariness by appealing to rational authorities.²⁰ This notion of authority is crucial in Bartley's analysis. He presents two main views of rationality: Comprehensive Rationalism and Critical Rationalism. Comprehensive Rationalism is the traditional approach of philosophy and has two main tenets: 1. to accept any position that can be justified, established, or supported by rational criteria or authorities, and 2. to accept only these positions.²¹ The problem has been that no philosophical view has been able to supply adequate rational authorities. This stems from the impossibility of holding (1) and (2) together, which in turn, leads to the irrationalist opportunity for the "tu quoque!"²²

With the failure of the traditional approach of Comprehensive Rationalism, modern philosophy has been characterised by Critical Rationalism. Bartley selects A.J.Ayer as a typical example of this view, which attempts to make the sceptic's victory "bloodless", by accepting the unjustifiability of ultimate principles, but pointing out that the notion of a standard by which to accept or reject rationality does not make sense.²³ Bartley claims that Ayer begs the question and that his view ultimately reduces to a variety of fideism.²⁴ Ayer is compared with Barth and Tillich, as resorting to persuasive definition by seeking merely to describe and proclaim his view.²⁵

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20. R.C.p.106; RvR.p.11.

21. R.C.p.109; RvR.p.12.

22. RvR.p.p.12-3; R.C.p.p.120ff.

23. RvR.p.p.14ff; R.C.p.124ff; A.Ayer, The Problem of Knowledge p.p.75-80.

24. RvR.p.15.

25. R.C.p.128ff; RvR.p.p.17ff.

The short answer to Ayer is simply to refuse to accept his position.

Bartley argues that the failure of Comprehensive and Critical Rationalism is due to the common structure which determines both the kind of questions one may ask and the answers which are appropriate. This structure is based on a philosophical tradition which is authoritarian. All questions within its sphere beg authoritarian answers.²⁶ This authoritarian structure is enforced by two features: (1) the fusion of criticism and justification, (the notion of justification is linked with the ability to give a proper authority in support of one's view), and (2) the assumption that the quality and degree of rationality pass through the relationship of logical deducibility from the justifying premises to justified conclusions.²⁷

Bartley argues that criticism is not and need not be fused with justification,²⁸ and that transmissibility, which was originally added through association with the criteria of truth and probability, has been improperly retained after the failure of these standards to satisfy the role of criteria.²⁹ Bartley states that the standard of rationality necessary for the fusion of criticism and justification is always based on an unwarranted assumption and open to irrationalist rejoinders.³⁰ Similarly, the transmissibility assumption falls to the ground after the failure of the offered criteria. The variety of/

26. RvR.p.19ff; R.C.pp.134ff.

27. RvR.pp.22ff; R.C.pp.141ff; Q.pp.83-5.

28. Q.pp.96-7; RvR.pp.21-4; R.C.pp.147-150.

29. RvR.p.26; Q.pp.85-6.

30. Q.p.93; R.C.p.145; RvR.p.p.22-3.

of criteria for truth and probability fail to be suitable because they offer no means of allowing a non-arbitrary, rational choice to be made between competing criteria.³¹

In place of the unsuccessful candidates for a theory of rationality, Bartley presents an amalgam called, Comprehensively Critical Rationalism, based on the work of Karl Popper.³²

31. RvR. p.p. 25-7; Q.p.85.

32. Q.p.p.96ff; RvR.p.p.10,20; R.C.p.p.146ff.

3. An Alternative Theory of Rationality.

Bartley's Comprehensively Critical Rationalism seeks to abandon justification and substitute criticism.³³ The stress thus is on the elimination of error rather than the search for truth.³⁴ Bartley's solution to the problems of the fusion of justification and criticism and the transmissibility dogma takes the form of the nonjustificational philosophy of criticism, stressing testability and revisability.³⁵ There are two features of the doctrine of criticism which are important. The first is to make clear what counts as criticism and the second, the need to maximise criticism.³⁶ Bartley offers four bases of criticism, which are by no means exhaustive. He lists the checks of logic, sense-observation, scientific theory, and the check of the problem. In brief, these refer in descending order of importance to, internal consistency, empirical refutation, conflict with scientific hypotheses, and the relevance and success of the theory in light of the problem it was designed to solve.³⁷ However, one of the stresses is that this nonjustificational theory of rationality must lead to a closer analysis of the notion of "criticism" and exploration of various avenues of criticism.³⁸

Bartley recognises the need to be thoroughgoing in his theory, and emphasises that we must both maximise criticism and be willing to hold/

33. R.C.p.p.146ff; RvR.p.p.21-4; Q.p.p.271-2, Foot-note.

34. RvR.p.21.

35. RvR.p.p.27-8; R.C.p.p.170,172-3.

36. Q.p.p.267-8,304; R.C.p.p.156-75; RvR.p.30.

37. R.C.p.p.158ff; Q.p.273.

38. Q.pp.267-70; R.C.p.p.156ff; RvR.p.22

hold everything, including his theory of rationality, up for critical revision. This means that we must search for every possible criticism against every view we hold and that we must be willing to be convinced of the need to change even our view of rationality itself.³⁹ There is to be no retreat to commitment by any attempt to justify any view irrationally.⁴⁰ We are only to hold views which have been subjected to criticism and have survived testing.⁴¹ Bartley recognises that, in fact, this process is infinite; yet claims to have avoided a vicious regress by removing the justification demand for criteria.⁴²

Rationality is thus criticism, and this involves testability and revisability.⁴³ We are to subject everything to the test and we must be prepared to revise all or any of our views at any time, given successful criticism. This entails, however, that both acceptance and rejection are provisional. We accept or reject a view till criticism changes it.⁴⁴ Our task, as Popper stresses, is to try to falsify and to examine continually all our presuppositions in light of these attempts at falsification.⁴⁵

Bartley believes that by these means we may learn more about the world by criticism, not only of our presently held views, but also of past/

39. RvR.p.p.27,30-31; R.C.p.p.146-7; Q.p.p.97-8,319.

40. RvR.p.p.30; Q.p.96.

41. RvR.p.30; R.C.p.p.147-8.

42. Q.p.93; RvR.p.p.28-9.

43. Q.pp.270-1,293,295.

44. Q.p.93, p.p.274-5; RvR.p.28; R.C.p.p.152,157-8. See above p.31 footnotes 35

45. RvR.p.21; Q.p.p.90-93; R.C.p.p.151-2; K. Popper, Open Society ch.VII.

past dogmas in every sphere of thought.⁴⁶ We are called upon to open all our views to criticism, to face up to these criticisms, and to review our opinions in light of any successful criticism.⁴⁷ By rejecting justification and transmissibility, we are freed from the crises of identity and integrity and may concentrate on the genuinely important work of philosophy.⁴⁸

46. RvR.p.29; Q.p.p.268,278.

47. R.C.p.p.151-2,158; Q.p.p.269-70.

48. RvR.p.p.29,31; Q.p.p.25k,278.

4. The Value of the Alternative Theory.

Bartley relates that the value of his approach is to show how we can shift the emphasis in rational discussion from justification to nonjustificational criticism.⁴⁹ The value of this is many-levelled. By removing the grounds for the "tu quoque" argument of the fideist and the sceptic,⁵⁰ Bartley also removes the threat of arbitrariness and irrationality to the practice of rationality and a viable theory of rationality.⁵¹ By clarifying and solving the crises of identity and integrity, showing the possibility of being rational about rationality, Bartley allows the stress to fall on criticism.⁵² He thus claims to have created new opportunities for understanding both the notion of criticism itself as well as philosophy past and future.⁵³ Now, we are told, we should aim to learn from our mistakes, because we realise that what matters is to learn to pose more and more intelligent questions.⁵⁴ Rationality is now seen to be a way of life in which we dedicate ourselves to subjecting everything to criticism and continual testing.⁵⁵

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49. RvR.p.31.
 50. RvR.p.31; Q.p.328; See above p.24
 51. See above p.p.24,27.
 52. RvR.p.31; Q.p.p.335-6; see above p.p.27,31.
 53. See above p.³¹ footnotes.33-38.
 54. Q.p.237 footnote.
 55. Q.p.97.

The value of Bartley's view is claimed to be that he allows the rationalist to be rational about his rationality, while at the same time removing from the irrationalist, the rational excuse for his irrationality,⁵⁶ thus enabling both to be "themselves"⁵⁷ and to fulfil the proper role appropriate to their respective positions. In this way, irrationality is seen in its true light and can be criticised without loss of integrity by the rationalist.⁵⁸

Almost more important, however, than the solution of the problem of rationality, is a new "moral" standing, which is created. Tolerance, mutual respect, and intellectual humility are now genuinely possible on a basis previously unrecognised.⁵⁹ We are able to treat people properly, by taking their views seriously, by inviting their criticisms, and even helping them to criticise our own views more adequately. We are to treat our opponents in discussion, as we would wish them to treat us.⁶⁰ Bartley describes this ethic as "respect", and claims this is only possible if serious argument is possible.⁶¹ One aim throughout his thesis work has been to promote this "respect" by illustrating the sort of critical argument his view calls for and by revealing the unfortunate consequences of the retreat to commitment.⁶²

56. RvR.p.31; Q.p.96A footnote, p.p.326-7

57. Q.p.p.327-8; RvR.p.31; see above p.27. see below p.43

58. Q.p.p.335-6.

59. R.C.p.223; Q.p.p.328-330,337.

60. R.C.p.220, Q.p.p.330-32.

61. Q.p.330.

62. Q.p.337.

Section 2 - Critique of Bartley on Rationality

The problem of rationality as outlined by Bartley is closely connected with the ability of the sceptic and fideist to make out a case against the rationalist, accusing him of being subject to the same ultimate irrational commitment by putting an arbitrary end to what would otherwise be an infinite regress. If it can be shown that Bartley's analysis of the sceptic-fideist position is faulty then this would clearly dissolve the problem of rationality as he has expressed it. This will be the starting point of the critique of Bartley. The criticism rests on three points which will be integrated into the criticism of this section. The three points that must be borne in mind in the more general criticism of Bartley's position are as follows:- his failure to examine all the limits of rationality particularly by his concentration on one area to the neglect of the other more important limits, the failure of his own account to be successful in presenting a problem, dealing with the same problem as he sees it, and finally, the benefits he claims accrue from his view, and finally, the effect of removing from the critic all possibility of argument which might change or modify his view.

This is the background of the critique, but the criticism of Bartley will be presented in the following way. First of all it will be questioned whether or not he has actually the problem that he thinks he has, by showing that his description of the sceptic-fideist is at fault. Then it will be assumed, for the sake of argument, that Bartley has done exactly what it is claimed that he has not, that Bartley has/

has correctly described the sceptic-fideist position, but that his description of the rationalist dilemma is faulty to the extent that there is no genuine problem. This means that if it can be shown that this is the case, Bartley's claim to offer a solution to this problem must be irrelevant until and unless he can show that there is a genuine problem for the rationalist. Then the opposite of what we have shown will be assumed, that Bartley has given an adequate account of the nature of the rationalist dilemma, but it will be suggested that Bartley's solution to the problem is, on its own terms, inadequate to solve the problem he thinks that there is and that he claims to have presented. In other words, Bartley's solution does not do what he claims it does do, even if it is allowed that it has genuine work which needs to be done. Finally, the value will be examined which Bartley claims results from adopting his approach regardless of whether it is thought that there is a problem for Bartley to try to solve or that he actually solves it. It will be argued that the value claimed for Bartley's view is not fulfilled in its own terms and does not come up to the high expectations which Bartley has for his approach. It is claimed that Bartley fails to make out a case for the sceptic-fideist and for the rationalist dilemma. It is argued that his solution to the problem he thinks arises from these accounts is in fact no solution at all even if it is accepted that there is a problem. Finally, it is shown that regardless of the problem, or solution, that the value of Bartley's approach is not what it is claimed to be.

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These criticisms are presented in parallel fashion with Bartley's own view and emphasis, but this must not obscure the general ground behind the criticism and the aim in view. It is that Bartley's account is faulty in the three ways already stated. He omits what ought not to be omitted. His own account is inadequate both in itself and as an account of the nature of rationality. His view leads to unacceptable conclusions, specifically the exclusion of all and any genuine criticism. These points are the basis of the choice of and presentation of Bartley's view, while they are interwoven into Bartley's own framework rather than being the mould into which Bartley's view is rudely forced.

1. The Problem of Rationality

The first question to be considered as far as Bartley is concerned is whether or not he makes out a case which deals adequately with the sceptic and fideist positions. Bartley has characterised the sceptical-fideist argument as the "tu quoque" retort to any criticism, on the basis that everyone has to make a dogmatic, irrational commitment. It is of interest that he concentrates mainly on fideist examples of the use of this argument and, in fact, offers no concrete example of a wholly sceptical position;¹ yet he claims that this argument is common to sceptic and fideist. This is relevant because it is unfair to characterise the christian view as irrationalist without more detailed argument.² The christian writers referred to by Bartley would wish to claim that the commitment of the christian, while not based on formal logic, can nevertheless be characterised as rational. This rational basis may be described in at least two ways. Christian commitment may be considered rational on its own terms, i.e. within the system of belief itself.³ That is to say, for someone who accepts the christian presuppositions it is totally rational to believe in christianity. On the other hand, it may be that christian commitment can be described as rational in the sense of Pascal's Wager. Given that there is no overriding evidence by which to choose between two views, it may be argued that christianity is the more rational commitment to make in the sense that it offers greater emotional security, a "heaven" to gain/

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1. R.C.p.p.113, cf.80-90; T.F.Torrance, "Faith and Philosophy", p238, Hibbert Journal, Vol. XLVII.No.3. April 1949.
 2. A. MacIntyre. "The Logical Status of Religious Beliefs", p.p.178,185, Metaphysical Beliefs.
 3. MacIntyre, ibid, p.p.202,208-9; A. Farrer, "Revelation", p.100, B. Mitchell, "The Grace of God".p.p.160,174-5, B. Mitchell (Ed.) Faith and Logic.

gain and a hell to lose", or a satisfactory moral code by which to live.

It may be countered that there is within the christian tradition, the conception of a "leap of faith". Fitz James Stephen comments; "In all important transactions of life we have to take a leap in the dark If we decide to leave the riddles unanswered that is a choice; if we waver in our answer, that, too, is a choice; but whatever choice we make, we make it at our peril. If a man chooses to turn his back altogether on God and the future, no one can prevent him; no one can show beyond reasonable doubt that he is mistaken. If a man thinks otherwise and acts as he thinks, I do not see that anyone can prove that he is mistaken. Each must act as he thinks best; and if he is wrong, so much the worse for him. We stand on a mountain pass in the midst of whirling snow and blinding mist, through which we get glimpses now and then of paths which may be deceptive. If we stand still we shall be frozen to death. If we take the wrong road we shall be dashed to pieces. We do not certainly know whether there is any right one."⁴ This may be the case, but Bartley makes mention of it only in a footnote,⁵ and without argument must be guilty of failing to do justice to the relation/

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4. Fitz James Stephen, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, p.353
5. R.C.p.p.89-90. Bartley offers three main examples, i.e. Tillich, MacIntyre, and Mitchell's book. None of these can be characterised as irrational, "tu quoque" users without detailed argument. See, for example, Tillich's discussion of the relation of faith and rationality, especially his notion of "ecstasy", as well as his attack on scepticism, Dynamics of Faith, p.p.6-7,19,76-7. MacIntyre seems oddly cast in this role, cf. Metaphysical Beliefs p.p.178,185, 202,208-9 et al. Mitchell's book in general tone runs counter to Bartley's claim. See the chapters on "The Grace of God", B. Mitchell, "Revelation", A. Farrer, and "How Theologians Reason?", G.C. Stead, in Faith and Logic B. Mitchell (ed.)

relation of this "leap" to irrationality.⁶ It may be argued that this "leap" can be characterised more in terms of Pascal's Wager, again laying stress on the sound rational grounds, in the broad sense of rational, for such an action.⁷ Bartley seems to equate faith with irrationality, but to do this he must show that these are one and the same. One may have faith in a person without or with apparent good reason, and yet be unable to delineate the reasons for such a faith.⁸ Few would wish to call this irrational unless there were considerable evidence to suggest that this faith was misplaced. We would rather stress that irrationality might better be described as acting without any reason at all, and this could not be charged against most christian commitment.

Bartley thus fails to clarify in what way the fideist - the only genuine example he offers - is involved in irrational commitment. Without making it clearer exactly in what way the fideist makes an irrational commitment, and how this constitutes a problem for rationality, Bartley's presentation of the genesis of the problem of rationality fails to make out its case. The strange critique of the rational excuse for irrationality will be examined, but it must also be seen that Bartley, having failed to offer any concrete example of a sceptical-irrationalist view, merely stating rather than proving such, also fails to/

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6. For comment on Merkegaard's concept of "leap" see T.F. Torrance, "Faith and Philosophy", p.p.245-6, Hibbert Journal, and J. Baillie, The Sense of the Presence of God, p.261
 7. For a useful explanation of the role of "reason" in Pascal see J. Cargile, "Pascal's Wager". Philosophy, 41,1966, p.252, and R. Popkin's article on Pascal in Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, p.53, Vol.6.
 8. For example, T. Brown, Martial Epigrams, i.32
 "I do not love you, Dr. Fell,
 But why I cannot tell;
 But this I know full well,
 I do not love you, Dr. Fell."
 See below, chapter four, p.375

to understand the nature of scepticism. It would seem that Bartley's procedure is rather elaborate to deal with the sceptical threat. Surely it would have been easier to examine in detail an example of a sceptical use of the "tu quoque", if there be such. Bartley slides over as irrelevant the difference between the sceptic and the fideist, but it is just this very difference which is crucial and which, indeed, Bartley without realising himself brings out in another context.⁹

The fideist, it is claimed, makes an irrational leap in one particular direction, while the sceptic simply suspends judgement.¹⁰ Bartley need only examine the standing of the sceptic, who tries, on the one hand, to criticise any rational view on the ground of commitment and then to claim that he is unable to make any judgement himself. It may be asked, indeed, whether or not the sceptical position can of itself be made sense of. This is surely much simpler and a more adequate refutation of the sceptical position, than to be forced to change one's view of rationality.¹¹ One might argue that the sceptical position is perfectly rational, if it claims that our judgements are always likely to be false, then it makes good sense to make as few judgements as possible. This however hinges on the definition and description we offer of the sceptic, and Bartley offers no such description or definition. On Bartley's own terms, if it can be shown that the sceptical argument is impossible, then there can be no threat from that quarter to the rationalist, and thus Comprehensively Critical Rationalism is unnecessary.

Having/

9. Q.p.p.326-7.

10. RvR.p.6.

11. R. Bambrough's discussion of scepticism in Reason, Truth, and God p.p.17,93,104.

Having shown that Bartley's account of the sceptical-fideist position is over-cursory, attention is turned to the odd notion of the rational excuse for irrationalism. Does it make sense to posit of the sceptic, who by Bartley's own definition suspends all judgement, the giving of a rational excuse for any view, far less his own irrationality? To claim to have a rational excuse would be already to have adopted a basis of judgement, which is anathema to Bartley's description of the sceptic.¹² The fideist seems to fare little better, if an attempt is made to describe him as offering a rational excuse for his irrationality. Does it literally make sense to suggest that irrationality can be rationally held, for surely that irrationality must in some sense be rational? For the fideist such a rational excuse must prove too much, leaving no room for faith. If the fideist is to be someone who claims the necessity to make a "leap of faith", then he would hardly wish to claim a rational ground for this, in the sense that there must be some more or less absolute distinction between faith and sight, faith and reason. If he does wish to claim such a rational excuse, then surely the charge may be brought against either the sceptic or fideist who makes this claim, of falling prey to the crises of identity and integrity, rather than accusing the rationalist of such. Part of the problem is the failure of Bartley adequately to define his terms, and this will be a recurring charge.

The/

12. W.R. Sorley, "Tradition", p.p.12-14. Herbert Spencer Lecture, Oxford 1926; "Skepticism" Vol.5, Encyclopaedia of Philosophy; B. Stroud's review of A. Naess, Scepticism, Philosophical Review, April 1971, p.255.

The point at issue here is whether or not Bartley in setting up the nature of the problem actually succeeds in doing so. He claims that because of the sceptic and the fideist move in presenting their case to an irrational commitment based on rational grounds, then there is a dilemma for the irrationalist. The argument has concentrated on the first part of this, the sceptic and fideist positions, to see whether or not Bartley's account is satisfactory. He has not shown a clear example of a sceptic, nor sufficiently analysed the fideist position. He does not take account of the differences between the two positions, nor draw attention to the extreme difficulty the sceptic has in presenting his case in the way that Bartley suggests poses a serious threat to rationality. Bartley has not made out the case for a rationalist dilemma on the basis of the sceptical-fideist approach, but it may be that his account of the rationalist problem has its own merit.

Bartley offers us two definitions of what he means by rationality. He states:- "I reserve the words 'reason', 'rationality', and 'rationalism' to refer broadly to that tradition whose members are dedicated to learning through critical discussion".¹³ It is of note that in "The Retreat to Commitment", he rather talks of rationalists as "dedicated to the task of trying to learn more about the world through the practice of critical argument."¹⁴ Bartley may be concealing something significant in the move from "discussion" to "argument". The other definition that Bartley uses is a twofold one, that "a rationalist /

¹³. Q.p.31; RvR.p.3.
¹⁴. R.C.p.viii.

rationalist accepts any position that can be justified or established or supported by appeal to the rational criteria or authorities" and "accepts only those positions that can be justified in this way".¹⁵ Bartley is perfectly entitled to suggest any definition he chooses, but we are at liberty to ask why it should be this one rather than any other. Bartley offers no analysis or argument of the nature and scope of reason and rationality. Yet his whole position, from the setting of the problem to the presentation of the solution, is dependent upon a particular view of rationality and the problems that this view entails.

One of the grounds of complaint against Bartley is that he fails to take adequate account of important features of rationality. In particular he stresses only one of the limits of rationality, that of logic, to the exclusion of the others. He argues that this alone is sufficient to raise a serious problem for the rationalist. The problem with such concentration on one area is twofold. It tends to belittle the reality of the other limits and the equally serious effect which they have for rationality. In practical terms, the whole spectrum of limits must be faced and dealt with if rational argument and discussion is to take place successfully. The second problem is that if Bartley's account of the logical limit is faulty, then the concentration on logical limits is wasted. The contention is that Bartley not only overlooks other important limits but also fails to make a case for the sole study of/

15. RvR.p.12; Q.p.52; R.C.p.109; see above p.32

of the logical limit because of failing to clarify the rationalist dilemma on his own terms. Merely to state that there is a variety of limits such as the factual experiential, scientific, existential, and practical as well as the logical, and yet to give no account of these either in practice or in theory suggests that there is more to be said about rationality than Bartley has said. In the final chapter, these themes will be woven into an account of the importance and nature of the limits of rationality as they are found in practice and as they affect the actual conduct and course of argument, whether this be religious, moral, or metaphysical.

Bartley also fails to make mention of many crucial factors which are regularly taken to be marks of rationality. He does not comment on the view that: "Rationalism is that system of philosophical belief which asserts that human reason unaided is competent to obtain objective truth".¹⁶ He also overlooks the association of rationalism with liberal opinion,¹⁷ the interrelation of thought and action implicit in rational behaviour,¹⁸ rationality as opposed to faith, qua faith, or experience,¹⁹ or in contradistinction to animal.²⁰ Bartley does not analyse the relation of rationality to reasoning and thought,²¹ its connection with logical conception,²² or the problems that modern theories have created for rationality.²³ Part of the problem with Bartley's/

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16. "Rationalism", Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol.18.p.991
 17. "Rationalism", Chamber's Encyclopaedia, Vol.VIIIp.564
 18. J. Rawls, "Justice as Fairness", Philosophical Review, Vol.LXVII 1958,p.170.
 19. G. Warnock's article, "Reason", Encyclopaedia of Philosophy Vol.7,p84
 20. A. Farrer, "A Starting-Point for the Philosophical Examination of Theological Belief", pl8, Faith and Logic B. Mitchell (ed.)
 21. H.A. Hodges, "Languages, Standpoints, and Attitudes", Riddell Memorial Lecture p.47
 22. V.H.Kirkorian's Article, "Cohen" Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Vol.2 p.126.
 23. P. Suppes, "Decision Theory", Encyclopaedia of Philosophy Vol.2.p.310.

Bartley's bald statement of definition is the allied failure to define its opposite, "irrationality". "When people raise the bogey of 'irrationalism' or a 'flight from reason', what do they mean by 'reason', and why should we be so eager to safeguard it?"²⁴ and "But how is the notion of 'reason' itself to be understood, and in what respects is its authority supposed to be flouted? It would scarcely be sufficient to reply that denial of reason consists in illogicality or confusion of thought, or that it manifests itself in a tendency to arrive at unacceptable conclusions; for this would apply to the work of many thinkers to whom the label 'irrationalist' is clearly inapplicable".²⁵ Without a clear conception of the one term, it is difficult to see how the other can be properly defined or understood.

Thus far a number of features have simply been enumerated which are considered essential to the nature of rationality, which Bartley overlooks without comment. In a more rigorous fashion, it might be enquired why Bartley's view of rationality is to be preferred to other prominent views, without examination of alternatives and argument for the one rather than the others. Three modern discussions are chosen - the three most notable - and the central stress of each is merely outlined to reveal the limited role of Bartley's own view.

Bennett in his book "Rationality"²⁶ is concerned to analyse rationality, and this means to him, "to explore the content of the true belief that human beings are on a certain intellectual eminence compared with other terrestrial creatures".²⁷ For this analysis Bennett assumes that/

24. Hodges, ibid, p.p.61-2.

25. P. Gardiner, "Irrationalism", Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Vol.4, p.p.213-4.

26. J. Bennett, Rationality.

27. Bennett, ibid, p.p.4-5.

that language is essential for rationality and attempts to deduce a basis for rationality by examination of non-rational beings, reducing finally to the formula of being able to make universal dated statements.²⁸ The value and adequacy of Bennett's views are not relevant here,²⁹ but rather the stressing of the difference of his approach, which was more a conceptual analysis of "rationality", believing that by differentiating rational from non-rational, the nature of rationality can be better appreciated.

R. Edgley in his book, "Reason in Theory and Practice",³⁰ wishes to examine the relation of practical to theoretical reason. He delineates the "logical features of theoretical reason",³¹ then moves to analyse the "practical conception of reason".³² He arrives at the broad scope of the role and function of practical reason, describing the "normative function" that reason fulfils.³³ Both Bennett and Edgley, though sharing a common, though very broad, conceptual-analysis method, offer different approaches from each other and from Bartley. Bartley needs to offer argument on his own behalf for the rationality of his approach and its benefit over and against other theories. Bennett and Edgley offer genuine insight into a great many features of rationality which tend to be assumed, and it is doubtful if anyone properly/

28. Bennett, ibid, p.p.93-4.
 29. See reviews of Bennett, Rationality, in Philosophical Quarterly, 15, 1965; Philosophy, 40, 1965; Philosophical Review, 75, 1966
 30. R. Edgley, Reason in Theory and Practice.
 31. Edgley, ibid, p.p.17-19
 32. Edgley, ibid, p.p.37-9
 33. Edgley, ibid, p.154.

properly understands or is able to evaluate any attack on rationality, until and unless it is clear what it is. Without such an analysis, Bartley's whole position must be held in abeyance, until he has examined more closely the nature of rationality, its relation with "reason", "reasoning" and "rationale"; whether the sense of "reason" varies if set in opposition to the concepts of experience,³⁴ faith, or passion,³⁵ and what the interrelation of these commonly regarded antonyms might be.³⁶

Theologically too, on the theme of rationality, Bartley's view is at odds with that of Professor Torrance, who describes reason as "the capacity to behave consciously in terms of the nature of the object", and as "our capacity for objectivity".³⁷ Torrance's stress is on the need to "know something only in accordance with its nature, and you develop your knowledge of it as you allow its nature to prescribe for you the mode of the rationality appropriate to it. That is the kind of objectivity we adopt in all rational behaviour whatsoever."³⁸ Torrance argues from this that it is possible and rational to talk of knowing God, as long as that is only in terms which are "appropriate to the divine Nature".³⁹ Using this basically medieval theme of rationality, Professor Torrance seeks to show the relation of science and/

34. W.H.Walsh, Reason and Experience.

35. D. Hume's discussion of the passions in his Treatise and Enquiries.

36. Bambrough, Reason, Truth, and God, p.118

37. T.F. Torrance, "Faith and Philosophy", Hibbert Journal; see below, chapter three, section one.

38. T.F. Torrance, God and Rationality, p.52.

39. T.F. Torrance, ibid, p.p.52-3

and theology, and to stress the possibility of a scientific theology based on a true ontology. Torrance's view of rationality is, like Bennett and Edgley, at odds with the brief statement of Bartley's view. Again there is the need for closer analysis on the part of Bartley before the adequacy of his view in comparison with the others, can properly be judged, and also the adequacy of his contribution to the problem of rationality.

Bartley is unsatisfactory about his description of the sceptical-fideist problem, both in the details of fideist and sceptical positions, and of the problem their attack may be held to constitute. He fails to give clear examples of the sceptical or fideist attack, and to show the differences and internal difficulties which they encounter. Part of the problem has been that Bartley has not given adequate definitions and grounds for these definitions, especially in light of modern discussion on the subject of rationality. Is, however, the problem as serious as Bartley would have people believe? This is meant in two senses: "Is there a genuine problem caused by an infinite regress and arbitrary commitment?" and "Is there a problem at all?"

Is there a problem created by the regress of justifying one's position? Bradley would appear to agree with Bartley and to state the problem more explicitly when he says; "We are fastened to a chain, and we wish to know if we are really secure. What ought we to do? Is it of much use to say, 'This link we are tied to is certainly solid, and it is fast to the next, which seems very strong and holds firmly to the next; beyond this we can not see more than a certain moderate distance, but/

but, so far as we know, it all hangs together?' The practical man would first of all ask, 'Where can I find the last link of my chain? When I know that it is fast, and not hung in the air, it is time enough to inspect the connection ' But the chain is such that every link begets, as soon as we come to it, a new one; and, ascending in our search, at each remove we are no nearer the last link of all, on which everything depends. The series of phenomena is so infected with relativity, that, while it is itself, it can never be made absolute. Its existence refers itself to what is beyond, and did it not do so, it would cease to exist. A last fact, a final link, is not merely a thing which we cannot know, but a thing which could not possibly be real. Our chain by its nature cannot have a support. Its essence excludes a fastening at the end. We do not merely fear that it hangs in the air, but we know it must be so. And when the end is unsupported, all the rest is unsupported".⁴⁰ The question is whether or not this is the function and role of the infinite regress argument. Bartley merely states that one is in a regress and that there is and can be no solution to it.⁴¹ But Bartley has not carried his analysis far enough. He has stated that there is no way to stop the regress but has not asked whether or not we need to stop the regress. In other words, is the question of the regress of justification, not better understood by comparing the process/

40. Bradley, Principles of Logic, p.100
 41. R.C.p.p.90ff.



process with that of defining by means of a dictionary? Must we and do we, in fact, continually question the dictionary definition to try to reach the absolutely basic meaning? Bambrough comments that "every word whose meaning is explained in the dictionary is explained in words whose meanings are also explained in the dictionary. The whole process of learning the meanings of English words from the dictionary is non-viciously circular; regressive, but not viciously regressive".⁴²

Bartley shows us that there is a regress, but fails to analyse whether or not, and to what degree this is a vicious regress. Bambrough holds that "there need not be, are not, could not be, any ultimate $\alpha \rho \chi \alpha \nu$ of definition, explanation and demonstration", and that "to recognise this is to weaken one of the most powerful motives for the generation of transcendent substances and ultimate foundations".⁴³ Bambrough's position is based on the realisation that only what is articulable and intelligible, can enter into logical relations. In other words, he wishes to stress the various informal modes of reasoning and the internal variety of the concepts of reason and truth. He stresses the importance of understanding that explanation is multiform: "Besides causal explanation there is also the distinct sense of explanation in which we explain (or expound, or explicate - unfold) a proof, an argument, a play, a picture".⁴⁴ There is also mention of gestalt theory/

42. Bambrough, Reason, Truth, and God, p.94

43. Bambrough, ibid., p.95

44. Bambrough, ibid., p.96

theory and the Platonic doctrine of reminiscence. Bambrough offers us the view that we need not regard the regress as being vicious, and that the sting of the argument can be drawn by examining the variety of informal modes of reasoning and justification that are in fact practised.⁴⁵

Not only is it doubtful if the regress is necessarily vicious, but it must also be doubted whether the regress argument proves what Bartley claims that it does, i.e. the insolubility of the problem of rationality on these terms.⁴⁶ It might be suggested, rather, that what the regress argument offers is to bring "home to us the fact that the intelligibility the philosopher is seeking is not to be found by going further along the path he has begun to tread; having failed to achieve it by introducing a single form in the situation, he is not going to do any better by introducing still more forms."⁴⁷ In other words, it is not so much that rationality as such has been misused, but rather that the notion of explanation and justification - the demand for a single form of these - is misplaced. This leads back to Bambrough's notion of a variety of modes and means of explanation and the centrality of informal concepts in adequate explanation and justification. One may attempt to avoid the regress by arguing that there is no need for explanation. One might also claim privilege for the first step in the regress, against which the arguer must show that there/

45. Bambrough, ibid, p.p.118-9,157; G.Ryle, "Formal and Informal Logic" Dilemmas.

46. R.C.p.p.90-95.

47. J. Passmore, "The Infinite Regress", Philosophical Reasoning, p.p.21-2.

there is no good reason for such a privilege-claim.⁴⁸ Bartley fails to examine either of these attempts to avoid the regress, or to clarify the distinction between an infinite regress and an infinite series.⁴⁹ This is especially odd as he himself argues that the nature of Comprehensively Critical Rationalism is that of a never-ending process of examination; yet he finds no difficulty in this regress, because he claims that justification has been abandoned.⁵⁰ But this does not excuse him from explanation and definition, and if so, he needs to give good reasons why his own view can be accepted, while that of the traditional rationalist cannot. Bartley, therefore, requires a closer account of whether or not the regress argument is or need be necessarily vicious, what tools can be used to deal with it, and why his own final position is so different, specifically from the demand for explanation and definition, and being different, why we might accept a privilege claim in one case and not in the other.

There need not be, then, the spectre of a vicious infinite regress to frighten the rationalist into changing his theory of rationality, unless Bartley can offer a more detailed analysis of the nature and function of the infinite regress argument and also evaluates modern attempts at thwarting its viciousness. But, if it is allowed, that Bartley has made his case for the problem of regress, is it the case that the commitment involved is arbitrary? The relativist position/

48. Passmore, ibid, p.p.24,27-8

49. Passmore, ibid, p.p.28ff.

50. Passmore, ibid, p.p.30ff; Q.p.271; RvR.p.p.28-9.

position derives much of its strength from this note of arbitrariness, but perhaps the concept "arbitrariness" is itself seldom clarified. Bartley is not, however, without his supporters, for M. Cowling argues: "Fundamental assumptions, because they are fundamental, cannot be scrutinised, and are involved in the most extensive arbitrariness of all."⁵¹ Cowling also suggests that the demand for reasons is itself an arbitrary preference.⁵² What is meant by "arbitrary" can perhaps best be seen by examining Hare's refutation of such a charge in the field of morals. The context is that of choosing to accept a way of life or not, and Hare states: "If he accepts it, then we can proceed to justify the decisions that are based upon it; if he does not accept it, then let him accept some other, and try to live by it..... To describe such ultimate decisions as arbitrary, because ex hypothesi everything that could be used to justify them has already been included in the decision, would be like saying that a complete description of the universe was utterly unfounded, because no further fact could be called upon in corroboration of it. This is not how we use the words "arbitrary" and 'unfounded'. Far from being arbitrary, such a decision would be the most well-founded of decisions, because it would be based upon a consideration of everything upon which it could possibly be founded."⁵³ Hare suggests that the word "arbitrary" must be inappropriate to the description of such/

51. M. Cowling, *Mill and Liberalism*, p.p.155-6

52. Cowling, ibid, p.156

53. R. Hare, Language of Morals, p.58

such a choice, and this can apply too, to the notion of a rationalist choosing his rationality. It need not be an arbitrary action, if in making the choice, the rationalist can offer a total background, both of motivation and thought, and most of all the backing of a life lived in accordance with his basic precepts, as evidence. Hare shows the strength of his position by offering the example of a man who is clairvoyant and can see everything that will result from his actions and choices. Hare raises the question of whether or not such a man can choose, and if so, whether this choice is arbitrary. "It would seem beyond doubt that he could choose between two courses: it would be strange, even to call such a choice necessarily arbitrary or ungrounded; for if a man knows to the last detail exactly what he is doing, and what he might otherwise have done, his choice is not arbitrary in the sense in which a choice would be arbitrary if made by the toss of a coin without any consideration of the effects".⁵⁴ The term "arbitrary" suggests something that is merely chance, but as was seen of Pascal,⁵⁵ there is an important difference between drawing lots though even a limited number of lots to be drawn may significantly affect the decision and be held to be a less than arbitrary factor, and making a choice, regardless of whether or not one is able to give reasons for that choice.⁵⁶ The language of "deciding", "evaluating", and "choosing" seems to contain the notion of better and worse, preferable, and desirable. These characteristics are not arbitrary in the sense of capricious. "Arbitrary" can/

54. Hare ibid., p.58

55. See above p.p.41ff

56. See above p. 41 footnote 8; see below, chapter four, p.268

can be opposed to "necessary" and in that sense is "without basis". But surely Bartley does not wish to claim that the traditional rationality made decisions without any basis. There is, and must be a difference between an adequate basis and no basis at all. When we say that there is nothing to choose between two things, or two men for a job, we do not mean that the choice is then arbitrary, but rather that our preferences and psychological make-up are to be the deciding factors, rather than the more obviously "objective" factors in the situation. Bartley offers no examination of the meaning and scope of "arbitrary", and it can be seen that this term, if taken literally, is inappropriate to the human practice of choosing, whether it be in respect of a new hat, or a new morality.

Bartley's analysis of the infinite regress and the arbitrariness of the commitment needed to call a halt to the regress has been shown to be overbrief and inadequate, but so also is the picture he offers of the step of commitment. Again Bartley may be criticised on the grounds that he does not examine what is meant by "commitment", whether or not there are different sorts, and to what degree these may be more or less acceptable. One wonders if it is necessary to escape commitment, if it is possible to do so, and whether Bartley's is the best way to escape from such commitment. If, as he does, he presents the value of his approach as that of removing the demand for justification,⁵⁷ then it seems that he is in danger of offering this positive gain itself as a justification for adopting his position.⁵⁸

If/

57. See above p.34

58. See below p. 108

If there is no contradiction in such justification, albeit at a different level, does Bartley's view not ultimately reduce itself to a form of commitment to criticism? That is, why should we adopt criticism rather than commitment? Why should we adopt consistent rationality, rather than mitigated or academic scepticism? This seems an appropriate question because Bartley offers little in the way of evidence for the value of criticisability, except as a retreat from commitment. Can we, then, escape from commitment, and need we? Bartley himself discusses the basic categories of logic and recognises that these are presuppositions which are absolute and to which "we are committed not as human beings, because of our biology, psychology, or sociology, but as arguers about the world."⁵⁹ However, this is, he claims, no commitment to logic,⁶⁰ but, he still describes these absolute presuppositions as something to which we are "committed".⁶¹ If Bartley can allow that there are certain absolute presuppositions to which we are committed, then it is surely appropriate for him to analyse out what these are, and our attitude towards them. Collingwood states that: "We do not acquire absolute presuppositions by arguing; on the contrary, unless we have them already arguing is impossible to us. Nor can we change them by arguing; unless they remain constant all our arguments would fall to pieces. We cannot confirm ourselves in them by "proving" them; it is proof that depends on them, not they on proof. The only attitude towards them that can enable us to enjoy what they have to give us (and that means science and civilisation, the life of rational animals) is an attitude of unquestioning acceptance.

We/

59. R.C.p.172, Q.p.p.319-20.

60. Q.p.318.

61. R.C.p.172; Q.p.p.319-20.

We must accept them and hold firmly to them; we must insist on presupposing them in all our thinking without asking why they should be thus accepted."⁶² Collingwood stresses that we cannot question these, for even to examine them is to use them. These absolute presuppositions seem to have much in common with Kant's categories,⁶³ and, if this is the case, Bartley ought to make much clearer the difference between this sort of commitment from the sort that he attacks. Given the analysis of "arbitrary" over the last few pages, it may be argued that there is little difference. Unless Bartley can show this difference, there seems little point to his attack on commitment.

However, a closer look is required at what sort of commitment this is. There is a sense in which every science, and every claim to knowledge, on the part of a human being is involved in taking something for granted. For example, "The activity of scientific investigation, which ever presupposes what it can never prove, namely the ultimate rationality of the universe which it sets itself to explore".⁶⁴ These presuppositions are of the form of commitments, for they govern the activity of the scientist and have far-reaching implications. "The commitments that govern normal science specify not only what sorts of entities the universe does contain, but also, by implication, those that it does not.... scientific fact and theory are not categorically separable that is why the unexpected discovery is not simply factual in its import and why the scientist's world is qualitatively transformed as well as quantitatively enriched by/

62. R. Collingwood, Essay on Metaphysics, p. 173

63. L. Mink, Mind, History and Dialectic; Donnegan, The Later Philosophy of Collingwood.

64. G. Webb, "Religion and the Thought of Today", Riddell Memorial Lecture, p.38

by fundamental novelties of either factor theory".⁶⁵ What then is the status of this presupposition, which takes the form of a commitment to the view that "what we know is accessible to rational enquiry, that it is somehow inherently intelligible or rational. If it were not, there could be no knowledge, let alone any science."⁶⁶ Bartley does not say. Polanyi, however, attempts to analyse more fully the notion of such commitment, and states that it "might be said to express a belief; where there is purposive striving, there is belief in success. Certainly no one can be said truly to believe in anything unless he is prepared to commit himself on the strength of his belief. We conclude that the holding of a belief is a commitment of which human beings are capable, and which bears close analogy to the commitment in which animals universally and quite inevitably engage when embarking on a purposive course of behaviour."⁶⁷ Part of what it means then to commit oneself, is that it relates to belief rather than knowledge. That is to say, a knowledge claim or demand must be inappropriate to these ideas, theories, or views. It is also part of the "nature of a belief that at the moment of its being held it cannot be fully justified, since it is inherent in all commitments that at the time we engage upon them their outcome is still uncertain."⁶⁸ Thus commitment relates to belief and incompleteness of evidence, coupled with the need for action. The centrality of the theme of action and its relation to commitment stems from the fact that "there is ultimately no spectator viewpoint which is wholly independent of actor, nor actor viewpoint/

65. T.S. Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, p.7; W.O. Quine, "Ontological Relativity", Ontological Relativity and Other Essays.

66. T.F. Torrance, God and Rationality, p.p.93-4

67. M. Polanyi, The Logic of Liberty, p.p.23-4

68. Polanyi, ibid, p.24

viewpoint which is wholly independent of spectator",⁶⁹ but also from the fact that the traditional notion of "detachment" is impossible. Torrance states that "our psychology insists that detachment is not the sign of rationality, but of open-mouthed imbecility",⁷⁰ and Polanyi that "detachment in the rigorous sense of the word can only be achieved in a state of complete imbecility well below the normal animal's level. In all states of mind above that, we are inevitably committed, and usually we are committed to an approach which excludes other approaches... detachment in the ordinary and true sense always means commitment to a particular approach which we deem to be proper to the occasion and disengagement from other points of view which for the time being are inadmissible. To hold the balance between our alternative possible approaches is our ultimate commitment, the most fundamental of all."⁷¹ Thus in commitment we have the themes of background presuppositions, belief, and action. Part of Bartley's problem, and indeed of much of modern philosophy, is the over-characterising of what this commitment entails. Modern existentialism has influenced both theology and philosophy, especially ethics, into an unreflective stress on decision and commitment. What is needed, and is happening, is the realisation that most of what we would characterise as basic commitments or absolute presupposition stems from our heritage. "Humanity is an inherited deposit taken on trust".⁷² "Our civilization is deeply committed to certain/

69. Coulson, "Christianity in an Age of Science" Riddell Memorial Lecture, p.28

70. Torrance, God and Rationality, p.8.

71. Polanyi, ibid, p.25

72. Farrer, "Revelation", p.87, Faith and Logic, B. Mitchell (ed.); K. Popper, Conjectures and Refutations, p.p.27,122.

certain beliefs about the nature of things; beliefs which are different, for example, from those to which the early Egyptian or the Aztec civilizations were committed."⁷³ These beliefs are imparted usually by education, or through professional training, and from all aspects of literature and informal personal contacts we have, and "these beliefs form far-reaching systems, and though each of us is directly affected only by one limited part of them, we are committed by implication to the whole pattern of which this is a part."⁷⁴ Given that much of our moral, metaphysical, scientific, and personal outlook is imbued into us socially and culturally,⁷⁵ we can realise that commitment is something much less existential, isolated, and common, than we are normally led to believe. Rather it tends to be acquiescing in the choices of others,⁷⁶ unless the situation is a novel one, or has special features. On this basis, Bartley's analysis of what commitment is, is radically undermined both on the grounds that he has failed to analyse some of the notions related to and involved in commitment, and to weigh the importance of these features, but also because he may have been misled by modern literature on the theme of commitment, into overstating the occasions and the nature of the act of commitment. Perhaps, rather the need is to stress the basic background against which and in light of which all our thinking and reasoning, evaluating,/

73. Polanyi, *ibid.*, p.p.27-8; Evans-Pritchard, "Levy-Bruhl's Theory of Primitive Mentality", Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts, University of Egypt 1934.

74. Polanyi, *ibid.*, p.26

75. Walsh, "Pride, Shame, and Responsibility", Philosophy, VolXLV 1970

76. J. Mabbott, "Punishment", The Philosophy of Punishment H. Acton (ed.) p.51

evaluating and decision-making, is carried out. If Bartley wishes to claim that the commitment to rationality is different from this sort of background, he needs to argue his case.

Bartley's view of the arbitrary commitment to call a halt to the infinite regress, has not stood up to analysis. The criticism has been based on analysing the three notions of infinite regress, arbitrariness, and commitment, and seeing that Bartley does not examine what is involved in these concepts, and in the practice of them, and whether they lend themselves to the problem of rationality which Bartley claims they do. Without a clearer account of the rationalist dilemma by means of conceptual clarification of regress, arbitrariness, and commitment, there seems not to be the problem that Bartley thinks there is and provides a solution to. But it may be responded, that one is still left with irrationalism, and that this must always pose a threat to rationalism. The question has been raised as to whether the irrationalist can make use of the rational excuse for irrationalism, which Bartley thinks is open to him.⁷⁷ But is irrationalism so clearcut as Bartley claims, and are the views which he designates as "irrational" genuinely so? The basic problem is that Bartley fails adequately to describe the differences between being within and being outside a system. H.A. Hodges has examined this problem and comments:- "Such systems are logically watertight; if you take up your position firmly within one of them, you can turn the edge of any objection that may be brought against it. There is a Christian interpretation of any facts or alleged/

77. See above p. 43

alleged facts which may be brought as evidence against christianity; just as there are several non-christian interpretations of those facts or alleged facts which are brought forward as evidence in support of christianity. To one who is a christian, his own interpretations are bound to seem the natural and obvious ones, and the others will appear forced and unreasonable; while to one who is not a christian the reverse will appear to be the case. For this reason, argument between adherents of such conflicting systems is usually a mere beating of the air. Each participant remains at the end where he was at the beginning, only marvelling at the unreasonableness of his opponent."⁷⁸ T.S. Kuhn has also examined the notion of system and the idea that within a system there are built-in standards, "paradigms", which are accepted and used for all true/false, adequate/inadequate, useful/useless conflicts.⁷⁹ The differences between systems and beliefs, and how one can move from one view to another needs to be further examined, but what is important is that Bartley appears to assume that the irrationalists fail to come up to some standard.⁸⁰ But to the so-called irrationalist, safely within his own system, his own view may appear perfectly logical and rational. Bartley has failed to note the importance of and the causes of conflict and change within and between various systems, and seems unaware of the dynamics of such situations. This is an example of Bartley failing to take seriously enough the role that criticism plays and discussion of a view with someone who holds a different view. He seems to understand discussion and criticism in terms that there is one sort of argument and standard of argument which all discussion and argument conform to. Thus it can/

78 H. Hodges, "Languages, Standpoints, and Attitudes", p.p.57-8; see above chapter one, p.7

79 T.S. Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions.

80 Q.p.96a.

can be better understood when he comes to present his own view why he leaves no room for genuine criticism and discussion, by failing to realise the variety of types and style of argument and the importance of different presuppositions as they affect the way in which people actually argue and present their material for consideration. For there to be such consideration the presentation of a view must allow room for the critic to express his opinion and criticism.

Bartley allows no room for a possible third category between "rational" and "irrational", that of "non-rational". It cannot be assumed without argument that if something does not come up to a standard of rationality that it is automatically irrational. As was seen with the notion "arbitrary", there was definitely a category of non-capricious explanations, which might not conform to a strict rationality, yet was necessarily informal, and none the worse for that. This category would allow the response to a demand for a rational basis, that the epithet "rational" could not and did not apply.

This section has been devoted to examining Bartley's account of the sceptical-fideist position and the threat it is supposed to constitute. It has been shown that his analysis is faulty, his treatment inadequate, his statement of the problem too brief, and that he fails to take account of important and relevant features especially in relation to the other limits of rationality. We have tried to dissolve the problem both at the level of the rational excuse for irrationalism, and the dilemma of ultimate commitment, and thus argue that/

that no matter what solution Bartley offers, it is beside the point, until and unless he is able to constitute his view clearly. There seems no genuine problem on Bartley's terms, hence the approach and solution are unnecessary.

2. Bartley's Approach to Rationality.

Bartley's problem is not what he thought it was and he fails to make out a case for it. He overlooks what is important both in relation to the variety of limits of rationality and in the failure to give a thoroughgoing account of the sceptic-fideist problem and the rationalist dilemma in terms of infinite regress, arbitrariness, and commitment. He omits what ought not to be omitted. The basic criticism against Bartley rested on three grounds. The first has been examined i.e. his failure to examine the notion of limits and his failure to give an adequate examination to the central notions involved in rationality. Attention is now centred on the second ground of criticism, i.e. that Bartley's own account is not in itself valid. Even if he has not successfully argued for the problem of rationality, his approach must still be examined and weighed up on the assumption, for the meantime, that he has clearly stated the problem and that it is as stated. Given this assumption, what is the adequacy of Bartley's approach and methodology? The approach is intimately bound up with the way that the problem is set. Bartley delineates the dilemma as the inability of the traditional rationalist to live up to his own standard of rationality.¹ Is there here a genuine problem? Bartley suggests that the rationalist is in a crisis of integrity because he fails to live up to his ideal of rationality.²

Bartley/

1. See above p.p. 24

2. See above p.p. 27

3.

Bartley fails to draw any distinction between failure to live up to one's ideals and having no ideals at all. What is it to have an ideal? It is an empirical notion which involves, as it were, a necessary falling short. Would one continue to have an ideal if one achieved the ideal all the time or even regularly?³ Rather, it would commonly be said that an ideal is something out of reach, which is aimed for and which is used as an absolute standard or guideline; yet which is not regularly, or perhaps even ever, achieved. The ideal, woman, ideal job, ideal teacher, and ideal rationality are none the worse for the failing to obtain any of these things, and are nonetheless real. An ideal involves the notion of a standard which can be kept or failed to be kept. Yet our ideals have exceptions, as scientific laws have exceptions, and indeed legal systems too. Language is not so rigid and logical as Bartley seems to assume, for it allows for the "falling short" of an ideal. There is a whole gamut of exceptions, mitigating circumstances, allowances, mistakes, cheats, and pretenders built into talk of ideals and standards. It is the nature of both people and society to allow for failure.⁴ Since this is the case, there is no serious problem for the rationalist vis a vis integrity. It need not be part and parcel of his exposition of rationality that one must always come up to the perfect standard. This is surely the point of Hume's critique of Rationalism: to show that reason itself is not and cannot be enough. Because/

3. See below, chapter four, p.p. 271ff. For a similar point see J. Urnson's discussion of supererogation in "Saints and Heroes", Moral Concepts, J. Feinberg (ed.)

4. Hare, Language of Morals; S. Hampshire, Thought and Action.

Because one is not always totally rational, need not give one qualms about trying to be rational. It is not so much a condemnation of one's theory of rationality as a comment about the way the world is.

By failing to examine the notion of standards and exceptions to such standards, Bartley fails to discuss alternative solutions, or rather dissolutions of his problem. The problem might well be described as a "straw man", for Bartley seems to assume some notion of "choosing" or "not choosing" one's rationality. The way he presents the crises of identity and integrity is such that one can either opt for or against rationality. Even after his solution, he allows that one can still choose to be irrational.⁵ Bartley seems to be working with the confusion between keeping a law or standard and choosing one,⁶ and the different nature of justification that is required in each case. As has been already mentioned in the passage on commitment, there is a distinction between entering a tradition and upholding it, and rarely, if ever, do we genuinely enter into a viewpoint in some isolated, existential fashion. Rather we grow up within a tradition and continue to uphold it.⁷ There may be some point at which choice to reaffirm the basic tenets of the position is made, rather than to continue to uphold it blindly, but this is still different in kind from choosing a viewpoint from scratch. Rationality is entered into - if indeed that makes sense - as a going concern/

5. Q.p.p.326-7.

6. J. Rawls, "Two Concepts of Rules"; J. Mabbot, "Punishment"; J. Urmson, "On Grading", Logic and Language, A. Flew (ed.) Second series.

7. See above p.p.61ff; see below, chapter four, section two, part three.

concern, and one wonders what sense one can attach to the notion of choosing a rationality or rationality itself. How could this choice or its alternative be framed? How could it be thought at all? This failure to separate justification of practice or position, from an individual action or part of either, leads only to confusion, and part of the importance of moral and political philosophy as well as philosophy of religion, is to put this in the proper perspective. Bartley has fallen victim to the same tendency to confuse the two, and as a result, creates an unreal problem.

The basic oddity of Bartley's critique is best seen by comparing the dilemma he presents - can one be rational about one's rationality?⁸ - with other similar questions. Is logic logical? Is beauty beautiful? Is good good? The striking thing about such questions is their extreme oddity, and the feeling of unease they elicit. An inappropriateness about them is felt, which, though it may be hard to delineate, is nonetheless real. The fear is that these are nonsense questions, and this fear is strengthened by the fact that a response is not forthcoming. "Of course", one wishes to say "logic is perfectly logical"; yet this conclusion seems to have been arrived at by logic itself. Bartley does not examine what it is to ask this sort of question and systematic ambiguity implicit in all such questions. As Wittgenstein's example of the standard yard length and his question whether or not it is a yard long reveals, there is a point at which questioning must stop.⁹ This point may vary and we may stop where we/

8. Q.p.p.44-5; RvR.p.8; see below, chapter four p.p. 270

9. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, § 50.

we are unable to respond to the question, either when the question has defeated us and we must change our view, or when we nevertheless retain our view with the response that someday we will have an answer to the question. One may also stop the questioning, when it is a nonsense question or invites a nonsense answer. But there is also the point at which it is unreasonable to ask for further evidence. For example, the wife who keeps asking her husband whether he loves her, though in all that he does and says he is revealing his love. The husband has married his wife, gives her a generous allowance, helps in the home, takes her out regularly, brings her flowers and chocolates, never forgets birthdays or anniversaries, and constantly expresses his affection in word and action, at the same time giving no ground or suggestion for the belief that he is not a faithful, thoughtful, loving husband. To such a man, the question, "Do you really love me?" must seem unreal and unanswerable in any other way than has already been done. Such a question must come to an end. What needs to be clarified is whether or not any of these stopping points has been reached, and therefore whether refusing to answer is justified. There is also the need to separate clearly choosing a standard and abiding by that standard.¹⁰ Thus we are back to the previous paragraphs, and the discussion of entering or upholding a tradition. There seems little sense that we can attach to the idea of using rationality to somehow reach that rationality.

Again we are confronted with Bartley's failure to clarify his conception of what rationality is. In the last section, some alternative/

10. Urmson, "On Grading".

alternative views of rationality were examined and specific features which were considered to be important. There are many such features such as universality, generality, universal validity, but one central one is the connection of rationality with the ability and the practice of argument. Bartley himself claims to offer arguments for his position and to approach the theory of rationality, as that in which people seek to learn more by the process of critical argument.¹¹ But what is this process of argument, and why is no analysis of this offered by Bartley?

This section is devoted to examination of the adequacy of Bartley's approach to the problem he claims to present. My criticism rests on the ground that he has failed to give an account which is in itself adequate. His account is also inadequate to the complexity of rationality. Without an account of the role of ideals and standards, the notions of exceptions to standards, the choice of standards over and against the choice on the basis of such standards, Bartley's case is weakened and his position is not valid as it stands. This criticism may again be associated with that from an earlier section: that Bartley omits important limits by concentrating on the limit of logic alone.

Bartley relates that his approach is concentrated solely on the logical problem for the rationalist; yet his approach is characterised by psychological terminology.¹² He talks of crises of identity and integrity, and draws his description of these from psychology. It is unclear whether Bartley is offering a conceptual or a contextual clarification./

11. R.C.p.viii.

12. See above p.27 see Watkins' discussion part four below.

clarification. The logical limitation is crucial, Bartley claims, because it rules out rationality from the very start, if successful. We have seen that the logical problem is misconstrued, and that there are considerable other limitations of rationality. The preference for the logical limitations rather than the verbal, epistemological, social, and conceptual limitations is not a clear-cut distinction, and one is left wondering if Bartley is trying to give an account of some feature of the world, or of some feature of human beings. One wonders whether we do not, in practice, know these limits, and we would better benefit from an account of how far understanding of the logical limits would take one, and why this supposed logical account^t is veiled in psychological jargon. Even if he is justified in selecting the logical problem of limits and has proved his case, he has then provided no more than a necessary condition for rationality, but certainly not a sufficient one. Thus he needs to supplement his account, given its success, with an account of the factual, physical, psychological, and practical limits and possibilities of rationality.¹³

A feature of Bartley's approach is the "common structure to failure" shared by rationalist positions.¹⁴ For this, Bartley lumps together Descartes and Hume - the rationalist and empiricist schools - stressing that both views beg authoritarian questions and answers. While there is much to sympathise with in this view that there is a basic underlying authoritarian structure, one wonders to what extent Bartley is justified in sliding over the very basic differences between reason and experience, and/

13. Chapter four, section two.

14. R.C.p.110ff; RvR.p.p.11ff.

and the varying attitudes these two views have towards them. Is there such a common structure as Bartley claims, and is this common structure integral to rationality? Further, is this "retreat", if it be such, to authority, as irrational and unsavoury as Bartley and Popper seem to think. There is at least room for argument on the point. C.K. Grant suggests that "the decision to believe an authority is not irrational so long as the statements at issue are subject to the appropriate kinds of test; whether I could make the tests or understand them is irrelevant. The essential point is that the choice of an authority is not necessarily an arbitrary fiat of the will; I do not have to be an astronomer, even an amateur one, to have good reasons for taking Professor Hoyle's word about the stars rather than that of Mme. Zora. There are different sorts of evidence that can justify, and so make rational, an empirical belief."¹⁵ Bartley needs to argue the point, not just assume it. Bartley is muddled, for though he talks of rationality as opposed to theory of rationality, one is still unclear whether it is epistemology which is the heart of his position, or rather the precursor of any epistemology in terms of features either of the world, of man, or of the structure of the reasoning faculties.

The criticism against Bartley in this section has been against his statement of the problem of rationality as the failure to live up to that standard and the attendant difficulties this raises. He has oversimplified the situation by talk of standards and ideals without analysis of what is involved in having such standards and ideals, how exceptions/

15. C.K. Grant, "Belief and Action", Inaugural Lecture, University of Durham, 1960 p.16.

exceptions affect them, and the difference between choosing a standard and abiding by an already accepted standard. Bartley fails to take account of these concepts and how they relate to actual argument, and discussion. His account is not in itself adequate and also concentrates on one limit to the exclusion of others which are equally important if rationality is to be understood. In the next section his alternative theory will be examined with a view to criticism on the grounds that his solution is in fact not adequate either to his own needs or to the complexity of rationality as it is found in actual argument and discussion. The new insights which Bartley claims that Popper has brought to rationality will be examined. It is claimed that Bartley has in fact failed to make out his case and that his approach is faulty, but for the sake of understanding his position and its dangers as well as for the sake of argument it will be assumed that his method is impeccable and attention turned to his solution to test its adequacy.

3. An Alternative Theory of Rationality

There are two key terms in the solution of the problem of rationality, as Bartley outlines it. These are "criticism" and "justification". Bartley's new philosophy, or rather his version of Popper's old one, is called the "nonjustificational philosophy of criticism".¹

These key notions will be examined in turn, before a more general criticism of his solution is offered.

Nietzsche commented that "efforts to justify smack of indecent exposure".² It would appear that Bartley would agree. He defines justification as the giving of good reason.³ A rational defence is the giving of good reasons to justify. This same view is characterised by A. Flew, where he asserts that "the use of 'justification' (is) a near synonym for 'reason for'".⁴ There are two points at issue. Is justification the giving of reasons, and is it the giving of good reasons? These are not the same, and because Bartley slurs them together, it is unclear which he favours. It is certainly not sufficient to state that justification is the same as giving reasons for. There are at least three basic differences. 1. "I can explain my action only by giving the reason which actually motivated me, and not by giving some reason which might have motivated me but did not... an act may be justified by pointing out any reason in its favour, whether that reason motivated the agent or not."⁵ 2. "I can explain my act, by giving my reasons to anyone who is curious; but it makes sense/

1. See above p.p. 31

2. Nietzsche, The will to Power.

3. Q.p.3; RvR.p.6.

4. A.Flew's essay, The Philosophy of Punishment, H. Acton (ed.)p.88.

5. J. Rachels, "Wants, Reasons, and Justification", Philosophical Quarterly, 18, 1968, p.p.306-7.

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sense to justify my act only in the face of prima facie reason why I shouldn't do it. If there is no reason why I should not do A, then a justification of A is not called for."⁶ 3. "Not every act done for a reason is justifiable ... There is no difference between justifying an act and successfully justifying an act. When I fail to justify my act because the reasons I give won't wash, I do not give a bad justification: I have not justified it at all."⁷ Justification is not equivalent to giving reasons for.

Bartley regards justification however, as the giving of good reasons. But this is in error, as is shown by the fact that any reason cannot count as a justification. Bartley offers no clue as to what is to count as good or bad reasons, whether in general or in a particular situation, nor what it is to justify adequately as opposed to inadequate attempts at justifying. Our "good reasons" can be dismissed by the other party as in fact "poor" reasons. But our excellent justification does not become a poor justification, rather it is, then no justification at all. Part of this problem again lies in Bartley's failure to examine what the main features of justification are. We have already seen that "justification" differs from "giving reasons".

Justification usually tends to be backward looking. Calley kills the Vietnamese, and is brought to trial to justify his actions. Justification tends to be of something which has already occurred. There are exceptions to this, where one might justify a course of action prior to embarking on it, or an attitude that one is about to adopt/

6. Rachels, ibid, p.307

7. Rachels, ibid, p.307

adopt, but even in these cases the action or opinion in question is one that is readily identifiable by both parties. Part of the success of justification depends on this basic agreement in description of the act or opinion to be justified. Necessarily there must also be agreement as to what is to count as "having justified" something, and of what "failing to justify" consists. Justification is appropriate in response to a question or criticism. That is to say that there must be genuine alternatives open to the person. As Flew puts it:-

"That there must be at least one alternative is brought out by considering that 'There is no alternative' is always either a sufficient justification or a sufficient reason for saying that the question of justification does not arise."⁸

A.P. Griffiths also remarks that "When it is suggested that there is a reason for acting in one way rather than another, the suggestion requires justification, in the absence of which the suggestion may be reasonably ignored."⁹

There can be no criticism or questioning if one is in a situation where there is no alternative or choice. This also entails that where there is no criticism, no question, or no alternative, there can be no demand for justification or need to justify. One responds that the justification demand is inappropriate.

Wittgenstein commented that justifications must come to an end somewhere.¹⁰

There have, however, been a variety of stopping-points for justification. Quinton in his Encyclopaedia article on "Knowledge and Belief" says:-

"Philosophers/

8. Flew, ibid, p. 89

9. "Ultimate Moral Principles: Their Justification", Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Vol.8, p. 181

10. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, 217, 485; P. Winch, The Idea of a Social Science, p.39.

"Philosophers have fastened on two forms of intuitive knowledge which, by standing as the uninferred first premises of all inference, can terminate the regress of justification. First there are self-evident necessary truths, and, second, there are basic contingent statements, immediately justified by the experiences they report and not dependent on the support of any further storable items of knowledge."¹¹ Mabbott points out that in Flew's analysis of punishment he talks only of justifying "something as an alternative to something else or against a counter-charge, and these two justifications might well differ. Flew adds that we may also justify something by reference to principles and persons."¹² More basically we can see that part of this notion of justification reaching an end, must be seen in light of recognising that in fact we do vary our justification attempts according to circumstances, the object in question, the person who is making the justification demand, the strength of that demand, and its nature, as well as according to our own view of the propriety of justification. For example, "a sufficient justification for inferring a conclusion from a set of premises is to see that the conclusion does in fact follow. To insist on any further justification is not to be extra cautious; it is to display a misunderstanding of what inference is. Learning to infer is not just a matter of being taught about explicit logical relations between propositions; it is learning to do something."¹³ Also on the notion of justifying induction, "It appears upon examination that/

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11. Quinon, "Knowledge and Belief", Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Vol. 4.p.346.
 12. J. Mabbott, "Professor Flew on Punishment", The Philosophy of Punishment, H. Acton /Ed./ p.119.
 13. Winch, The Idea of a Social Science, p.57.

that the task of the logical justification of induction, as classically conceived, is framed so as to be a priori impossible of solution. If induction is by definition nondeductive and if the demand for justification is, at bottom, that induction be shown to satisfy the conditions of correctness appropriate only to deduction, then the task is certainly hopeless. But to conclude, for this reason, that induction is basically invalid or that a belief based upon inductive grounds can never be reasonable is to transfer, in a manner all too enticing, criteria of evaluation from one domain to another domain, in which they are inappropriate."¹⁴ Justification varies according to the object in question, and according to the person. "What would serve as justification against one charge and for a Roman Catholic could be simply irrelevant against another and for an atheist humanist... In any one context (i.e. where the same values are given to all the variables) there may be two logically separate acceptable justifications both independently sufficient. And surely this is not merely possible but likely. For the fields of human causation, motivation, and justification are precisely those in which overdetermination is most common. (An action is said to be overdetermined when at least two motives were at work to produce it, either of which alone could have been sufficiently strong to do so separately. The concept, mutatis mutandis, obviously can and should also be applied to matters of causation and justification."¹⁵ Bartlett comments that:- "There are two/

14. M. Black, "Induction", Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Vol 4. p.177

15. Flew in essay in The Philosophy of Punishment, Action (ed.) p.89

two types of justification. One, properly called verification, consist in discovering steps which are connected in a chain of cause and effect, or of reason and consequent, from the evidence as it has been presented to whatever completion has been believed. The details, items, or events in this chain are all treated as having properties in no way different from those of the items of the initial evidence. The other type of justification is by results and in action on the part of the believers. The first kind disposes of belief, replacing it by scientifically or intellectually attested understanding. The second kind seeks to make the belief stronger and more clearly necessary."¹⁶ Bartlett himself favours the latter believing that "the only available decisive justification is in terms of results. Anyone who rejects thismust either fall back upon a purely intuitive position, saying that a belief's justification is exactly the same thing as a belief's acceptance, or must try to rest a case on internal consistency within a belief system."¹⁷

Bartley fails to analyse out this notion of justification, and to clarify both conceptual and contextual justification. He is concerned with justifying rationality as a whole, but draws no distinction between justifying one particular rational action or belief and the holistic justification he seeks. This crucial distinction between justification of an act and of a practice, has already figured largely in this account,¹⁸ but Bartley must give some analysis of the need to justify/

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16. Sir Frederick Bartlett, "Religion as Experience, Belief, Action", Riddell Memorial Lecture, p.36
 17. Bartlett, ibid, p.p.26-7
 18. See above p.p 69 ff and footnote 6 p.p.69 ff; J. Rawls, "Two Concepts of Rules" Philosophical Review, Vol. LXIV, 1955, p.32.

justify the practice as a whole, given that the rationalist is able to make genuinely rational decisions and to hold more or less rational views in practice. Part of the systematic ambiguity of "justification" is that it can refer either to actions or opinions and views, but nowhere does Bartley comment on this distinction or analyse its importance. It is surely better to clarify exactly what concepts we are seeking to understand and replace before we try to replace them to solve a problem which may be conceptually or contextually dissolved.

Bartley seeks to rid us of justification, but it is unclear what this is. If taken literally, one might no longer be required to justify one's actions or views. What would then happen to our understanding of "justifiable homicide" or "justifiable criticism"? Justification seems to be an essential feature in response to criticism, given the appropriate conditions. Unmitigated criticism is not an explication of the way we live, and Bartley must show more clearly that justification inevitably breaks down. This he has not done. Thus there is a good deal more to justification than Bartley seems to think and his account is faulty because of failing to note the necessary point and strength of justification in practice.

Turning from "justification" to the other key term "criticism", this concept will be examined, and then, in light of this, Bartley's position evaluated and his failure to examine criticism and its role in argument will be noted while seeking to present the very features Bartley overlooks. In other words, the complaint against Bartley at this/

this point is that his own account is internally invalid because of his failure to examine both the concepts of "justification" and "criticism", and that an adequate approach to rationality must not only raise the question of the nature of criticism and its relation to rationality, but seek to analyse "criticism" to clarify the nature of rationality. Bartley presents the correct issue but does not deal with it successfully nor adequately. He gives a good example of the important features of rationality which require to be grasped to apply it successfully to argument, while himself failing to go far enough.

Some of the basic features of "criticism" are as follows; criticism requires standards. By this is meant that one needs to know what is to count as criticism, **as well as its means and modes.**

It will be seen that there are different kinds and types of criticism, and, this being the case, the need for definition of standards of and for criticism becomes all the more essential. Criticism itself need not be so destructive as Bartley seems to imply. Criticism, in essence, ought to be based on neutrality, allowing for both positive and negative criticisms. "To criticise is always to judge, but in popular speech there is often the additional suggestion that the judgment is adverse but criticism can also be favourable, and more generally it can refer to the whole process of evaluation, whether its conclusions are favourable or unfavourable."¹⁹ Criticism also presupposes that one is acquainted in some way with the object of criticism. "A necessary condition of holding the right to criticise cannot, then, be direct experience/

19. R.S. Downie, "The Right to Criticise", Philosophy, Vol.XLIV, 1969, p.116.

experience of what we are criticising, but may, more generally, be knowledge of it; we must be correctly informed about the facts (if we have not ourselves experienced them) otherwise our right to criticise can be blocked, as when we say, 'You don't know all the facts, so you have no right to criticise'."²⁰ The occasion of criticism most generally results when something goes wrong. When there is some failure or error, criticism in order to bring about change or improvement, or to eliminate error is appropriate. Acton comments that:- "Criticism, even when directed on statements or theories, is an attempt to secure correction!"²¹ That is, there is little occasion for criticism, if everything is satisfactory. This, however, is not strictly correct, for one might criticise on the basis of tightening up particular conceptual weaknesses, or in order to bring "into fuller light the truth expressed in a doctrine or the value of an institution."²² Thus criticism may be apposite to clarification, explanation, and understanding, as well as the removal or mitigation of error. If this is the case, then Bartley's attack on the "tu quoque" is weakened, because even within an arbitrary commitment, few, if any irrationalist, would wish to claim that there is no room for criticism based on descriptive and explicative terms. The "tu quoque" is not the end of all criticism. Criticism also implies that one has appropriate backing for the criticism. "One way of denying that a person has that right (i.e. to criticise) is to deny that he can provide the appropriate backing for his criticism ... The attempt to criticise may be blocked before the question of backing can arise at all."²³/

20. Downie, *ibid*, p.117

21. Acton's introduction, The Philosophy of Punishment, Acton (ed.)p.35.

22. Sorley, "Tradition", p.24.

23. Downie, *ibid*, p.116.

all."²³ This backing may be in the form of evidence, or authority. Understanding and intelligence are also presupposed, in that it is assumed that there is the capacity to follow the criticism and see the point of it. This leads naturally to the capacity to adapt in light of criticism, or to meet the criticism in some other way. One must have, therefore, the opportunity to answer the criticism either by counter argument or by the ability to benefit from it in practice. Downie comments that criticism, specifically, is usually of "people, their actions or their artefacts" and this "may be either moral or non-moral".²⁴ This is important. We would not criticise a child unless he was able to appreciate the criticism and benefit from it - at least, we would not criticise to any point, unless this were so. If one is confronted with a compulsive alcoholic, physically and psychologically, criticism would seem out of place in light of his problem. More especially, if one were confronted with a situation where one could criticise an old lady for what she had done, but the effect of that criticism would be to drive her to suicide, one would be aware of the need to judge whether or not it was appropriate to criticise, regardless of the consequences and morality of the action.

In general, it has become clear that criticism can be more or less appropriate, and that inevitably criticism must vary with circumstances, the personal relation one bears to the person criticised, the object criticised, and one's view of the object or belief. It is crucial that the/

23. Downie, *ibid*, p.116

24. Downie, *ibid*, p.116

the diversity of objects of criticism and that the appropriateness of different sorts of criticism be understood. One might criticise ideas, traditions, institutions, values, morals, people, and states of affairs. These vary in the type and nature of criticism which is appropriate. One might offer theoretical, practical, psychological, psychoanalytic, moral, or religious criticisms. The standards and modes of approach in each case must vary considerably. So, too, there are different levels of criticism, in the sense of the holistic approach, or the analytic, or perhaps some other free-form, abstract criticism. Polanyi makes this point by use of the illustration of a pianist and his playing a sonata, then analysing the musical phrases, finger by finger, so that he loses the capacity properly to play the sonata as a whole.²⁵ This is a crucial point, which Polanyi describes as a distinction between proximal and distal.²⁶ This applies too to criticism. One may try to criticise the individual brushstrokes or the setting of the characters in a picture. These require different modes and standards. Even Popper realises that anything, but specifically the analysis of the problem of change, is "in danger of being completely buried under the mounting heap of the minutiae of textual criticism."²⁷ That is, that excessive detailed criticism can destroy the appreciation of the whole, and vice versa.

Bartley ought to have offered a similar analysis of what is involved/

25. M. Polanyi, The Tacit Dimension, p.19

26. M. Polani, "Tacit Knowing", The Tacit Dimension

27. K. Popper, "Back to the Pre-Socratics", Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Vol. LIX, 1958-9. p.p.9-10.

involved in criticism, rather than merely stating that what is necessary is the nonjustificational philosophy of criticism. The point is whether or not Bartley's position is adequate to the complexity of rationality without such a closer analysis of such central features as "criticism" and the role they play in the practical effect of rationality in all types of argument. Can criticism, as it has been analysed, fulfil the role that Bartley has, by virtue of his philosophical predilection, carved out for it? Bartley suggests that everything is to be held open to criticism,²⁸ and that this criticism is infinite, yet not regressive. The regress has already been commented on, so now concentration centres on this idea of leaving everything open to criticism. It is not possible to hold everything open to criticism at once, as Bartley himself recognises,²⁹ for we need, as Urmson puts it, "a fixed point to move the world with one's lever".³⁰ The problem is, however, that it is unclear as to the basis on which the choice of a standpoint, from which to criticise all else, ought to be made. Everything cannot be held under the microscope at once, but are we as free as Bartley suggests to hold everything in turn under the microscope? It is not possible or desirable to hold **everything** open to criticism. There are certain very basic things which it is impossible to imagine ever doubting.³¹ Can it properly ever be doubted that $2+2=4$, or that humans ought to be moral, that murder is wrong, that time/

28. See above p.p. 31ff.

29. R.C.p.p.151-2.

30. Urmson, "On Grading", Logic and Language, A. Flew (ed.) p.409

31. See below "Recent discussion of Bartley".

time and space are somehow "given", or that person predicates are central to our humanity, and that machines are machines? There are, I believe, basic beliefs which cannot ever be questioned appropriately or even the form that such a questioning would take imagined. Bartley himself seems to agree with this point when he talks of logic being basic, and not open to revision in its primary form.³² But if this is the case, Bartley is surely contradicting the notion of holding everything open to criticism, especially if this is either impossible or unnecessary. If Bartley allows that certain things hold good by virtue of our role as "arguers about the world", how much more do certain things hold by virtue of being human?³³ One need not hold things open to criticism unless there is the occasion or need for criticism or response. It is, as Kuhn stresses, appropriate only in time of crisis.³⁴ Also it is necessary that there be the opportunity to resolve the criticism, or else it is irrelevant and inappropriate. Kuhn suggests the notion of a "crucial experiment" by which one is able to judge between two views.³⁵ It is not possible or necessary to hold everything open to criticism.

But this notion of "holding everything open to criticism", is itself puzzling. Attention has already been drawn to the different sorts of criticism and the need for standards. What is necessary is the delineation of a standard for this test of criticism, for the test being completed, and for successful completion. The problem is that/

32. Q.p.p.284-293; R.C.p.p.169-172.

33. Q.p.p.319-320; R.C.p.172.

34. Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, p.p.82-4

35. Kuhn, ibid.

that there are basic differences between criticism of a philosophy essay and a mathematical proof. Right/wrong, true/false, adequate/inadequate, pass/fail, are all very different dichotomies, and properly to understand the kind of criticism Bartley wishes to commend, we need a thorough account of what sort of standard and test Bartley's view of criticism entails.

There are also various moves by which one might seek to end criticism. Some of these were examined in the section on "justification". One might respond to criticism stating that it is not in order, i.e. criticism is beside the point. The grounds of this statement might be one of the following. Criticism is beside the point because it is irrelevant, in the sense that it is inappropriate to the object or belief under discussion. It may be beside the point in the sense that, even if it is true, it is as nothing compared with the belief or theory held. That is to say that one might accept the force of the criticism, yet reject the result of the criticism. This is in line with Job's comment concerning his faith in God, "Yea, though he slay me, yet I will trust Him."³⁶ This involves a value-judgement, but Bartley needs to show that this is inappropriate in light of the criticism offered. Another manoeuvre would be to respond to the criticism by suggesting that there is something wrong with it, though at the moment, one is not certain what is wrong. One is saying that one will someday, somehow, prove that the criticism is wrong. More basically,/

36. Job, chapter xiii, v.15

basically, one might simply claim that for the time being, the view or belief must be held beyond criticism, because it is essential to the methodology that one is following, or the experiment one is conducting. More simply yet, one may simply answer the criticisms and thus dissolve them. One need not, without a good deal of argument, retreat to acceptance of commitment, as Bartley assumes.

Bartley's view of criticism is lacking in detailed analysis, and his claim to hold everything open to criticism is stated without examining the alternative steps available. However, Bartley's position has more specific problems. It will be seen that Bartley's view is overlogical, and accordingly too narrow, when his presentation of the various checks, which he claims are central to criticism is examined. What is the basis of criticism which Bartley suggests is necessary? Is it reason or experience? Or is it the case that one takes the data from anywhere and everywhere? If this is the case, and this appears implicit in Bartley's account, some standard is still needed to judge the adequacy and success of the criticism. To do this properly one needs to know and evaluate the bases of criticism. Bartley seems to presuppose that criticism is worth doing, rather than to indulge in description or preaching. This involves a value judgement, whether or not the irrationalist argument holds, for Bartley stresses the importance of risking error boldly to learn more about the world; but why should anyone adopt this stress rather than one of seeking, at all costs, to avoid error and maintain only what can be absolutely known? In a sense, Bartley's position seems to result from the fact that our rationality/

rationality is limited, and criticism enables us to escape from such limitations. The judgement that criticism must be used, must also be limited. Bartley makes no mention of this problem, and no attempt to respond to it. The problem is parallel to the theological statement of the fallenness of man, which itself must be a fallen statement. Similarly, Bartley claims that criticism is unlimited.³⁷ We might wonder if this is unlimited practically or theoretically or both. If it is possible to have all knowledge as a result of criticism, then total rationality is possible. This would seem unlikely, but Bartley offers no reason to accept proximate explanation over and against ultimate explanation.³⁸ Bartley states that his view of criticism is itself up for revision and criticism, but no means are given by which to criticise criticism, and Watkins analyses the very basic problem that this creates for Bartley.³⁹

The basic problem is that it leaves the critic no ground to stand on. This is part of the puzzle of Bartley's view. He first of all suggests that everything is open to criticism and that therefore, every kind of criticism must be accepted. But is this not ultimately to weaken the effect of criticism, by the inability to separate out what is important from the unimportant and the relevant from the irrelevant? For there to be genuine argument it is not sufficient merely to know what is to count as a valid argument, but also what is invalid. If all and every criticism is by definition allowed, then there can be no real/

37. Q.p.271; RvR.p.p.28-9

38. R. Hepburn, Christianity and Paradox.

39. See below, section, "Recent Discussion on Bartley."

real criticism for nothing is irrelevant and nothing unimportant. Part of the nature of criticism and argument rests on the fact that not all criticism is relevant or important so that one concentrates on what is important and relevant in order to appreciate better the nature of what one is discussing. It is like the faculty of memory. We do not and cannot recall everything we have seen and done, and if we did, as has been the case in certain notable cases, then there is the constant danger of breakdown, due to what can only be called overloading, where there is no selection taking place of the things which are important and relevant to recall and those which are useless and even positively harmful to our capacity to function successfully as human beings coping properly with our environment. Watkins takes this a step further and suggests that not only in effect but in its very nature Bartley's account runs into difficulties because it leaves no room for the critic to stand. This is in fact the third ground of criticism which is the background of the critique of Bartley. Firstly, the omission of other limits of rationality and central features of rationality was noted. Then it was argued that Bartley's own account was not in itself adequate for his own demands, nor was it adequate to the complexity of rationality. In other words, a fuller account of rationality is required. The final general ground of criticism has now emerged within the context of criticising Bartley in a fashion parallel to his own presentation. This is the unacceptable conclusion his position leads to. This is that the critic has no ground to stand on. This is the case from seeing the kind of account of criticism Bartley presents, but it is also the case from the very statement of Bartley's own thesis, as Watkins also has discovered.

An/

An attempt has been made to show the unclarity of Bartley's view and how it must break down in the face of closer analysis of what criticism is and how it is practised. But if it is assumed that Bartley is correct, it may be considered whether or not his view makes any genuine difference. The danger is that Bartley's view reduces to the idea that one will always be able to make some criticism against any view. This notion that some criticism will always be relevant, i.e. that there is always something to be said against a view, is singularly unhelpful. It trivialises criticism and reduces the position to a mere platitude. Yet until Bartley clarifies the difference between this trivial view and his own analysis of criticism, we are left with the situation where his view is unworkable in light of what criticism is, and thus must be in danger of reducing to a mere platitude.⁴⁰

Bartley suggests that what is of true importance is that we ought to learn about the world by critical argument.⁴¹ This is achieved by two main tools - testability and refutability. In other words the main stress is on criticism with a view to trying to falsify.⁴² The rationality of a belief is its ability to withstand criticism, and any "position may be held rationally regardless of justification provided it can be and is held open to criticism and survives severe testing".⁴³ There are a cluster of problems here. Is criticism and survival of testing the same thing? What are the standards for testing and adequate passing or failing of the test? What is the relation of these views/

40. J. Watkins, "Comprehensively Critical Rationalism", Philosophy, XLIV, 1969, p.58

41. R.C.p.vii, and below p.p.33 and footnote 46

42. R.C.p.p.147-8, 152, Q.p.97.

43. Q.p.93; 274-5; RvR p.28; see above p.31, footnote 35.

views to truth and error? Bartley tells us that views will and can be held only provisionally, for there might be successful refutation sometime.⁴⁴ But that there is no establishment of truth or error.⁴⁵ That is, even if a view is refuted by criticism, it may still be correct, and if a view survives testing and criticism, it may still, one day, be shown to be false. This is the standard with which Bartley and Popper wish to replace our traditional views. This inevitably conflicts with our views of right and wrong, true and false. There are some things which are just known to be true, and which can never be envisaged or conceptualised as changing. This must therefore, lead to the threat of relativism which Bartley seeks to avoid.⁴⁶ The position is similar to that of the Coherence theorists, who rejected absolute truth, and held that "rejection is provisional",⁴⁷ as was acceptance, i.e. truth had degrees of reality.⁴⁸ We normally believe that we have sufficient evidence to count many things as true, and we cannot easily believe that these ought to be held open to criticism, far less trying to give an account of what criticism could be appropriate to this theme. Bartley and Popper have been misled concerning the nature of truth, falsity and error by trying to fit these terms into a philosophy of science mould, derived from examination of scientific change, Popper comments:- "A false theory may be as great an achievement as a true one. And many false theories have been more helpful in our search for truth than some less interesting theories which are still accepted. For false theories can/

44. Q.p.p.274-5; K. Popper, The Logic of Scientific Discovery, p.50

45. RvR.p.p.28-9.

46. R.C.p.viii.

47. B.Bosanquet, Logic; Implication and Linear Inference; Bradley, Principles of Logic; Appearance and Reality.

48. Bradley, ibid, p.p.197, 236ff.

can be helpful in many ways: they may suggest some more or less radical modifications, and they may stimulate criticism."⁴⁹ All that may be true, but it does not change the fact that the theory is false and in general, we are more concerned with truth, in some sort of universal, general, enduring sense.

This criticism must also apply to Bartley's view that we can learn about the world by critical argument.⁵⁰ It was commented that his view of criticism was too narrow and overlogical. What is meant by this is that there is more to criticism than argument and logic. Rationality is not equivalent to logic, validity, or true premisses. Criticism, as has been seen, is relevant in psychological, moral, religious, and practical terms as well as in logical. Bartley fails to give an account of how his logical picture of testability and refutability, as features of criticism, compares and contrasts and is relevant to the many other kinds of criticism, which are more readily identifiable in our everyday living. Bambrough comments on such informal modes of explanation, giving two examples:- "One consists in the perception of hitherto unrecognised patterns in the otherwise bewildering and variegated details of facts that are themselves well known but imperfectly understood in their relations to one another. The other is the striving, no less rational for being also imaginative, to achieve a vivid realisation of the truth of what are already recognised as truths",⁵¹ and also refers to "occasions when we can achieve and convey knowledge and understanding by seeing and/

50. R.C.p.viii; and see above p.p.33

51. R. Bambrough, Reason, Truth and God, p.153.

and showing a pattern of relationships between a set of items in which each separate item is already available for inspection, where no item is hidden and no further data are called for, and where nevertheless, the process of exhibiting the pattern is not one of performing formal deductive transformations of the existing data or premises."⁵² There is a whole language of insight, emotion, feeling, intuition, empathy, sympathy, and general gestalt theory, which is appropriate to much of our moral and religious, as well as political and practical living. We are given no rationale for ignoring it, in favour of the adoption of logico-scientific criticisms. Bartley appears to leave little or no room for experience, faith, revelation, and insight, whether or not in the religious sense. He needs to offer a fuller appreciation of the informal characteristics which are the mark of much of our thinking and appreciation in art, religion, and even in some views of scientific progress. We learn more about the world informally by the means suggested, than by any process of critical argument. A more detailed presentation of the various limits of rationality would help obviate this criticism, but leads back to one of the three general attacks on Bartley, in this case, that he omits important features of rationality and the limits of rationality.

Bartley does offer some analysis of what he thinks is appropriate as an adequate basis of criticism. This is the four checks of logic, sense-observation, scientific theory, and the problem.⁵³ Bartley states that these are in descending order of importance, but he fails to tell us what is to be done if conflict arises between the various checks,/

52. Bambrough, ibid. p.59

53. Q.p.273; R.C.p.p.158-9

checks, and what value is to be put on them, given considerable variation in the applicability of each. In other words, a calculus is required of applicability and value. Bartley begins with logic. Consistency is necessary only if strictly logical standards are required. For example, allowances are made for people who behave inconsistently, and people still continue to have dealings with them despite their illogical behaviour. Logic tells us only if the relation between premise and conclusion is valid. Unfortunately, if it is not, we do not know wherein the breakdown lies, e.g. which premise is at fault. Logic is severely limited in this respect, and can only deal with formal structures. Given this, how is it to be used and compared with the check of sense-observation? The object of our sense-observation is to seek an empirical refutation, according to Bartley.⁵⁴ But surely sense-experience is also used in a more positive sense, to offer a proof of a position. Sense-observation can, however, lead astray, but logic may be no safeguard against this, witness the Flat Earth Society. Bartley has the check of scientific hypothesis. The problem here is the bewildering variety of opposing theories, which are still sub-judice, awaiting further evidence. What is the standard for choice between these theories? Bartley then lists the check of the problem and asks whether the theory solves the problem it is intended to. Bartley has limited the object of criticism to theories, without examining whether or not these are the sole objects of criticism. In short Bartley's four checks of criticism are neither adequately presented nor themselves easily integrated into one level of procedure. A clearer picture is required of what each check entails/

54. R.C.p.158.

entails and how each check relates to the others.

However, it is to this assumption of theories being designed to solve specific problems and indeed the more general assumption which he is making that knowledge is problem-based, that attention is turned. The problem is that the concept of "problem-based" knowledge fails to dictate what the problem is and whence it has arisen. Is it logical, conceptual, contextual, or social? This is relevant, for the approach and solution to each problem may vary considerably along a right/wrong, adequate/inadequate, better/worse scale. Mathematical problems have little in common with moral and metaphysical problems. Definitions of problems and of solutions must inevitably vary. The theologian may have a problem about the love of God and the presence of evil in the world: the politician of believing all men to be equal, yet by political necessity voting for an opposite view. The lover may have the problem of how to prove his love. The statements of, and solutions to these problems must vary in context and description, according to appropriateness to the problem concerned and according to the relevant limit of rationality involved, which Bartley does not deal with. More crucially, it is not always possible to know why a problem is solved and yet to have solved it. All knowledge is not problem-based and cannot be expounded in that mould.

"Love not me for comely grace
 For my pleasing eye or face,
 Nor for any outward part
 No, nor for my constant heart:
 For these may fail or turn to ill,
 So thou and I shall sever.
 Keep,/"

Keep, therefore, a true woman's eye,
 And love me still, but know not why...."⁵⁵

The knowledge that we are in love, like this painting, believe in God, recognise the equality of all men, and that promise-breaking is bad, is not based on any problem situation. A person may not be able to expound why he knows, but that is not to say that he does not know. There is some element of skill, appreciation, sympathy, and mastery which is basic to much of knowing how as well as knowing that. The question of the problem to be solved is not always appropriate, and without a closer account of the interrelation of these checks, which Bartley offers, it may be doubted whether he has established his case.

The argument has tried to show that Bartley's solution is faulty because of his failure to clarify and substantiate his claims for justification, criticism, error, and the critical checks he offers. But if it were allowed that Bartley's view was valid and coherent, the problem is still left of what the status of the view is. What exactly is he trying to do? To offer an account of human or of methodological limitations, of some feature of the world, or about humans in relation to the world? One wishes to know how Bartley arrived at his view, for at times he talks as if it were revelatory.⁵⁶ Is Bartley seeking to examine rationality itself, or the presuppositions of rationality, or the preconditions of rationality? The basic need is for some cashing out of his view by offering concrete examples of criticism at work.

It/

55. J. Wilbye's Second Set of Madrigals, Pageant of English Verse, p.35
 56. RvR.p.20

It would be particularly helpful if a clear account were given of the difference between being in or out of a system and what it is to adopt, to adapt, and to reject a system or theory of belief.

The danger which arises from Bartley's failure to give such a description is that on his own account there is no room for the critic to attack Bartley's view or anyone else's in a meaningful way. This arises from the points which have been made concerning the openness of C.C.R. to every criticism, Bartley's failure to distinguish between winning and losing an argument, and that error counts, in Bartley's view, for as much as truth. What this means is that in the actual situation of argument anything and everything is going to count, yet this must reduce the effectiveness of making the relevant and important points affect the situation by reducing them to the level of everything which is irrelevant and unimportant. Without having a standard for winning or losing an argument there can be no room for the critic because his position cannot stand over and against that of his opponent Bartley. For all that the critic may know he may be supporting Bartley, and indeed this is what Bartley tends to suggest when he talks about the need for others to criticise his view, but, of course, the more that they criticise the more will his case be proved to be correct. The problem is that if this is true and if as, he also suggests that error is as important and relevant as truth, then the critic can never win, there can be no conclusion to the argument or discussion except that which will favour Bartley, and this surely is the death of discussion and argument between opponents. There can in fact be no real opposition to Bartley for/

for in the very act of criticising or attacking him, one is simply proving his case. In argument between opposing views it is at least possible usually for the one to persuade the other and vice versa, but if this is no longer true, it must be questioned whether or not there is real argument and discussion. And if it is not real argument and discussion it suggests that there is something fatally wrong with Bartley's account.

The criticism of Bartley may be most generally summed up as the complaint of the failure on his part to clarify what he is doing, and to examine closely enough the concepts involved. As has been argued, be shown, the result of these failures has been to undermine the position of Bartley. The criticism has been based on his own account, yet has had three basic grounds behind it. It has been complained that he omits important limits and features of rationality, that his account is in itself inadequate as seen by the lack of details concerning justification and criticism, the difficulty of holding everything open to criticism, the oddity of seeking to falsify, and the inadequacy of the four checks offered by Bartley. This has been the particular stress in this section but with it, the final ground of criticism has also emerged, that of Bartley's exclusion of the possibility of criticism and attack against his view. A brief account of the little literature that has followed Bartley's work is now presented before evaluating Bartley's own evaluation of his work. Bartley's position concerns a basic view of what philosophy is: yet he ignores modern stresses in philosophy, e.g. linguistic and conceptual analysis, in favour of criticism. This needs evidence and support, as well as refutation of opposing views of philosophy.

4. Recent Discussion of Bartley

J.W.N. Watkins briefly outlines Bartley's Comprehensively Critical Rationalism as fulfilling the demand that it be rational according to its own account of rationality.¹ Once a supporter, Watkins claims that it will not do on the grounds that it is "a perfect example of what Dr. J. Giedymin calls a dictatorial strategy".² This means that C.C.R. (Watkins's abbreviation) is uncriticisable, whereas, for its integrity, it must be criticisable. Giedymin stresses that it should not be permitted that a chosen player may win the game, however it may go, and Watkins claims that this is exactly the position of the defender of C.C.R. Watkins analyses Bartley's position into two parts. "1. A rationalist can and should hold all his positions open to criticism",³ and "2. That a rationalist can and should hold all his positions open to criticism is a position that he can and should hold (so long as it withstands criticism)."⁴ This leads to "3. That a rationalist can and should hold all his positions open to criticism is itself a position that he can and should hold open to criticism."⁵ Watkins then discusses Bartley's own attempts to show that C.C.R. is not a position that can be held open to criticism. Watkins stresses that by "criticism" must be meant something non-trivial. He states:- "If no restriction were placed on 'criticisable', a challenge to show that C.C.R. is not criticisable could not possibly be met: it would be 'dictatorial strategy' in Giedymin's sense."⁶ Watkins claims that even in a restricted and non-trivial sense of "criticisable", Bartley's view is still a "dictatorial strategy".

Watkins/

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1. J. Watkins, "Comprehensively Critical Rationalism", Philosophy XLIV, 1969, p. 57
 2. Watkins, ibid, p.57; J. Giedymin, "A generalization of the Refutability Postulate", Studia Logica, 10, 1960.
 3. Watkins, ibid, p.58; R.C. p.146.
 4. Watkins, ibid, p.58
 5. Watkins, ibid, p. 58.
 6. Watkins, ibid, p.58.

Watkins examines Bartley's view of what counts as criticism. He notes the problem of arguing that one's own view is criticisable without over or underdoing that. Mere assertion is not enough, but conclusive proof rebuts the position. Bartley's line is that what is necessary would be "an argument showing that at least some of the unjustified and unjustifiable critical standards necessarily used by a comprehensively critical rationalist were criticisable to boot."⁷ This is not a genuine possibility, Watkins argues, for "no opponent could show that some standard used by a comprehensively critical rationalist is uncriticisable in the sense that it is not open to adverse comment of any kind. Suppose, however, that he produces a cogent argument purporting to show that it is not open to anything that Bartley counts as genuine criticism. Then that would constitute a highly damaging criticism of the standard in question, in view of the C.C.R. itself, which requires a rationalist to hold all his positions open to criticism. Hence it is impossible for a critic to show that a critical standard necessarily used by a comprehensively critical rationalist is uncriticisable."⁸ The anti-Bartley must show, on Bartley's account, that a standard is necessarily used by the comprehensively critical rationalist, and this is what Watkins claims is impossible because of the discursive nature of Bartley's account.

C.C.R. is not and cannot claim to be criticisable and be such, because/

7. Watkins, ibid. p.59

8. Watkins, ibid. p.59

because there is no risk that this will happen. This results from the relation of 1,2, and 3 above, so that any attempt to show the falsity of 3, must also be an argument for the falsity of 2 and 1, and, if proved, would show that C.C.R. is criticisable, thus proving that 3 is true.

"In support of the claim that C.C.R. is criticisable we are challenged to criticise it in a certain way - namely, by trying to show that it is uncriticisable!"⁹ Thus, "if the critic comes nowhere near to meeting the challenge, Bartley wins; and if the critic does come near to meeting the challenge, the critic loses, since his nearly successful criticism establishes criticisability. Bartley's anti-justificationism means that there is no onus on him to justify C.C.R.; the onus is on his critics to rebut it; but it is assured in advance that they cannot do what they are challenged to do. It seems a perfect example of Giedymin's 'dictatorial strategy'."¹⁰ Bartley's response would appear to be that this at least shows that C.C.R. is criticisable, but that we might separate out levels of criticism. Watkins replies that this "criticism" is merely "Pickwickian", and that the status of C.C.R. is basically faulty. Thus Watkins claims that the rationalist problem is still with us. His own solution is that the rationalist "should try to be as rational as he can about the beliefs and opinions he holds."¹¹ This can be held on moral grounds rather than rational, escaping any self-

9. Watkins, ibid, p.60

10. Watkins, ibid, p.60

11. Watkins, ibid, p.61

self-defeating position. The irrationalist cannot taunt that such a rationalist holds his fundamental beliefs in the same way as the irrationalist.

Agassi, Jarvie, and Settle reply to Watkins critique suggesting that he uses an "idea quite alien to Bartley's view, the idea, namely, that if a theory emerges from criticism, unharmed, then it emerges victorious."¹² Bartley, they claim, has no such maxim as, "endorse a victorious view".¹³ Bartley specifies only conditions for defeat, not for victory. "It does not follow that Bartley or Watkins or any other rationally inclined person has to embrace doctrines which have been successfully criticised."¹⁴ Agassi, Jarvi, and Settle then draw the distinction between a doctrine and a doctrine about doctrines, and argue that "as a doctrine it can be retained or given up whether or not it conforms to its own doctrine."¹⁵ Criticisability can be shown only after the event, and this "does not show that C.C.R. (or any other theory) has, will be, or should be, given up."¹⁶ Watkins, it is claimed, confuses criticisability with consistency, and "the vulnerability of C.C.R. to attack is independent of the fact that every attack establishes the criticisability of the program as a whole."¹⁷ This defence, however, "does not show that C.C.R. should be embraced."¹⁸ This is still an open question. Two brief appendices follow examining various/

12. Agassi, Jarvie, Settle, "The Grounds of Reason", Philosophy, XLVI, January, 1971, p.44.

13. Agassi, Jarvie, Settle, ibid, p.44

14. Agassi, Jarvie, Settle, ibid, p.45

15. Agassi, Jarvie, Settle, ibid, p.45

16. Agassi, Jarvie, Settle, ibid, p.45

17. Agassi, Jarvie, Settle, ibid, p.46

18. Agassi, Jarvie, Settle, ibid, p.46

various types of dogmatisms and the logic of openness to criticism and levels of criticisability. These are dependent on the success of the main argument.

If Agassi, Jarvie and Settle are correct and we do not need to give up any view which has been successfully criticised, then this seems to remove the whole point of criticism. If the criticism and severe testing make no difference to our embracing a doctrine, then arbitrariness and irrationality must win the day.¹⁹ If C.C.R.'s success is irrelevant to its acceptance, then it is not Bartley's view, and the psychological question is relevant, if C.C.R. is to solve the integrity problem.²⁰ If C.C.R. is successfully refuted and yet we are not forced to give up the doctrine, then this is again not Bartley's view, and it removes all point to refutation.²¹ Bartley stresses that a view must be put to the test, implying surely that the test matters and will lead to no irrationalist leap. We cannot separate the doctrine of C.C.R. from its own status as a doctrine, and the self-referring category of genuine uncriticisability must be taken more seriously, than merely stating the different meta-levels. If it is still an open question as to the acceptance or rejection of C.C.R., then Bartley must have failed and we still need a leap to allow us psychologically to accept any view. If so, Bartley was doomed from the start, having misunderstood the locus of/

19. RvR. p.30; R.C.p.147-8

20. RvR.p.p.8-9; R.C.p.p.3,10,58.

21. RvR.p.p.27,30-31; R.C.p.p.146-7; Q.p.p.97-8,319.

of the irrationalist attack.

Richmond comments that if Watkins is correct, then it is logically impossible for a critical rationalist to be rational about his rationalism, thus "it is irrational for him to attempt to be rational about his rationalism."²²

So, in not being rational about rationalism, the comprehensive and the comprehensively critical rationalist are being rational" This escape, however, is not open to Bartley as he claims that it is possible to be rational about one's rationalism.²³ Kekes concentrates on Watkins' alternative and points out that the moral excuse is open equally to the irrationalist,²⁴ that Watkins lays too much stress on a psychological rather than a logical account, and that he fails to distinguish rational belief from being a rational person.

Watkins seeks to respond to all three articles by first of all tightening up his formulation of C.C.R. The psychological influence is to the fore because of Bartley's own psychologicistic account.²⁵ The main thesis of C.C.R. now becomes, "All non-analytic and rationally acceptable statements are criticisable".²⁶ He returns to the point that the value of C.C.R. on Bartley's analysis is that it "may get refuted". For this to be true it cannot be analytic. Watkins isolates the self-referring nature of C.C.R., showing that the main thesis is either analytic or false, and that neither or these is satisfactory./

22. Richmond, "Can a Rationalist Be Rational About His Rationalism?", Philosophy, XLVI, Jan. 1971, p.p.54-5.

23. See above, p.p. 24, 27, 34

24. J. Kekes, "Watkins on Rationalism", Philosophy, XLVI, Jan. 1971, p.p.51-3

25. Watkins, "C.C.R. A Refutation", Philosophy, XLVI, Jan. 1971, p.p.54ff
see above p.p. 72, 83

26. Watkins, "C.C.R. A Refutation", p.56

satisfactory. "If the main constituents of C.C.R. are all analytic or false, it is not so surprising that C.C.R. has been accused of emptiness and uncriticisability and defended against such accusations with the claim that it may be false."²⁷ Agassi, Jarvi, and Settle's technique of analysing C.C.R. by meta-language statements is no more successful, as it ultimately reduces to Critical Rationalism. Watkins sums up with the remark that "anyone can say that he holds all his beliefs open to criticism; but for my part I know very well that it is psychologically impossible for me to hold all my beliefs genuinely open to criticism."²⁸ This means that " a good critical rationalist will try not to be more uncritical than he need be; but he will turn into a pseudo-rationalist if he pretends to be more critical than he can be."²⁹

Watkins refutation has three main strengths. It reveals the oddity of the self-referring nature of Bartley's position, as if one were trying to justify it by saying that one has been unable to refute it. If this last statement is not a justification, then it is not clear what its status is, and Watkins is correct in showing that it destroys the "integrity" of Bartley's solution. It draws out the confusion between and concerning "criticism" and "criticisability", and this is crucial to destroying Bartley's thesis. Finally, it reveals the impossibility of doing what C.C.R. Demands of us -
critising/

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27. Watkins, "C.C.R.: A Refutation", p.59, Kekes, ibid, p.51, Kekes suggests that Falsity will not do as a replacement for criticisability because Bartley sets the problem in terms of criticisability.
28. Watkins, "C.C.R.: A Refutation", p.61.
29. Watkins, "C.C.R.: A Refutation", p.61.

criticising everything.³⁰ We cannot and ought not to try to do that.

Watkins then brings out the damaging effect which results from Bartley's failure to leave room for the critic both in the death of all possible discussion and argument, but also in the basic doubt which it raises against Bartley's position as a whole.³¹ It again shows that there is something seriously wrong with Bartley's account of rationality and with the practical effects of his view. No view of rationality which excludes the possibility of criticism or improvement of that view can be held with a view which realises the importance of rationality in argument and discussion, which depend on and are geared to develop and deal with criticism and improvement or justification and defence of views.

30. See above p.87

31. See above, p.20ff.

5. The Value of the Alternative Theory

Before attention is turned to discussion of the value of Bartley's theory as he himself presents it a summary of what has been done is necessary. At the outset the attack on Bartley was described as resting on three grounds. It has been shown that he is guilty of important omissions especially in relation to the other limits of rationality. Of course, Bartley is aware that there are other limits of rationality, but he chooses to concentrate on what he regards as central. This is not the case and the very omission of these other features weakens the rest of his view. A fuller account is needed of the complexity of the limits of rationality. But regardless of what Bartley omits, fault may still be found with his account as it stands. In particular his failure to look carefully at the ideas of arbitrariness, justification and criticism, and his overstressing of commitment all lead him into internal difficulties which make his account unacceptable as an adequate theory of rationality. An attempt is made to overcome this by seeking to make easier the kind of specification of a whole way of life which Hare was arguing for to overcome arbitrariness and by looking more closely at the ideas of justification and criticism as they relate to the limits of rationality. The imbalance of commitment is corrected by examining the social limits of rationality. But the final area of divergence from Bartley concerns the failure on his account to allow genuine criticism to take place. Without allowing for and encouraging discussion and argument and analysing the relation of rationality to these central features of what is tended to be considered a rational man, then one would be guilty as Bartley is of failing to do justice to rationality/

rationality and to the integrity of the person who not only disagrees, but who is able to offer a reasonable case for his disagreement, and prepared to discuss and argue the alternative merits of the differing views.

While these three grounds of criticism form the background of the critique, the presentation has been based on Bartley's own account of the problem, its solution, and its benefit. In the areas of problem and solution Bartley's account has both shown important issues concerning rationality which has introduced the subject, but also has negatively shown the inadequacies of his position and the necessity for conceptual clarification and the introduction of other themes. What has been done for the problem and solution must now be done in terms of the value Bartley claims for his view. Regardless of the success or otherwise of his delineation of the problem and solution to rationality and its dilemma, the value of his theory may be considered.

Bartley expresses the desire that his thesis may be judged on the basis of whether or not he has solved the problem of rationality.¹ He has sought to prove that it is possible to be a consistent liberal rationalist, and to shift the emphasis in rational discussion from justification to nonjustificational criticism.² In the doctoral dissertation he invites critical discussion of the following points, which will be commented on to assess whether or not his approach is as valuable as he hopes and claims. His first concern is with the value of his approach in its ability to solve the problem and as a guide for philosophical research. Bartley does not solve the problem because he/

1. Q.p.25a.

2. RvR.p.31: Q.p.15.

he fails to make clear exactly what the problem is and then adequately to analyse the notions inherent in the problem. His approach is inadequate, and his solution does not fulfil the claims that he makes for it. It cannot, therefore be a guide for future philosophical research in quite the way that he hopes. Nevertheless, it does show the need for careful analysis of some of the concepts and questions he has raised, and in that sense, it benefits philosophy.

He inquires also about the correctness of his description of the problem of rationality and of the arguments of the fideist and sceptic, as well as his solution to the problem and his distinction between justification and criticism.³ He fails to describe correctly the rationalist problem in that he fails adequately to examine the notion of rationality and other possible theories of rationality. Coupled with this, his presentation of scepticism and fideism lacks sufficient detail and slides over significant differences which are crucial to a true irrationalist assault on reason. His solution to the problem of rationality is not plausible because it leaves too much unsaid and, in the last resort, leaves the situation much where it was prior to his discussion. His separation of justification and criticism suffers again from overbrief treatment and inadequate detail both in conceptual and contextual terms. Without such evidence, his claim must be accounted: "not proven".

He/

3. Q.p.25k: Q.p.25i.

He is also concerned about his observation that traditional philosophy is authoritarian, and its relation to criticism and logic.⁴ There is a great deal of value in this point of the authoritarian structure, but Bartley does not take it far enough in again failing to assess the context and concepts involved, and offers little examination of the role such authority plays in all the variety of situations where it is appropriate. His desire to renounce this authoritarian stress is hasty unless supported by more telling evidence in its favour. His final concern is that Popper's philosophy is a genuine nonjustificational philosophy of criticism.⁵ Judgement must be held in abeyance, until the concepts of justification and criticism have been more adequately dealt with. There is too much of controversy in Popper, derived from a slanted view of philosophy of science, to be accepted until a good deal more argument both at the philosophy of science level, as well as the relation to error and truth, and the relation to critical tools in the complexity of moral, political, and religious life.

Bartley fails to make out his case on grounds of insufficient evidence and because the analysis he does offer is inadequate and faulty. Nevertheless, Bartley still claims a more positive value for the approach, and that is tolerance, respect, and intellectual humility.⁶ If this new capacity for tolerance, respect and humility is/

4. Q.p. 25i.

5. Q.p. 25i.

6. R.C. p.p.187-223; Q.p.p.327,328-332.

is a positive gain, Bartley must beware of offering this in any sense as a justification for adopting the view, or else he will be in a contradiction. Accordingly, it can only be a description of what actually will and does happen. If this is the case, it is only by looking and seeing whether or not it happens, that his claim may be judged. A growth of tolerance, humility, and respect towards others on the part of all Popperians is looked for. This may not be so readily forthcoming, however, because it is difficult to see how Bartley can present his view as the truth, or better in the sense of an improvement upon traditional views, and yet retain this nebulous humility, in face of the historical stupidity of traditional rationalists and even empiricists, both unable to appreciate the dilemma they are subject to. It would not seem out of place for Bartley to feel a slight twinge of pride when he writes, "I have succeeded in solving the problem of rationality"⁷. But Bartley retorts that, "Anyone who has grappled with the arguments about ultimate commitment and the limits of rationality, and who has appreciated what a strong case the irrationalists have been able to put up, should have acquired at least one virtue: a measure of tolerance and intellectual humility. For rationalists can and very often do make mistakes too."⁸ It is hoped that his solution is no mistake, but it would seem wiser if the surety of success is so limited to provide as "few hostages to fortune" as possible and retreat to a mitigated scepticism, speaking only of "what we do know, and testify of what we have seen".⁹ We are, however/

7. Q.p.25a.

8. Q.p.p.328-9.

9. John, chapter 3, v.11.

however, able to show respect for people by inviting them to criticise us and to take these criticisms seriously. This is an apparently odd account of "respect" made up of taking criticism seriously. More usually, respect is related to a response to the quality of life and attitudes which someone displays. Bartley needs to "analyse "respect" and offer a rationale for his suggested change. Bartley's view, he claims leads to tolerance.¹⁰ But it is difficult to see how taking criticism seriously is the same as what is regularly meant by "tolerant". Tolerance in racial affairs, and in moral matters seems harder to come by than by critical discussion. Bartley's optimism seems to result from an exaggerated view of the function of critical argument in the world of thought and discussion. The success of Comprehensively Critical Rationalism in creating a spirit of tolerance in our racially unsettled areas of the world must be awaited with interest. Till then it must be doubted if there is such value in terms of tolerance, humility, and respect engaged solely by Bartley's views.

There is some consolation left for Bartley in his claim to have destroyed the rational excuse for irrationalism.¹¹ As has already been pointed out, this rational excuse is of no value to the irrationalist because it leads on his part to a crisis of integrity.¹² Bartley can still claim that he has shown, however, that the irrationalist will now be seen to be an irrationalist.¹³ Bartley assumes that the irrationalists can then say nothing, but as was already mentioned,¹⁴ there may still be considerable/

10. Q.p.p.333-4.

11. RvR.p.31; Q.p.326.

12. See above, p. 43

13. RvR.p.31; Q.p.326.

14. See above, p.p.64 p.p.83H

considerable room within the system, the so-called irrationalist upholds, for the use of critical techniques. Description, explanation, and preaching may still be open to the irrationalist, as long as he remains within his own presuppositions and terminology. An interesting aside made by Bartley is that "the fact that a view has affective and irrational origins has no bearing whatsoever on the question of its claims to objective rationality."¹⁵ If this is the case, the theists who may be unable to express in rational terms their original acceptance of faith, need not be barred from rational argument thereafter. Thus indeed any "theological statement could in principle be correct,"¹⁶ over and against any apparently successful scientific refutation of it. If the origin of one's faith is irrelevant to its objective rationality, then there may be a new upsurge in apologetics. There need be no absolute rejection in theology of any apparently outmoded doctrines. Bartley does argue that theologians need to be more honest about the critical institutions they accept in principle and to translate this into practice.¹⁷ This is valid and theology would benefit if every theologian were to follow through his own critical presuppositions. But this is merely to be consistent. Nevertheless, the theologian and the christian ought to be using and creating critical tools appropriate and useful to confession and proclamation of their faith.

Bartley has not, perhaps dealt irrationalism the death blow he wishes, and fails to take account of the strength of irrational factors against/

15. Q.p.12.

16. Q.p.p.274-5.

17. R.C. p.158.

against the hope of a total rational victory, whether a traditional or Popperian sort. Too often "the rationalist imagines that a small dose of reason will be enough to put the world right. In his shortsightedness he wants to do justice to all sides, but in the melee of conflicting forces he gets trampled upon without having achieved the slightest effect. Disappointed by the irrationality of the world, he realises at last his futility, retires from the fray, and weakly surrenders to the winning side."¹⁸ Many writers suggest that there are basic irrational features which must, in some way, be accounted for. "A rationality that can find no place for the intractability of things is not worthy of the name; for reason is not reason that goes against fact, and it is a fact that a certain irreducible minimum of irrationality exists."¹⁹ Both Niebuhr and Brunner argue that "the doctrine of original sin remains absurd from the standpoint of a pure rationalism, for it expresses a relation between fate and freedom which cannot be fully rationalised,"²⁰ and that "only he who understands that sin is inexplicable knows what it is."²¹ Not only sin, but evil creates a problem for rationality. "Somehow evil posits itself and cannot be rationalised. Evil is fundamentally discontinuity."²² Bartley's refutation of irrationalism is not and cannot be successful either on its own terms, or in general, until he has dealt with these irrational features, and adequately discussed the full variety of irrationalist moves.

Bartley/

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18. D. Bonhoeffer, Letters and Papers from Prison, p.135
 19. J. Feibleman, "On the Connections between the Two Worlds", Revista Mexicana De Filosofia, Vol.1, No.2.
 20. Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man, Vol.1, p.278
 21. E. Brunner, Man in Revolt, p.494
 22. T.F. Torrance, "Faith and Philosophy", p.240; see below, chapter 3, p.181 chapter four, p. 358

Bartley's claims for the value of his approach are sadly depleted. His methodology and solution do not fulfil the promise he claims for them. The virtues of tolerance, humility, and respect are inadequately examined and not established, and his critique of irrationalism leaves much spadework still to be done. On his own terms, the value of Bartley's thesis is more negative than positive. More may be learned from his mistakes and inadequacies, than from his successes.

The specific criticism of Bartley has been based on three general grounds. It has been argued that he omits important features of rationality and the other limits of rationality which, in practice, are crucial. He fails to make out his own case. His view as presented is faulty internally and not sufficient to cope with the complexity of rationality in relation to argument and discussion. Finally, his view leads to an unfortunate conclusion that excludes the possibility of criticism against Bartley's own view, so that it is immune from all criticism. Bartley has served to introduce rationality, its major themes, and the state of modern views concerning its nature. Both positively and negatively Bartley contributes to an understanding of the use of rationality in argument of all kinds. On the basis of his view and the critique presented, it is now necessary to examine a different account of rationality and the issues it raises, and finally to offer an account of the nature of rationality which will make good the deficiencies while learning from his strengths and weaknesses.

CHAPTER THREE - TORRANCE ON RATIONALITY1. Introduction

In the same way as Bartley provided an introduction to the subject of rationality from the point of view of recent metaphysical writing, T.F. Torrance provides an example of a theologian who is aware of the importance of a clear statement of the nature of rationality. Torrance deals specifically with rationality in the theological sphere and also deals with many of the questions and issues which Bartley raises and examines. Thus by examining Torrance's account a clearer picture of the nature of rationality may be gained as it relates to theological argument and persuasion. His view will be presented in his own form rather than a false mould based on the critique I shall offer. This is to be fair to his own particular emphases and presentation. This will deal firstly with a particular essay on theological rationality, and then cover the theme of rationality by reference to the spectrum of his work from the last decade.

As was the case with Bartley, the criticism will then be presented in relation to Torrance's own account, but with the same three grounds in mind as earlier outlined. It will be argued that Torrance overlooks important features of rationality particularly concerned with the limits of rationality which are too important to be ignored. Secondly, it will be claimed that Torrance's own account is not in itself adequate either as an account of rationality or to the complexity of the subject. Finally, it will be shown that Torrance's position has an unfortunate consequence, /

consequence, i.e. that any critic of Torrance has no basis on Torrance's account to make his criticism and complaint against the position. Without the possibility of criticism, doubt must be cast on the veracity of the position in terms of a realistic account of rationality. These criticisms, however, will be integrated into the structure of Torrance's account and the parallel critique. His view will not be moulded to these criticisms, but vice versa. Torrance will instruct both positively and negatively by the topics he deals with and the difficulties encountered in this presentation.

T.F. Torrance's work presents a highly detailed and specialised approach on the part of a theologian to the question of rationality. This approach to rationality is not the aim of his theological work, which may be interpreted rather as an attempt to analyse the intellectual structure of our knowledge in view of the problems examined by the Fathers, Medieval Schoolmen, and Reformers, so that in modern theology we can distinguish clearly the rational from the irrational, the properly objective from the unwarrantedly subjective, and cut away much of the confusion that has, in his view, infested modern theology.¹ This involves the desire to reach a clearer view of the proper scientific foundations of theology on its own grounds.² It must accordingly be realised that the bulk of Torrance's emphasis deals with the relation of theology to science, especially modern science, and to the basic questions of epistemology, as these are interpreted in relation to modern science and historical periods of flux.³ This is the case, but/

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1. T.F. Torrance, Theological Science, p. xvii. Hereafter "T".
 2. T.p.p.xvii, ix, 10-11; T.F. Torrance, Space, Time and Incarnation p.51. Hereafter "RR."
 3. T.p.p.17-18; T.F. Torrance, God and Rationality, p.p.30-31, hereafter "S".

but it does not alter the fact that explicit in Torrance's view and work is a reliance upon a notion of rationality, which is presented in some detail. This, of course, is not the end-in-itself for Torrance, but part of the total picture he seeks to present by which theology can properly be conducted in the twentieth century scientific age.⁴

His work covers a wide scope both in time and subject matter, and it is therefore necessary to concentrate one's efforts upon the central issues. Our specific concern is with the nature of the account of rationality he offers. This interest derives from the fact that in all his work we are presented with an attempt to make theology valid in the present world, or rather to show the actual validity of theology and the theological method for today.⁵ This attempt is couched in the language of science with references to modern physics, relativity theory, and quantum mechanics.⁶ Yet it is claimed that what is being said is not something new, but **a presentation of the historical basis of theology** through the Early Fathers and the Reformation.⁷ He thus offers an account of theology with a view of theological rationality which claims both historical and modern relevance and support. In seeking to understand the nature and scope of rationality, attention is focused on Torrance's view of rationality on the grounds of its being a theological account, **This is therefore relevant to the philosophy of religion** and the general problem of whether rationality is the sort of thing which is related to the specific area in which we are working, **Is it either something/**

4. T.p.xvii. "Theology in Reconstruction", hereafter "MM".

5. T.p.xvii; S.p.p.30-31,42,68; MM.p.295; RR.p.69

6. RR.p.69,79,83; S.p.p.7-8,14-15,103; T.p.102.

7. S.p.p.30-31; T.p.p.17-18; RR.p.p.16-17, 20-21, 23, 12-13.

something more general and universal, or both, or neither? It claim to have a basis in historical terms, vis a vis the history of doctrine in the Christian Church, as well as times of theological and epistemological change and development, especially in scientific terms;

The ideas involved in and related to Torrance's account of rationality are important in and of themselves. They are important regardless of their immediate relevance for specific theological work, as features which must be taken account of in seeking to understand the presupposition of rationality and its synonyms. It is unusual to find a theological writer who makes such wide use of words such as "rationality" and "rational", and this offers the hope that Torrance's account will be of specific value in a better understanding of rationality.

Having established the relation of Torrance's work to the thesis subject of rationality, the problem still confronts of how best to present the material at hand. Length and relevance rule out any overall presentation with its inherent risk of vague generality. So to obviate this problem, the first essay in "God and Rationality", which is itself entitled "Theological Rationality" will be presented. This is chosen both because of its title and its specific content, which provide one particular version from Torrance's pen of his own view. However, this account will be supplemented in relation to the theme of rationality by reference to his major work over the last six years. These further sources are not randomly chosen, but are crucially important in that there are four major works of considerable length and detail, which inevitably present a total view and position. These works/

works are also up-to-date which allows the interpretation of the role and nature of rationality in an modern theological account, as was attempted for morals and metaphysics in the case of Bartley. Further these four major works allow a natural line to be drawn in the scope of the material to be examined and presented. Within the bound of one chapter of a thesis one could not hope adequately to cover the genesis, development, and final fruition of any view; but with concentration upon recent major works, one is entitled to claim relevance to the position as it is at the present time and in the detail of the present as it is offered to others for understanding and appreciation. Torrance's own essay on theological rationality will be presented, supplemented by reference to "Theology in Reconstruction", "Theological Science", "Space, Time and Incarnation", and the other essays of "God and Rationality", as well as some other short articles. Only an account of rationality as Torrance sees it will be offered based on the realisation that criticism of this account may or may not be relevant to the total position of Torrance. One would simply raise the question as to whether, given considerable difficulty in the account of rationality, the position can be presented in the terms it is, which rely upon such a view of rationality, though, of course, not only such a view. Thus the scope of criticism and evaluation is entirely related to the problems and nature of rationality rather than to Torrance's work as a whole, with the aim always in view of seeking better to understand what rationality is especially in relation to religion and morality.

The/

The critique of Torrance will, like that of Bartley, rest on three grounds of concern. First of all that there are certain important features of rationality which Torrance overlooks particularly in connection with the limits of rationality as they are to be found in the practical situation of argument and discussion. Secondly it will be shown that even on its own account Torrance's view of rationality is inadequate in its details and as it is applied to theology in particular. Finally it will be argued that one of the effects of Torrance's view of rationality is to remove the possibility of criticism by removing any ground which the critic may stand upon. It will here be seen as another example of the dictatorial strategy already seen in the details of Bartley's view.⁸ Torrance destroys the possibility of disagreement, for any attack on his view may be construed as subjectivism. If you disagree with Torrance then you have failed to discern the true nature of the object in question and have adopted an inappropriate mode of rationality rather than that which is the true one and which, if followed through correctly, would have brought you into contact with the reality which is the true basis of all concepts and language.

In contrast to Bartley, who leaves the area for criticism so open that there is no genuine criticism, Torrance has a system which is too closed. If Bartley has an open mind, Torrance has a closed one, with the result that there can be no conception of divergence and disagreement if one adopts Torrance's account as a whole. What is needed is a balance between/

8. See above, Chapter Two, "Recent Discussion of Bartley".

between the two extremes of Bartley and Torrance, where one is able to hold one's own view yet allow the critic the right and opportunity to express his opinion and still to be able and willing to enter into discussion and argument which is not predetermined before it commences but rather is so structured that there can be real conclusions reached, which may be accepted by one's opponent or oneself.

2. Torrance's "Theological Rationality".¹

T.F. Torrance describes the harassment of theology "by the imperialism of mechanistic concepts",² which result from a hang-over from the Newtonian era. He states that "in reaction some biblical scholars and theologians have allowed themselves to be driven into existentialism and phenomenology where they have been caught in the flight from scientific objectivity, only to founder in the morass of historical relativism in which Jesus, in spite of desperate attempts to hold on to Him, keeps vanishing from their instruments of observation."³ Other theologians have turned to cultural expressionism and sociology, but this leaves a gap between modern culture and historic Christianity. Thus many Christians today are in "the wilderness of irrationality and confusion".⁴

Torrance's account of the genesis of this problem is the cleavage between theology and experience in which the theologian is out of touch with the reality of God and therefore becomes abstract and rationalistic, so that theology is estranged from its proper object and from the common man.⁵ The Church has developed in turn "pragmatic ideology" and a sort of "religious technology" in place of theology, and this has led to revolt against "the establishment". Torrance states that "if theology without experience is irrelevant and experience without theology is blind, the Church without theology can be little more than a blind leader of the blind".⁶ The real trouble, however, is a rift between/

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1. This section is totally drawn from p.p. 3-25 in God and Rationality
 2. S.p.3.
 3. S.p.p.3,17,37,40-1,61,107; MM.p.p.231,270-1; RR.p.47-8
 4. S.p.p.vii, 4-5,44,185; T.p.xvii; MM.pp.270-1;231,69
 5. MM.p.231; S.p.p.42,68; MM.p.259.
 6. S.p.4.

between the spiritual and the physical, and so between thought and life, reason and behaviour, law and nature. So disjunction results between theology and the experience of the believer, with theological statements empty of objective content because of failure to be "grounded in actual understanding of faith that arises out of man's reciprocal relations with God".⁷

This situation, is, however, transitory in a time when the whole perspective of human thought is on the move. This mutation in orientation of thought loosens "the relation between the fundamental data of theological knowledge and the moulds of traditional thought and language in which it has come to be expressed".⁸ This initially results in confusion, but eventually puts theology back on its proper foundations to find profounder renewal. This is the situation today, thus theology is in a critical period. Theology must not seek to take "cover from the searching light of scientific inquiry". Rather, "if theology is to survive the crisis of these times, it must move out into the full light of day, engage in critical revision of its own theoretic framework, and go on to fresh scientific construction under the pressure and determination of its own object".⁹

This is not to start theology from scratch, but rather, "in so far as we are now able through prior formulations to apprehend the objective reality in a greater fulness than they could specify at the time, the basic concepts and relations they involve will accredit themselves to us as rooted in the structure of reality and therefore as belonging/

7. S.p.p.vii-viii, 4.

8. S.p.4.

9. S.p.p.4,48,116-7; MM.p.69; T.p.p.9-10

belonging to the essential content of faith. Far from being discarded they will be thought out afresh, assimilated in a deeper and wider understanding of the faith, and thus can be secured as permanent theological gains".¹⁰ In this way continuity of past and present is ensured by detachment from obscuring presuppositions. We must learn to forget as well as to remember to achieve new understanding and insight.

This is the task of the theologian "who really knows how far concepts and relations actually match the object of his knowledge", to engage in "a disciplined penetration into the inner intelligibility of the faith, enabling us to distinguish time-conditioned images and representations from the substance of the faith, and to determine which concepts and relations can be justified and retained".¹¹ Thus theology, like Physics, needs its own meta-science of the clarification of basic concepts to express faith adequately for today. Theology's integrity depends on "a sustained integration of theological reflection with its proper object and a rigorous development of its own field of rational activity".¹² "This is nothing else than a demand for scientific theology operating on its own ground, and engaging in active dialogue with the natural human sciences, in its own distinctness".¹³ To meet this demand Torrance presents the need for a more adequate conception of science, of connection, and a more adequate understanding of conceptuality.

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10. S.p.5.

11. S.p.p.5-6, 51-2, 151; RR.p.90; T.p.xii-xiii, 282; MM.p.53

12. S.p.6.

13. S.p.p.6,45-6,12-13,15; MM.p.278; RR.p.90; T.p.p.9-10,30,116, 129,283.

1. A More Adequate Conception of Science.

"The notion of science as detached and disinterested is obsolete with all its stress on the observable and clearly defined".¹⁴ This is the instrumentalist and mechanistic view of science in which we claim to know only what we can control and accept as valid only what can pass the test of our predictions. The object of theological knowledge cannot be reduced to that form of thought and approach, "for He cannot be brought within the objectifying moulds of our prescriptive structures or netted within the devices of 'our science'".¹⁵ However, science is not like this as we can see from the change in the structure of modern science. Perceptibility and predictability are seen to be severely limited and not the hallmark of all true science. The notion of scientific detachment today "appears rather pathetic, for our psychology insists that detachment is not the sign of rationality but of open-mouthed imbecility!"¹⁶ It stemmed from the Cartesian stress on the self. The scientist, in contrast to traditional views, "does not doubt the object of his inquiry, for he is committed to a profound belief in its intelligibility".¹⁷ The scientist does, however, "subject to doubt his own assumptions about the object, and so he allows attachment to the object to help him detach himself from his own presuppositions. He directs open questions to the object in order to let it disclose itself to him in its own reality and nature, and in the light of what he learns he revises his questions in order that his interrogation may be nearer the/

14. S.p.p.7,40; MM.p.p.9,65,114; T.p.p.44,46-7,75,131,205-7,297,299.

15. S.p.8.

16. S.p.3.

17. S.p.8.

the mark, but all this has the effect of calling in question the preconceived ideas of the investigator himself".¹⁸ The scientist is thus questioned to the very roots of his being, and is thus "passionately involved, for what is at stake is the integrity of his own rationality vis-a-vis the relentless compulsion upon him of the inherent rationality of the universe, i.e. what we call the scientific conscience".¹⁹

This is what Torrance calls "scientific objectivity", "the disciplined control of our subjectivities lest they should be unwarrantedly obtruded upon the object of inquiry and thus allowed to obstruct and distort apprehension of it".²⁰ This means that "objective thinking lays itself open to the nature and reality of the object in order to take its shape from the structure of its own prescription".²¹ The antithesis of this is objectifying thought, in which "we make and mould" our objects of knowledge out of the stuff of our consciousness. That is, an inflexible conceptual structure, which is beyond criticism or modification by experience, conditions reality.²² This leads to subjectivity in the object, which, unless it is changed to emphasise the relation of frames of thought to the object, can lead to no radically new knowledge.

Theologians need to reject the outmoded scientific views and enter "into the rational freedom that comes with objectivity and its detachment from arbitrary control by subjective factors".²³ For, Torrance tells us, "objectivity in theological science, like objectivity in every true science/

18. S.p.p.8-9.

19. S.p.p.8-9,18,34,44,90,92,116-8,63-4,89,91,201-2; T.p.p.35-6,96, xiii, xvi-xvii, 45-6,122,124,168-9,339; MM p.53.

20. S.p.9.

21. S.p.9.

22. MM.p.67; S.p.p.9-10; T.p.p.35,41,93.

23. S.p.10.

science, is achieved through rigorous correlation of thought with its proper object and the self-renunciation, repentance and change of mind that it involves".²⁴

With Einstein, the theologian must learn that science is nothing more "than the refinement of everyday thinking, for it respects the fundamental nature of things and seeks to understand and explain them in their own intelligibility".²⁵ The essence of science is "to bring together the theoretical and the empirical, and to let empirical relation to the object determine the mode of rationality we must adopt toward it, in order that we may coordinate and deepen our experience".²⁶ Scientific concepts are not prescriptive, for we cannot say precisely how concepts coordinate with experience. But, "we can engage in science only through a profound faith in the accessibility of things to rational understanding". Einstein says that "the eternal mystery of the world is its comprehensibility".²⁷

2. A More Adequate Sense of Connection.

"The ability to think can be spoken of as the ability to connect things up with other things and to think their interrelations. Hence it is important for correct thinking to determine the specific mode of connection or the kind of relation that obtains between the things we are contemplating".²⁸ In light of this, science is the investigation of "things and events for the order or regularity they manifest in their inter-/"

24. S.p.p.10, 12-13; T.p.p.85, 129-30.

25. S.p.10.

26. S.p.10.

27. S.p.p.18, 34, 96, 114, 116-7, 190-1, 182; T.p.xii, 38, 112, 303, 331, 339; MM.p.53.

28. S.p.11.

inter-connections in their attempt to reduce the manifold relations in the world, or at least in some field of experience, to some kind of uniformity, and if possible to penetrate down to a unitary logical basis in our understanding of them through which the whole field of our experience can be illuminated".²⁹ This relies on the connection between the theoretical and the empirical and requires the clarification of the kind of connection in each field of inquiry. Science must always guard against abstraction and formalisation instead of expressing the dynamism of actual events in their connections.³⁰

Quantum mechanics provides an example of this different sort of connection, and it is in this area that there is work being done to develop a "quantum logic, in order to give appropriate and adequate rational expression to the distinctive kind of connection between the geometrical and dynamic aspects of reality that concern us here."³¹ If physics has had to develop different kinds of connection, so the theologian ought to investigate the kind of connections which arise out of the realities he deals with. "Quite clearly the sort of connection which theology requires must be more subtle and flexible, yet no less rational, than those traditionally isolated in the natural and human sciences, if it is to have the kind of precision and range appropriate to the interaction between God and the world, or divine and human agency, that belongs to the essential heart of its subject-matter".³²

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29. S.p.11.

30. MM.p.p.79,91; S.p.20,104-5; T.p.p.13-14,66,146,150,184,222-3,226,247,254,257,272.

31. S.p.p.12,103; T.p.102; RR.p.69.

32. S.p.13.

What the theologian can learn from science is "the way in which approach is made to the question of connection, from the actualities of the objective field".³³

The angle of approach to any field is determinative, whether particular or general, and what is essential is freedom from distortion, as modern physics has learned to have, and which biology has yet to develop. Field theory reveals to theology that "reality, hidden so far as our observations are concerned, is open to explanatory interpretation in essentially differential and functional relations, but we have to develop the kind of open axiomatic penetration that will reveal its natural logical structure".³⁴ This is what the theologian must do, remembering that "adequate explanatory interpretation must be developed ultimately from the side of the object and out of actual relations in the objective field, and not merely, as in much contemporary theology, from the side of the knowing subject."³⁵

3. A More Adequate Understanding of Conceptuality.

"Although scientific knowledge is possible only on the assumption that nature is inherently intelligible, it is unable to adapt to logical fixation the relation between concepts and the realities with which they are co-ordinated, any more than we can reduce to statements alone the relation between statements and being, but that does not allow us to hold that the relation between scientific concepts and reality is non-conceptual or non-rational".³⁶ We must beware of a false dichotomy between conceptuality and reality. Einstein stresses, however, that "scientific/

33. S.p.13.

34. S.p.p.15,103.

35. S.p.15; MM.p.p.231,259; S.p.p.42,68.

36. S.p.p.16,36; MM.p.p.56,72.

"scientific knowledge of the world rests upon a basis of 'primary concepts' (or 'fundamental relations') which are directly and intuitively connected with experience and derive their certainty through their applicability to it, while all other scientific concepts and notions are connected to this basis by means of theorems. In this way our scientific knowledge in each field is co-ordinated rationally with the comprehensibility of the world."... Torrance refers to this as "dogmatic realism" and seeks to apply this to theology.³⁷

In any science we begin not from concepts in isolation but with concepts linked together in a field of conceptuality and orderly intelligible happenings. Primary concepts rise "where thought is already and immediately engaged with reality",³⁸ and are the medium "through which reality is disclosed to us in its inner relations and we on our part are enabled to grasp it in accordance with its objective structure and interpret it to others through series of conceptual extensions."³⁹ Concepts are defined in a relation to a conceptual field and their meaning stems from co-ordination of field with reality. Abstraction leads to vagueness and detachment from reality leading to the "prison walls of our own subjectivities."⁴⁰ However, we can thus realise the bi-polar structure of concepts through correlation with subject and object. Concepts are rooted "as interrelated forms of life in a socio-conceptual field",⁴¹ so to be understood must be examined in psychological and social terms. But also "Concepts are grounded in an objective/

37. S.p.16. For further discussion of primary concepts see Torrance's argument in T.p.p.226-8,235-7,240-1; MM.p.p.53-4.

38. S.p.p.16-17.

39. S.p.17.

40. S.p.17. See also footnote 30 above.

41. S.p.17. For further discussion of the importance of the social influence of specifically frames of reference see MM.p.p.9,28-9,63; S.p.p.197,202-3; T.p.61. T.F. Torrance, "Faith and Philosophy" Hereafter "FP" Hibbert Journal Vol. XLVII No.3.

objective field of orderly relations, which means that in order to understand them we must penetrate into the rational structure of the reality to which they refer and by which they are determined."⁴² Thus we need to clarify the relation of language and society to the objective reference of concepts, to guard against "masterful conceptualization" which might smother objective reference. We must guard against the rigidity of language to allow for "new learning and thinking under the direct thrust of reality."⁴³

The relevance of these questions for theology is seen by examining the relation of concepts and language, especially with reference to the Bible and understanding and communicating it. Theology needs to engage in "demanding and carrying through a significant shift in the meaning of ordinary terms to cope with the new insights and in creating new forms of expression apposite to new truths where the adaptation of old forms of speech and thought does not prove adequate".⁴⁴ This involves no veneration of ordinary language but concern with grasping new truth. But it also means that theological language becomes caught up with the socio-conceptual structures in which we live, and therefore tends to become opaque and obscure. Thus we require constant revision and reconstruction of concepts for purity of thought. "This is done by keeping our concepts as close as possible to the objective source that gave rise to them, for that is the only way they can be renewed in their original force and rationality".⁴⁵

Coupled with this revision we need to remind ourselves of the bi-polarity of human concepts, for failure to do so leads to subjective rather/

42. S.p.p.17-18.

43. S.p.18.

44. S.p.p.19,187; T.p.p.172,259-60,293.

45. S.p.20. For the importance of primary intuitions see RR.p.55-6; S.p.p.189-90; T.p.p.235-6

rather than objective definition of concepts, which in turn has led to the problems of new Protestantism and the new theology in the Roman Church.

"What is required is a more adequate understanding of the polarization of conceptuality with its objective and its subjective reference, in which reality seizes our minds and sets up within them the law of its own rationality".⁴⁶ True concepts arise in us through direct and intuitive apprehension of reality, yet our concepts refer to more than they can ever specify in explicit forms. For example, "in our knowledge of God conception takes place under the impact of His Word and Spirit. Through His Word God confronts us with the inner speech of His divine being and through His Spirit He evidences Himself to us in the presence of His reality, in such a way that He creates in us the capacity to hear, recognise and apprehend Him, and evokes from us the consent and understanding of faith in His self-revelation".⁴⁷

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46. S.p.21.

47. S.p.21. Torrance's doctrine of God is that God is primary in everything, particularly in our knowing of Him. (MM.p.9;T.p.44;299) We cannot know Him apart from His grace in making Himself known to us, and He prescribes the content and form of all our judgment. (MM.p.p.65;114;T.p.p.46-7,75; S.p.40) He is Lord, even as an Object of our knowing, for He is far greater than we can ever know. (T.p.p.131,205-7,297) Nature and the universe can give no account of themselves, but it is in God we find the source of their rationality and comprehensibility. (RR.p.p.10;T.p.46;S.p.p.22,35,188) He has created rationality in the world, yet we cannot construe God on the basis of what we know already (T.p.p.26,188;S.p.p.123,184) but only within a relationship with Christ. (S.p.p.139-40;176,T.p.p.27,44) God is beyond our formulations of Who he is, yet He must be the centre of our thinking in order to open us up from our subjectivity, in order that we may know Him out of Himself.(T.p.p.12-13,19,32,131-2,310;S.p.p.49,177) God reveals Himself in His freedom as a speaking subject in the Word of Christ. (MM.p.131;T.p.p. 9-10;32-3,39) God can only be spoken of properly by reference to His coming in human form in the person of Christ. (T.p.p.40,51-2,305;S.p.137) This is within the space-time continuum and based in historical fact. (RR.p.p.24,61; T.p.48;S.p.188) Yet the doctrine of God is totally one of grace in which it is God Himself who makes our Theology possible. (MM.p.p.26-7,32,36,124-5,181, RR.p.75) Torrance describes the crucial features of God's action towards us in terms of accomodation and the creation of reciprocity. (MM.p.p.70,113-4; RR.p.54;T.p.p.47,132-3;S.p.137-8,142,149) God discloses Himself to us (T.p.p. 163-4,S.p.184) reconciles us to Himself (T.p.p.41,97;S.p.179), and at the same time, as it were, raises us up beyond our self-understanding to be able to know Him as He ought to be known (MM.p.p.9-10,70,131;RR.p.p.54-5;T.p.p.46, 47-8,49-50,135-6). Thus God speaks in Christ, but also in Christ we have the perfect man in the perfect attitude of hearing and responsive obedience.(MM. p.p.26,189;T.p.p.32-3;S.p.p.138-40) The task of the Holy Spirit is to open us up for this bipolar action of God upon us. (S.P.P.189,192,; T.p.21.)

How both poles of conceptuality are related we may wish to regard as "part of the mystery of the comprehensibility of things",⁴⁸ but in relation to the knowledge of God account must be taken of the epistemological relevance of the Holy Spirit for an explanation of our knowledge from the side of the object and in accordance with its nature.⁴⁹

Torrance then offers three considerations to be remembered.

(a) The Patristic distinction between apprehending and comprehending.

We apprehend God without bringing the totality of God within the compass of our apprehension. Apprehension "is the form of conception rationally appropriate to His divine nature and majesty".⁵⁰ This obviates the need to give a precise conceptual definition of the reality of God. "We know God only in that we are seized by His reality".⁵¹ This is called cataleptic apprehending, "in it the Word of God seizes our minds, sets up within their conceiving the force of its own rationality, and thus opens them to conceptual understanding of God".⁵² (b). Based on/

48. S.p.p.22,15-16; MM.p.14.

49. There can be no knowledge of God, in Torrance's terms, apart from the Holy Spirit, who is the action of God. (MM.p.p.93,97; S.p.165) He is the personal presence of God (MM.p.97; S.p.p.167,183). The Spirit is the Agent in God's revelation to man in that he transforms man to receive this revelation by turning man inside out in order to be open to God (MM.p.238,S.p.p.168,173-4,185,T.p.52.) His work is peculiarly personal in that He confronts us with a Person, and by this confrontation we are enabled to become persons in the true sense. (MM.p.250; S.p.p.170-1,173,176,189) The Spirit makes the work of Christ actual within us and enables us to do the humanly impossible, i.e. to grasp, understand and speak of God. (MM.p.p.238, 253; S.p.p.176,188; T.p.349)

50. S.p.22.

51. S.p.22.

52. S.p.22-3.

on Frege - a word without any corresponding inner picture is not for that reason lacking in content or meaning. The unimaginable is not necessarily without rational basis. The conceivable is not the picturable. This applies to our knowledge of the invisible God, with concepts which point beyond the range of the imaginable.⁵³ (c) Frege - it is from the sentence as a whole that the words receive their content. This relates to concepts in that their meaning is to be found in the field of conceptuality in which they function. "The whole field is possessed of meaning in so far as it is co-ordinated with experience and directly apprehended".⁵⁴ Theorems, which express the relations between concepts have an indirect relation to experience in their applicability to what is intuitively apprehended through the primary concepts. This means that "it is by operating with different levels of conceptuality that we are able to clarify the logic of the conceptual fields and determine the fundamental concepts which, through their objective bond with reality, form the basis for the illumination and organisation of all our knowledge in that field".⁵⁵

It is viewed in this light that the analogical relation in our knowledge of God is simplified by the co-ordination of conceptual levels by reference to which the individual concepts are defined. This means that theology must be developed as a dogmatic science to clarify our basic concepts and penetrate "into their fundamental unity, with all the disclosure of objectivity and enlightenment that brings".⁵⁶

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53. For the role of relativity in relation to the observable, see S.p.p.7-8,14-15; RR.p.p.79,83
 54. S.p.24 and above footnote 37; S.p.p.11,12-13,94
 55. S.p.p.24-5.
 56. S.p.25.

It is on the basis of this essay on theological rationality, as an introduction, that Torrance goes on to consider theology old and new, theology and science, Word and Spirit, and theological persuasion. It must again be stressed that "Theological Rationality" is merely one expression of Torrance's view, but nevertheless it does offer the main themes of his work and outlines the sort of procedure and approach he seeks to commend and develop for theology today. It also as an essay, presents these themes and approaches in relation to a view of what rationality is, but it does not do so in the wealth of detail which an examination of the other major works since nineteen sixty-five offers. Thus to supplement the view of rationality presented and utilised as a basis of the argument in "Theological Rationality" and so into the rest of "God and Rationality", a more detailed account of what Torrance has to say on the theme of rationality from all the sources mentioned will be presented.

3. Torrance on Rationality.

For Torrance rationality is closely bound up with the capacity to be objective, that is to be bound by what is objective in contrast to emphasis on the subjective, which is a form of irrationality. Torrance in examining modern man's failure to distinguish between objective realities and subjective conditions, which is a mark of irrational behaviour or mental disorder, states that "we cannot hold a conception of rationality which obtains for religion and ethics and art and does not obtain for science. In every sphere of our life, in reflection, in action, and in worship reason is our capacity for objectivity".¹ This was one of the great lessons of the Reformation, which theologians are now being forced to learn again. This is also seen in modern science where "undue emphasis upon the place of the human subject leads quickly into an irrational situation, in which it is claimed that man himself imposes patterns of his own upon nature through his inventions. Not only is man unable to distinguish a given reality from his own constructions, but even to think of trying to do so, it is argued, is to fall from the pure ideal of science as complete technological control of nature. But all this can mean in the end of the day is that in his scientific activity man is only meeting himself, fulfilling himself, and that there is no meaning in anything except that which he puts into it out of himself. And so the real outcome of this line of thought is meaninglessness and futility, everywhere apparent in the/

1. MM.p.231.

the social life of our 'scientific' civilisation".² So Torrance suggests that "Theological and natural science share the same basic problem: how to refer our thoughts and statements genuinely beyond ourselves, how to reach knowledge of reality in which we do not intrude ourselves distortingly into the picture, and yet how to retain the full and integral place of the human subject in it all".³ Torrance in discussion of theological science among the special sciences states that "in all scientific knowledge, including theology above all, man is unconditionally bound to his object, for to be bound and determined by what is objective is the core of rationality. But there is another side to this although he is unconditionally bound to the object in faithful and authentic knowing of it, man is yet free, active, and spontaneous in his epistemic relations, while part of his freedom at least consists in his knowledge of his unconditional relation to the object, as well as his determination to use his knowledge of the object".⁴ In particular in discussing what happens when reason encountering God or the Word of God refuses to subdue God to reason's own subjectivity, Torrance tells us that one of the two things that happens is that "reason finds that in order to be rational (to behave in terms of the Object) it must suspend its unity-complex, for it confronts a unique Object to which there is no real analogy, and which will not be schematised. It is the huge boulder of a Thou blocking the path/

2. T.p.p.xvi-xvii.

3. T.p.xviii.

4. T.p.303.

path which cannot honestly be subdued to an it Here, then, the reason cannot bring forward any category or capacity of its own with which to apprehend the Object. Only in the act of acknowledgement can it receive the capacity to behave in terms of the Object, but must therefore be prepared for transformation in obedience to its unique Subject-Object. This means that reason must revise its whole conception of unity and coherence as well as of objectivity, learning to operate with a profounder unity and a profounder objectivity".⁵

To be rational, on Torrance's view, is to behave in a manner appropriate to what is not us. Torrance, in discussing "The Relevance of the Doctrine of the Spirit for Ecumenical Theology", in seeking to express the nature of genuine objectivity rather than objectivism, tells us that "in the language of Professor John MacMurray reason is our capacity to behave consciously in terms of the nature of what is not ourselves, that is to say, the capacity to act in accordance with the nature of the object. Hence true thoughts are thoughts which refer properly to reality and which are thought in accordance with the nature of the object to which they refer. They are not true if they refer to certain objects in a mode that is determined by the nature of other and different objects; they cannot be true, for example, if they refer to personal beings as if they were merely things. Persons must be treated as persons if our thoughts of them are to be properly objective.

Reason/

5. F.P.p.244.

Reason is our capacity for objectivity in this sense. To be rational, therefore, means to behave not in terms of our own nature, but in terms of our knowledge of the world outside us, of things and persons, in accordance with their own natures. Clearly this objectivity or reason cannot be confined to the intellect alone, but characterises every aspect of our human life and activity as rational persons - indeed it is the essential characteristic of personal consciousness. It is what distinguishes rational, personal activity from all inorganic impersonal activity".⁶ In discussing worship in "The Word of God and the Response of Man", Torrance relates worship to language and recalls "that language is the system of verbal signs which we develop in order to grasp things and present them to ourselves in such a way that we can stand over against them and think about them, and allow them to disclose themselves to us in forms appropriate to them. This applies in different ways to the world of things and the world of persons, but in both we are engaged in the rationality of acting in accordance of what is not-ourselves and enlarging our knowledge of it. In the world of persons, however, it is particularly with inter-personal transcendence that we are concerned, in which we distinguish ourselves from each other and communicate with each other. This is also the role which language plays in our worship of God".⁷ Again, in his introducing questions in "The Knowledge of God", Torrance in seeking to/

6. MM.p.232.

7. S.p.p.156-7.

to clarify rationality suggests taking as his guide, if only as a preliminary definition, John MacMurray's account of "rationality". MacMurray states that "reason is the capacity to behave consciously in terms of what is not ourselves. We can express this briefly by saying that reason is 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".⁸ Torrance adds that "this is not to deny that the objective reality may have the nature of a subject, or to question the place of the subject in our human knowing".⁹

To behave in a manner which is appropriate to what is not us is also to have the capacity to refer properly to reality. Torrance in examining the nature of scientific activity, deals with the nature of science as consisting only of sciences, but comments that "all this is not to say, however, that there is no such thing as a scientific way of acting and thinking which is to be pursued in every field of learning and discovery. This is the way of acting and thinking that is no more and no less than the rigorous extension of our basic rationality, as we seek to act towards things in ways appropriate to their natures, to understand them through letting them shine in their own light, and to reduce thinking of them into orderly forms on the prescription of their inherent intelligibility. Scientific activity of this kind is essentially open and flexible through fidelity to the manifold character of reality and is universally applicable, but as such it is the/

8. J. MacMurray, Reason and Emotion, p.19

9. T.p.p.11-12.

the antithesis of the paranoiac rigidity manifest in every form of 'scientism'.¹⁰ Again in his discussion of objectivity in "The Doctrine of the Spirit and Ecumenical Theology", Torrance suggests that "it is of the nature of persons to be reasonable, to relate themselves objectively to the world around them, in action as well as in reflection, in emotion as well as in volition. Thus if in natural science we develop a knowledge of things in their objective reality by learning to act in accordance with the nature of the world around us, so in the sphere of the ethical and social life we develop a capacity to act objectively in relation to other persons, by behaving towards them in accordance with their natures, not in terms of the nature of things and not in terms of our own subjective determinations. That is why love occupies such an essential place in these interpersonal relations, for the capacity to love objectively is the capacity in which we live as persons. Indeed it is the ultimate source of our capacity to behave in terms of the nature of the object. Hence it would also be irrational to treat things as persons. Strict respect for the nature of what is other than ourselves is the very core of rationality".¹¹

Rationality is characteristic of personal consciousness, yet it is not just intellectual but must affect every aspect of our life, and requires the objectivity of other minds for the proper relation of thought/

10. T.p.p.106-7

11. MM.p.p.232.

thought and action to objective and intelligible realities. This is the case, for as we have already seen, "clearly this objectivity or reason cannot be confined to the intellect alone, but characterises every aspect of our human life and activity as rational persons - indeed it is the essential characteristic of personal consciousness. It is what distinguishes rational, personal activity from all inorganic, impersonal activity".¹² In dealing with the problems of logic and specifically the ways in which the Truth of God in Christ is received and communicated, Torrance tells us that "true knowledge of Him is not isolated or individualist. To a certain extent that is true of all knowledge, which is never finally the activity of single individuals. It arises in community and requires community for its full and proper operation, and can never escape from it. The thinking of all of us is conditioned by history, by previous thinking and the communication of knowledge already acquired; but it is also conditioned by our personal relations in the present, for even our basic rationality requires the objectivity of other minds".¹³ Torrance particularly stresses this in regard to the Person of Christ and our knowledge of Him.

Torrance's view of rationality is best summed up in the stress that what we know must prescribe for us the mode of rationality we are to adopt towards it. In the preface to "Theological Science" we read that "it is always the nature of things that must prescribe for us the specific/

12. MM.p.232.

13. T.P.210.

specific mode of rationality that we must adopt toward them, and prescribe also the form of verification apposite to them, and therefore, it is a major part of all scientific activity to reach clear convictions as to the distinctive nature of what we are seeking to know in order that we may develop and operate with the distinctive categories demanded of us".¹⁴ In the section on the "Nature of Truth" we find that "knowledge is real only as it is in accordance with the nature of the object, but the nature of the object prescribes the mode of rationality we have to adopt towards it in our knowing and also the nature of the demonstration appropriate to it".¹⁵ Torrance then relates this to the Object of theology, the Truth of God in Jesus. In the essay, "Theology in the Scientific World", we learn that "in all scientific knowledge, we let the nature of what we know, prescribe for us the specific mode of rationality we adopt toward it. That is why in every science we operate with a distinctive form of inquiry proper to the nature of the object we investigate in it. The kind of inquiry we develop in our investigation of determinate objects, for example, takes the form of physical questioning or experiments in which we force mute nature to answer our questions, or to use Bacon's expression, in which we have to 'torment' nature in order to elicit a 'yes' or 'no' in reaction to our stipulations. But when we are concerned to know personal objects, or subjects, we adopt quite a different form of inquiry in which physical compulsion is entirely out of place, one in which personal reciprocity in speaking and listening, asking and answering,/"

14. T.p.xii.

15. T.p.198.

answering, is the appropriate mode of rationality".¹⁶ In "Ecumenism and Science", in the description of science, we read that "there is only one basic way of human knowing which is found to operate in every field of human experience, in religious as well as natural knowledge. Science is the rigorous and disciplined extension of the basic way of knowing applied in exact, controlled, and organised ways to different fields of experience. In every field we know something in accordance with its nature, and so we let its nature determine for us the mode of rationality we must adopt toward it and the form of learning or discovery appropriate to it".¹⁷ This is then related to the different kinds of object and therefore of modes of rationality to be adopted. In the same section we go on to discover that since we must let the nature of what we know prescribe for us the mode of rationality we adopt toward it, science must take account of the subject of the human knower. In fact, it requires of us, with all its rigour, controlled adaptation of the subject to the object. That is why it is quite unscientific to transfer from one field to another the distinctive mode of rationality that develops within it. Thus we cannot assume impersonal, objectivist forms of behaviour toward personal subjects, but must assume personal, objective mode of behaviour toward them if we are to know them in a responsible and rational way".¹⁸ The same point is made in his analysis of our psychological resistance in habits of mind requiring ultimately that we ourselves be changed. In mentioning Hume's dictum that/

16. S.p.93.

17. S.p.114.

18. S.p.116.

that reason is the slave of passions, Torrance writes that "feeling is properly a passion, an affection in which we suffer impact or come under attack from something other than ourselves. We may resist it, and this makes it more difficult for us, but only if we go along with it (not necessarily to subscribe to it) may we know and understand it. This is the side of our rationality in which we let ourselves be affected by what we seek to know; we let it impose its own self-witness upon us, and we let ourselves be told by it (an all-important element in a posteriori knowledge.)"¹⁹

All science can be interpreted as seeking to bring to view the inherent rationality which is in nature. Talking of the change in scientific questioning, Torrance states that "when a scientist lays bare the anatomical and physiological structure of the human body, he is not creating and imposing patterns upon it. When you yourself observe crystal-line formations in the rocks you are not importing into them geometrical patterns of your own inventing, you think the geometrical patterns you find embedded in them already. That is why our basic statements are formed by way of conceptual assent to what is there or by way of recognition of an intelligibility inherent in the nature of things. This is certainly the astonishing thing that keeps on striking the scientist with wonder and awe, as Einstein used to say, that there is already embedded in nature an inherent rationality which it is the task of science to bring to light and express. Apart from it there could be no science at all. Thus the mathematical equations/

19. S.p.197.

equations and even the new geometries we construct are quite meaningless unless they are applicable to nature, but if they are applicable to nature they are elaborated expressions of an objective rationality lying in nature itself".²⁰ In discussion of the relation of theological knowledge to the objective Word, we read that "the basic act of knowledge is one in which the reason acts in accordance with the nature of the given object, that is, acknowledges and recognises it, so that it attains its essential conceptuality as it lets its thinking follow the inherent rationality of the given. In natural science, for example, the reason does not invent geometrical patterns and impose them upon nature in the form of crystals which it posits in this way; rather does it follow as closely as it can the mathematical structure of nature by letting it disclose itself to the reason in order that it may think in accordance with it and thus understand it. In this way natural science operates with recognition-statements arising out of its reflection of the rationality of the universe".²¹

In order for there to be science or knowing at all we must accept this inherent rationality. In "Theology in the Scientific World", we learn of something which needs to be emphasised. It is that "in every science we presuppose that what we know is accessible to rational inquiry, that it is somehow inherently intelligible or rational. If it were not so there could be no knowledge, let alone any science, e.g. in/

20. S.p.42.

21. S.p.182.

in developing verification, one probes into the inner rationality of the object or field of knowledge, into its inner logic. Of course, if we cannot do that we are entitled to question whether what is claimed to be knowledge is not just something thought up out of our own subjectivities and projected out there in an objectified form. But if we can bring to view the inner rationality of a field of knowledge, we are convinced that we are in touch with reality, that we are not inventing but discovering, that we are thinking as we are compelled to think by the essential nature of the realities themselves".²² In his discussion of theological persuasion, as a postscript to "God and "Rationality", Torrance, talking of intelligible language and intelligible subject-matter, states that "the things about which we speak to one another must be capable of rational apprehension and of semantic designation. This is something that we assume and operate with in ordinary experience and in science, without attempting to explain it. If the nature of things were not somehow inherently rational they would remain inapprehensible and opaque and indeed we ourselves would not be able to emerge into rationality. It is because things are amenable to rational treatment that we can apprehend them at all, we understand them or get light upon them in so far as we can penetrate into their rationality and develop our grasp of it. Scientific knowledge is that in which we bring the inherent rationality of things to light and expression, as we let the realities we investigate/

22. S.p.p.93-4.

investigate disclose themselves to us under our questioning and we on our part submit our minds to their inherent connections and order. Let it be granted that scientific activity involves a give-and-take between subject and object, and that all knowledge is by way of being a compromise between thought and being; nevertheless it remains an awesome fact that if the nature of things were not inherently rational and apprehensible knowledge could not arise at all, far less communication".²³

The same point is made three times in his section on the problems of logic, Firstly in the comparison of natural and scientific language we read that "our normal scientific language presupposes an inherent rationality in nature, so that it makes use of basic forms that refer to states of affairs and patterns of events in the external world, but the contingent and factual elements in these forms impede strict theoretic demonstration",²⁴ Secondly, in discussing the analogical

character of existence statements, we can describe our conviction concerning the validity of our own theories. At least we can commit ourselves to their acceptance. This is "as the applicability of

a model to the real world, which in some sciences is empirically verifiable/

23. S.p.196. It is interesting to note that this exact passage is presented in the preface of "Theological Science" p.p.x-xi, with the following minor changes. Instead of "...emerge into rationality..." we read "....emerge into the light of rationality"; instead of "... submit our minds to their inherent connections....", we "submit our minds to their intrinsic connections...."; instead of "..... Let it be granted that scientific activity involves....", we read "... Scientific activity certainly involves...."; instead of "... and that all knowledge...." we read "...while all knowledge..."; and finally, instead of "if the nature of things were not inherently rational...." we read "...if the nature of things were not intelligible..."

24. T.p.224.

verifiable in determinate ways, or as the persistent relevance of an analogue to the nature of the reality into which we inquire, as we experience it or intuit it with increasing understanding through the analogue, or as the fertility of a theory in throwing light upon a set of stubborn problems and at the same time revealing new facts, but in whatever form it may be stated it is the discovery of a far-reaching rationality in the nature of things which we are forced to distinguish from our knowing of it, and to which we give authority in working our conception of it. It is the discerning of an objective structure of this kind that so often opens up the way for the great new advances",²⁵ and Finally in discussing the limited power of our conception adequate to reality we learn that "knowledge is given in the interaction of subject and object, and scientific knowledge cannot escape being a compromise between thought and being. Nevertheless, although we cannot finally transcend our own selves and limitations, we use theories, models or analogues as means or instruments through which we discern and cognise objective reality as far as we may, relying upon a rationality embedded in the nature of things and independent of our knowing of it, since it is this that makes science possible at all".²⁶

On the basis of this inherent rationality, we seek in every sphere of knowledge to express the objective rationality which is part and parcel of the object of knowledge. In his discussion of the similarities of theological science and the special sciences, we learn that one such similarity is "respect for the objectivity of facts, or, in other words, for real thinking that proceeds only by way of reference to/

25. T.p.242.

26. T.p.258.

to the externally given reality. In the methodological procedure of the sciences we have just been discussing active and passive elements are always involved. The reason is actively at work in constructing the model or developing the analogue as it puts its questions to nature and elicits its answers, but throughout the reason submits itself to the objective realities and seeks to cognise them passively through its theoretic constructions".²⁷ Relating this to theology, we find that "because the Truth of God encounters us within the world of creaturely objects theology is inevitably concerned with all sorts of 'objects' which it must respect, for it cannot otherwise know and speak of the Truth of God truthfully. But theology is bound to respect this objectivity in an unprecedented way, precisely because ultimate Objectivity encounters us within the realm of contingent objectivity. It is respect for the objectivity of contingent facts that characterises every authentic empirical science, but theology makes that respect a religious as well as a scientific obligation".²⁸ The same point is made in a different context, that of the discussion of the rapidly altering framework of scientific thought, in light of relativity "axioms are not just a set of logical premises antecedent to and independent of the results reached, but arise out of the intrinsic connections of scientific activity, and force themselves upon us as the necessary structures of thought through which the intelligible nature of things imposes itself upon our minds. In this way, as Einstein used to point out, geometry applied to the physical/

27. T.p.288.

28. T.p.288.

physical universe ceases to be an axiomatic deductive science and becomes a natural science inseparably bound up with physics. The axioms may indeed be formulated at first through postulation as we reflect on the way in which the facts are being established, but they have to be deductively tested (in Popper's sense), and are justified (in Polanyi's sense) in view of the objective depth and indeterminate range of rationality that becomes disclosed through them. The special point for us to note, however is this: Here we have a rigorously scientific way of thought which is an axiomatic penetration into the inherent rationality of things beyond all our mental pictures of reality, a rationality that is itself not phenomenally or causally related to phenomena or empirical events and which could not be discerned merely from an observational or empirical approach, but which forces itself upon us as the rational ground lying behind phenomena or empirical events, and without which they could not be what they are."....(My emphasis.)²⁹

On the basis of inherent rationality and the aim of knowledge as expressing the objective and inherent rationality we have three things to bear in mind. The first is that in theology we must use open concepts, i.e. open to reformulation in light of the knowledge of the object, in order to clarify rationality. Open concepts are "concepts which, to be sure, must be closed on our side, for we have to formulate them as carefully and exactly as we can, but which on God's side are open (and therefore apposite) to the infinite objectivity and inexhaustible reality of the diving Being. That is to say, the kind of conceptuality with/

29. S.p.100; See also S.p.42 and footnote 20 above.

with which we operate in theology is one in which our acts of cognition are formed from beyond them by the reality disclosed so that the content of what is revealed constantly bursts through the forms we bring to it in order to grasp it".³⁰ In the next paragraph Torrance continues to "it is important to see that open concepts are not irrational because they are open, for to be open vis-a-vis the eternal God is the true mode of their rationality, prescribed for them by the nature of the divine Object of knowledge - they would in fact be the most imprecise and inaccurate if they were not open in this way. At the same time, their openness indicates the limits of our human inquiry beyond which we cannot rationally go, or the limitation of our powers to put into words our understanding of the divine rationality which will not be restricted or confined within our finite formulations. Nevertheless, within these limits we may and indeed we must probe as deeply as we can and seek to make clear the rationality which we are given to apprehend. It is for this purpose that we have to use open concepts which by their very nature do not describe, delimit or define the Reality we seek to understand, but which we employ as media through which we allow our minds to come under the compulsion of the Reality so that we think of it only as we are forced to, and let them be opened out more and more in accordance with its richness and range in enlightenment".³¹

The second thing to bear in mind is that the sort of inquiry which is truly rational must itself bring our presuppositions into question in light of the further revelations of the object, as we approach the objectivity and inherent rationality of that object.

Torrance/

30. S.p.p.186-7.

31. S.p.187.

Torrance makes the point both in the preface to "Theological Science" and in a discussion of rationality in "Theological Persuasion". He suggests that "as we seek to penetrate into the rationality of something our inquiry must also cut back into ourselves and our own presuppositions, for they must be brought into question if we are to be really open to understand the thing concerned out of itself and in accordance with its own nature. In these circumstances persuasion must argue for a reconstruction in our interpretative frame of thought, in order that alien elements may be eliminated from it and new elements assimilated more appropriate to the nature of things we are speaking about".³²

We read in Torrance's description of theology in a scientific world that "in a science we know some given reality strictly in accordance with its nature, and we let its nature determine for us the form and content of our knowledge of it. We cannot assume that we already know what its nature is, for we learn what it is only through inductive questioning in which we try to let it declare itself to us in spite of, and often in contradiction to, what we tell ourselves about it. This is a process in which we find ourselves being stripped of our preconceived ideas. Our main difficulty is undoubtedly with ourselves and our built-in habits of thought which we stubbornly carry over from the past or from another area of knowledge into our inquiries but which can only obstruct and distort our apprehension of what is really new. In scientific activity we let ourselves and what we/

32. S.p.197; T.p.xi.

we think we already know be called in question, so that as far as possible we may know the given reality out of itself and in accordance with its own nature. We know natural processes, for example, not out of a priori assumptions, but by exploring natural processes alone, and by thinking of them only in terms of natural processes and through forms of thought which we develop under the pressure of what they actually are. In scientific activity of this kind we try to ground our knowledge of the given reality squarely upon the reality itself and articulate what we know out of a compelling and exclusive relation with it. This means that we must distinguish what we know from our subjective states and conditions and that in proportion as we know something in accordance with its own nature we allow our presuppositions to be suspended or set aside. But it also means that we must learn to distinguish what we know from our knowing of it, so that we may not confuse our forms of knowledge with the realities we apprehend through them. What all this adds up to is the principle of scientific objectivity, which is simply an extension of our fundamental rationality in which we think and act in accordance with what is the case."³³

The third thing is that if we fail to understand something as rational, it is our own fault, for we have forced it into an alien framework, which is inappropriate. In discussion of the conjoint apprehension of things with other minds we read that "if something is inherently rational, and not merely accidental or surd-like, then it is/

33. S.p.92; T.p.xii.

is our fault and not that of the thing itself if we fail to understand it: we have probably overlaid it with some form of unreality by bringing to its apprehension preconceived ideas that are not appropriate or are wrongly extrapolated from another field of experience."³⁴

The clearest example to date of the sort of thing that Torrance has in mind for theology can be seen in the field of physics, which is a model of natural science in that by mathematical representation it seeks to penetrate into the inner rationality of things and bring this rationality to view. In the chapter on "The Nature of Scientific Activity", we read that "there is an important sense in which physics has played an exemplary role, and may still be allowed to stand as a model of pure science, when its intrinsically developed methods are shown to be determined by the nature of its own special subject-matter, for then it may serve to show us how basic rationality when rigorously extended in appropriate ways to some particular field may yield quite startling results. Appropriate, however, is the operative term here, for pure science can yield results only when the method and the matter are purely matched".³⁵ More generally in discussing theological science among special sciences we read that "what the scientist does in any field is to seek to achieve an orderly understanding of events in which he can grasp them as a connected and intelligible whole and so be able to penetrate into their inner rationality. He does not invent that rationality but discovers it, even though he must act with imagination and insight in detecting and developing the right clues and act creatively in constructing forms of thought and knowledge through/

34. S.p.p.196-7, T.p.xi.

35. T.p.107.

through which he can discern the basic rationality and let his thinking fall under its direction as he offers even a descriptive account of the events In so far as he can reduce to consistent and rational expression the ways in which his knowledge is related to the grounds upon which it is based he is convinced that he has come to grips with the inherent rationality of things and convinced of the truth of his reconstructions - hence the crucial importance in natural science of achieving wherever possible mathematical representation of our understanding of things for it is in that way that we bring the objective rationality to view. Yet, as we have seen, we may treat this representation only as a disclosure-model through which we apprehend the reality we are investigating and not as a descriptive formula or as the equivalent of some ontic structure in the reality itself".³⁶ As this last quotation also shows, rationality is not an invention on the part of the physicist, but rather a discovery of what is there. So all scientists are seeking to come to grips with reality in order to bring basic rationality to view.

The inherent rationality of the universe, however, is not self-explanatory and thus it calls for some explanation of its source and ground. In discussion of the difference between theological science and the other sciences we find that "the natural and human sciences, however, operate only within the finite if unbounded universe, and thus within the limits of what is rationally accessible to us in nature..... These sciences are concerned with developing the immanent rationalities/

36. T.p.318.

rationalities of nature and are content to occupy themselves with fields of rationality that are not ultimately self-explanatory, refraining from asking the question as to the ultimate rational ground that lies behind every field of knowledge." In contrast, "theology, on the other hand, is the science that is unable to halt at the limits that must satisfy natural science, for it is concerned above all to penetrate into transcendent and fountal rationality, the ultimate source of all that is intelligible to man and which is presupposed in the created rationalities of nature explored through natural sciences. There is something analogous to this transcendent rationality in the transcendent element that presses itself upon us in every science".³⁷ However, Torrance goes on to say that "if there is to be real science at all there must be cataleptic control of our human intellectual constructions by something that is itself not constructed, but received, a rationality that seizes us from above and beyond ourselves".³⁸ Yet "this transcendent element in the sciences of nature is not of course to be identified with God, for it comes at us out of the immanent rationality of nature, but it does cry aloud for God if only because the immanent rationality in nature does not provide us with any explanation of itself".³⁹

Even to attempt to formulate the question of inherent rationality as regards the universe and its ground raises problems, for even to question where such rationality comes from is itself to be forced to use/

37. S.p.96.

38. S.p.p.96-7.

39. S.p.97.

use rationality. In examining the problem of Incarnation in space and time and how we can speak of the Incarnation as an act of God without illegitimate projection of our creaturely time into God, Torrance suggests that we come up against an ultimate boundary in thought, which he parallels with "one of those ultimate boundaries in thought such as we reach when we ask a question as to the rationality of the universe: not only do we have to assume that rationality in order to answer the question but we have to assume it in order to ask the question in the first place. We cannot meaningfully ask a question that calls in question that which it needs in order to be the question that is being asked. We cannot step outside the relationship to the rationality of the universe in which we find ourselves without stepping outside of rationality altogether. Before the question as to the relation between our knowing and ultimate rationality we cannot but stand in awe and acknowledgement, and can ask our questions rightly only within the actuality of that relationship."⁴⁰

Torrance suggests that we can only make ultimate sense of immanent rationality by following it through to its ground in the transcendent rationality of God. This is based on Origen's work, for "it was Origen who was first to discern the philosophical significance of this reversal of Aristotelian and Stoic concepts, in establishing the connection between the transcendence of God and the rationality of nature, thus delivering the universe from being shut up in the futility/

40. RR.p.p.53-4.

futility of being unable to offer any explanation of its own rationality".⁴¹

This typified the work of the Church Fathers. "Hence instead of thinking of God in accordance with the determinate features of the finite cosmos the theologians of the early Church thought of Him as the source of all rationality who, by maintaining the universe as the object of His creative knowledge and power, structures and limits it, making it determinate and comprehensible". Talk of the transcendent rationality of God, however, in "theology is often so baffling to those who are absorbed in the natural or human sciences with created or second-order rationalities which all require the support of one another, for in theological science we must presuppose the ultimate rationality into which we inquire in order to inquire rationally of God and we are unable to contend for Him on any lower ground than that which He is. It is all very well in the other sciences to bracket off the question as to ultimate rationality, that is, to be methodologically agnostic in understanding nature out of itself alone, but when we take away those brackets and ask the question as to ultimate rationality, to be agnostic would be an act of sheer irrationality, for it would mean that our reason was being loosed from its bond with the source of rational being. Conversely stated, knowledge of the ultimate rationality of God is reached at the point where our human reason becomes enlightened from beyond the limits of created rationality and where an infinite extension of intelligibility beyond ourselves is disclosed, but all this in such a way that the ultimate rationality sets up its law in the depth of our human rationality and is recognized and respected as the norm and source of our rational illumination".⁴³

God/

41. RR.p.12
 42. RR.p.23.
 43. S.p.97.

God creates rationality in the universe in His creation out of nothing, as well as creating the structures of space and time, which are the created forms of rationality. In discussing the relation of the Reformation to modern theology, Torrance describes the releasing of nature for empirical investigation out of itself as a reversion to "the Patristic insight that the rationality inherent in the world is conferred upon it by God's creation of the world out of nothing".⁴⁴ This is then related in "The Incarnation in Space and Time" to the fact that "the Christian doctrine of Creation asserts that God in His transcendent freedom made the universe out of nothing, and that in giving it a reality distinct from His own but dependent on it He endowed the universe with an immanent rationality making it determinate and knowable".⁴⁵ This view relates to the idea, which is quoted with approval, from Patristic thought, Anselm, Duns Scotus, Pascal and Karl Barth, that "the structures of space and time are created forms of rationality to be distinguished from the eternal rationality of God. In creating and knowing them God remains free from any necessity in the relationship, although they remain grounded in the Supreme Truth of His Being".⁴⁶ The prime example Torrance gives of this at work is the Incarnation and the mode of understanding which is appropriate to the incarnation, interpreted in light of field theory, so that "we see again at work the relation between the created rationalities and the/

44. RR.p.37

45. RR.p.59

46. RR.p.65

the transcendent rationality of God in which the latter is recognized not as an intrusion into the former but rather as their affirming and establishing on their true and ultimate ground".⁴⁷

Torrance analyses created rationality into two basic forms of word and number in terms of personal and impersonal being. He tells us that "we must be careful to distinguish clearly the kind of rationality inherent in historical events from that inherent in natural events. When we presume that nature is inherently intelligible we presume that our understanding of its processes and states can be given some form of mathematical presentation, for it is in that way, as we have noted, that we believe its rationality can come most clearly to view In historical events we operate with a different kind of rationality which we have described as intention or purpose, rationality in its personal rather than in its impersonal form..... If we may speak of the rationality embedded in nature as number, we may speak of the rationality embedded in history as logos, for in history we are concerned with giving a different kind of account (λογον διδοναι) of things from that we give of natural processes, and it is therefore a different kind of story that we have to tell".⁴⁸ Again the point is made in "The Word of God and the Word of Man", in discussion of the Incarnation as the entering into created rationality, we are told that "this created rationality takes two main forms, number and word, corresponding to impersonal and personal being. Different though they are they come together in man,/"

47. RR.p.p.85-6.

48. T.p.321.

man, in the interrelation and inseparability of his physical and spiritual existence in space and time, and they operate together in the emergence of the universe as it is explored and scientifically built up through man's interaction with nature and as its inherent rationality is brought to co-ordinate expression in mathematical and verbal language. Number is the rationality of the creation in its form as determinate event, the rationality of immanence and necessity which is mute in itself but which may be brought to articulation through man in so far as he thinks it under the compulsion of the physical nature of things. Word is the rationality of the creation in which it reaches beyond its fixed and mute condition, the rationality of transcendence and freedom in which man as the crown and priest of creation has the function of shaping formal instruments through which he may bring being to disclose itself in accordance with its manifold nature. Both forms of rationality are needed, but it is in and through man alone that they emerge into the open, so that it is by man's grasp and handling of them that the creation, including man, attains to its full being".⁴⁹

As we see from the last paragraph and the last sentence, both number and word rationality are necessary, yet they function at different levels and are dependent on the transcendent rationality inherent in the Logos of God for their own role as rational forms. In the same discussion of rationality we learn that "number cannot come/

49. S.p.140. For the importance of the inherent differences between number and word as forms of rationality see T.p.251.

come to expression apart from word, that is, without the acquisition of language through which man can stand over against his environment, designating its features and prescribing them to himself as objects for reflexion and computation in order that he may organize and enlarge his knowledge of the world. On the other hand, word cannot fulfil this role apart from number, that is, without the realm of the determinate and immutable which in virtue of its inherent rationality supplies the fixed medium for the development of intelligible systems of representation and at the same time acts as the external control required for consistency and universality in communication. Thus number and word find articulation in two co-ordinated levels of rationality in which each requires the other but in which word is the formal means by which the creation is delivered from being trapped in itself and is made open to what is above and beyond it. In this context the inherent rationality of the physical creation is seen not to be self-contained but to call for a transcendent rationality for its explanation and meaning".⁵⁰

This dependence on transcendent rationality is even more crucial, for without such transcendent rationality there can be no pure science, for rationality grasps us from beyond ourselves and we must conform to it to be fully rational. In his description of theology in the scientific world, we read that "the passion of the scientist is aroused by the intuitive apprehension of a reality that is not constructed or controlled by man but that waits to be discovered. And so he develops a science, the final shape of which does not lie within his own competence to determine. He glimpses its possibilities but they reach out far beyond him. As Michael Polanyi has put it, he is caught up in/

50. S.p.p.140-1

in the pursuit of a reality that is only partially disclosed but that has an indeterminate range of rationality still unrevealed, for he is convinced that it has an independence and power for manifesting itself in unthought-of ways in the future. His scientific conscience is the counterpart or echo in himself of that transcendent element, a logic beyond his own mind, that thrusts itself unrelentingly and compulsively upon him. That is why, as Polanyi has so often insisted, there can be no pure science pursued freely for its own sake without dedicated service to a transcendent rationality. If there is to be real science at all there must be cataleptic control of our human intellectual constructions by something that is itself not constructed, but received, a rationality that seizes us from above and beyond ourselves.

This transcendent element in the sciences of nature is not of course to be identified with God, for it comes at us out of the immanent rationality of nature, but it does cry aloud for God if only because the immanent rationality in nature does not provide us with any explanation of itself".⁵¹

When we seek to discover what this account of rationality means in practice for us, we must be aware of our specific problem in the very nature of our humanity. Man is unable of himself properly to be rational, for his reason seeks to be autonomous and to conform what is there to the configuration reason brings to reality. In a footnote on the chapter on "the Knowledge of God", we have a definition of "autonomous/

51. S.p.p.96-7

"autonomous reason": it "is of course a diseased form of rationality for it is the reason turned in upon itself, and claiming as inherent in itself the forms which it can derive only in relation to the objective world upon which it reasons".⁵² This is amplified in an early article on "Faith and Philosophy". "It is impossible to think without having something to think about. Reason cannot operate without substantia. Therefore the autonomous reason, by its very nature and by definition cut off from and unable to grasp its proper relation to the objective world immediately, is forced to feed upon itself as if it were its own substantia. Presumably this autonomous reason has already attained a certain more or less permanent configuration in conformity with the material world, but it has come to imagine that this configuration belongs to its essential being, that it is substantial to it, or to use Kantian language, that in view of the categories of its own understanding, it can understand any object to which it may direct its attention. This has been taken to be true to such an extent that it has become an axiom for the reason to accept as rational only that which fits in with the forms of its own autonomous activity. It refuses to recognize anything outside the charmed circle of its own self-sufficiency except what can be understood by the norms immanent to reason."⁵³ This being the case, "as a rule, when the autonomous reason comes across the unknown, it subdues the unknown to the forms of its own understanding and the unknown is translated into terms of what/

52. T.p.261. Footnote.

53. F.P.p.p.242,3.

what is known already. It cannot conceive an absolute unlikeness except in terms of itself, for it allows no break in the circle of its own autonomy (Kierkegaard)".⁵⁴ This results in the situation that, "as he is, man is unable to behave in terms of the Truth, therefore unable to be rational. He must be changed, as St. Paul said, by the renewing of his mind until he is conformed to the image of God in Christ. To behave in terms of Christ who is the express image and reality of God is to have faith in God. That is what it means for reason to be rational, to have the true objectivity of faith."⁵⁵

Reason's autonomy is most clearly seen when man is confronted by God and cannot by reasoning reduce God to merely human categories. "Autonomous reason can only try to understand God in terms of itself, presupposing an ontic continuity between itself and God, and so we can only 'hold down the truth in the form of a lie' as St. Paul said, 'worshipping the creature instead of the Creator'. A fully fledged autonomy is bent on self-deification".⁵⁶ "The urge of reason to complete itself in a foreclosed unity corresponding to the charmed circle of the autonomous reason is so ineradicable a habit of mind, and so irresistible, that only when reason is prized open from above through faith, and kept open, can the reason be restrained from betraying the facts of existence in an artificial unity. In faith, the monologue of reason is invaded by a Word from without, and instead of monologue there is dialogue. Faith is reason engaged in dialogue and by dialogue faith prevents the reason from closing in upon itself alone and therefore from offering a foreclosed rationalisation of existence. Reason is confronted and reaches a crucial situation/

54. FP.p.243.

55. FP.p.245.

56. FP.p.243.

situation: that is the moment of faith. Faith is reason acknowledging something transcendent of itself, and behaving in accordance with it. In this situation to have faith is the only rational thing that reason can do".⁵⁷

In light of man's situation as regards his autonomous reason and confronted as he is with the inherent rationality of the universe and of God, man can merely submit to the inherent rationality of both the universe and God and seek to communicate this by persuading others to submit to the same rationality, and thus we discover that community is essential for proper understanding of the rationality of all things. In the preface of "Theological Science", we read that "scientific knowledge is that in which we bring the inherent rationality of things to light and expression, as we let the realities we investigate disclose themselves to us under our questioning and we on our part submit our minds to their intrinsic connections.....We communicate with others only when we get them to submit their thought to the same rationality in things that we experience. Thus communication from the very start involves an element of persuasion."⁵⁸ The implications of this are more clearly drawn in "Theological Persuasion". We find that "in theological persuasion, we seek to bring others to the point where they submit their minds to the inherent rationality of the divine revelation. There they must think only as they are compelled to think by the nature of the divine realities themselves, and there they must engage in a critical judgment in which they test the persuasive statements in the light of that/

57. FP.p.244.

58. T.p.xi. Torrence states the same thing in the same words in S.p.196.

that to which they refer, and test their own preconceptions to see whether they are importing into what is apprehended something that is not really there or whether they are preventing the apprehension of what is really there but quite new and altogether beyond them. This kind of persuasion cannot achieve its end fully with single individuals, for if God is not merely what I have thought up and projected out there, He is objectively real and universally knowable by others (that is in so far as they are prepared to know Him in accordance with His own nature)"⁵⁹ Parallel to this we find that "in natural science we build up knowledge through casting ourselves upon the rationality of the given, and we test the reality and objectivity of our knowledge through the development of its inherent patterns of rationality in a way that not only transcends our experience in the present but proves to be progressively fertile in the light it throws upon other problems and questions. But this testing requires a whole community of verifiers all over the world, for science moves and advances as one, with its internal self-scrutiny and self-criticism, and its own rigorous conscience aroused in it by the compelling claims of reality. So it is with theology".⁶⁰

59. S.p.201

60. S.pp.201-2.

4. Critique of Torrance's Account of Rationality

As outlined in the Introduction to this chapter, Torrance provides an example of a modern theological writer who is aware of the necessity for an examination of rationality. His view has been presented in some detail to ensure that the line of Torrance's own position is preserved and that it is evident why his position leads to the difficulties presented and why his view as a whole must be considered inadequate to the complexity of rationality as well as in its own form subject to considerable problems and the need for further explication.

Within the critique will be developed the positive gains to be had on the basis of the issues and points which Torrance makes, as will the negative gains in terms of the weaknesses of his account and the areas in which these may be improved. The critique will take the form which the positive treatment of Torrance's position has followed. Each step in the argument for rationality presented in sections two and three will be commented on and some relevant criticism made either positively or negatively. In this way, Torrance's account will be allowed to stand or fall on its own merits, rather than forced to serve some ulterior purpose of criticism.

The areas covered in criticism of Torrance will be first of all that his account is overbrief and leaves the limits of rationality largely ignored. Concentrating on the theme of rationality, it will be asked whether there is too great a variety of topics referred to under Torrance's scheme, and specific questions raised as to the nature of the rationality of the universe, and of God, as well as the dependence/

dependence of Torrance on a particular christian emphasis. Then his account of objectivity and its relation to subjectivity will be dealt with and the way that it is impossible to rid his view of subjective features even though his position seems to require just such a removal. Criticism will then be levelled against his view of the "object", in terms of the differences between objects, the difficulty of defining actual objects, and the particular problems with examples, such as "mind", historical events, scientific objects, and God.

With the critique of the view of the object will be presented the danger of overpersonalisation and pre-categorisation, and certain problems with intuition and the use of figurative language. The critique then moves to consider the phrase "mode of rationality" and to ask what "mode" means, whether there is the kind of difference in approach which Torrance seems to suggest, what practical effect his view has, and the meaning of adoption in connection with the notion of rationality which rather seems to be concerned with something people already have.

Torrance's failure to exclude what ought to be excluded will be shown in terms of false views such as alchemy and astrology, other christian views, and other world religions. Coupled with this will be criticism of his failure to be true to the complexity of rationality in terms of different attitudes, detailed analyses, and different kinds of understanding. Then his notions of inherent, created, and transcendent rationality will be considered, along with the idea of awe/

awe and mystery as well as the positive benefits of false theories. Then immanence, revelation, openness of concepts will be dealt with before attention is turned to the role of community in Torrance's account and the difficulties this creates for free will, actual discussion, argument and communication in general.

However behind this form of criticism which is geared to Torrance's own presentation and emphasis there will be a general background of criticism which will be the basis from which the criticism of Torrance is launched and that which will serve as the ground for development of my own positive view.

This general criticism of Torrance's view will concentrate on three areas. Some of the omissions which Torrance makes will be examined as regards the nature of rationality, and the importance of this centres on his failure to examine the limits of rationality especially as they are to be understood from the actual practice of argument and discussion. Secondly Torrance's account will be discussed on its own merits to see whether or not it stands up as a sufficient account of what rationality is, and it will be shown in what way Torrance fails to make out his case, and the details of this failure will be presented in the body of the text. Finally it will be shown that one of the effects of Torrance's account is that it leaves no room for the critic to stand upon. It will be seen that his discussion of intuition, his failure to exclude the false-astrology, alchemy, fairy-lore and boobums- his position against other christians and other religions, his account of revelation, his doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and Torrance's inability to question his own/

own system all are part and parcel of the way he excludes the critic from being able to express dissatisfaction with his view and offer an alternative.

The presentation of the criticism shall, however, be based not on moulding Torrance's material to suit my own ends but by taking his position as he has it outlined in his own account and with the sorts of emphases which he makes. In this way I shall seek to be fair, while at the same time seeking to isolate particular points for my own use in the description of an account of rationality which is both adequate to the complexity of the subject and which also allows genuine discussion and argument. The first general ground of criticism, then, against Torrance is his failure to examine the limits of rationality and his omission of important features of rationality. Then doubt is set against the application of the epithet "rational" to so great a variety of things such as persons and inanimate objects. Then two examples of such rationality, that of the universe and God, are tested for adequacy. Then attention is drawn to the reliance of Torrance's view of rationality on a particular christian emphasis and position.

In view of the detail and scope of Torrance's account of rationality, it seems illegitimate to suggest that his account is in fact too brief. It is, however, overbrief in that it is at a considerable tangent to the bulk of present discussion of the nature and scope of rationality. This criticism would have little relevance, but for the fact that Torrance's view of theological science has integral to it a view of rationality which is basic to the description both of natural science as practised today as well as to theology as he seeks to practise and commend/

commend such a practice. Torrance's account, on his own admission, is in the tradition of the Early Fathers, the Reformation, and what he describes as modern science; yet the concept of rationality is historically related to the work of the Rationalists throughout the ages, and there is little account taken of the nature of such a view in its historical aspect, apart from references to the problems created by Cartesian dualism. This is also the case with the lack of relation to the bulk of modern discussion on the theme of rationality. Modern discussions such as those of W.W. Bartley III, J. Bennett, R. Edgley, and B. Wilson are without mention or analysis, whereas they offer alternative views of the nature and scope of rationality, and need therefore to be argued against and to be contrasted with his own account. In the specific detail of Torrance's account and approach to the nature of rationality, one is left without sufficient discussion of a whole variety of features of rationality, which any account of adequacy must at least put into some perspective and offer understanding of. The relationship of rationality with reason, and the uses of "reasonable" and "unreasonable" in the wide variety of contexts are not specifically considered or examined. There is no account given of the logical, practical, scientific, or experiential limits of rationality, which are the crucial features of rationality in argument and discussion. There is no account of the relation of rationality to such ideas as justification, evidence, and criticism. Nor does Torrance discuss the traditional antitheses of/

of reason over and against faith or against experience, by examination of the generally accepted anti-theses involved. Torrance does not compare and contrast rationality in human spheres with animal behaviour and claims to rationality. There is no analysis of these various concepts, which seem, prima facie, so essential in understanding what rationality is, and how best to give an adequate account of such rationality especially as it relates to theology in any claim to scientific method and integrity.

It is, of course, easy to complain about the failure to analyse cognate concepts of rationality which seem crucial in any adequate account of its nature. But this needs to be coupled with a careful critique of exactly what Torrance does say, even if that in itself is not a complete explanation of rationality. Torrance states that rationality is a feature of many and various things. He talks of the rationality of the universe,¹ things,² nature,³ in the nature of things,⁴ world,⁵ existence,⁶ theology,⁷ scientists,⁸ creation,⁹ and God.¹⁰ Some of these will be examined in greater detail, but it is doubtful if one can talk of the rationality of things, of the universe and of God, as if rationality in each case was one and the same sort of thing. The rationality of objects and the rationality of the universe are surely different levels of statements and of organisation.

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1. S.p.p.9,82; MM.p.14; RR.p.p.12,59-60.
 2. S.p.p.42,45,94,100,164,195,197.
 3. S.p.p.42,95,97; MM.p.95; RR.p.12; T.p.224.
 4. S.p.p.195,196; MM.p.58; T.pxi,8-9,236-7,242.
 5. S.p.p.45-6
 6. MM.p.56.
 7. T.p.p.285-6.
 8. S.p.9.
 9. S.p.p.140-141.
 10. S.p.p.vii,39-40,48,97-8,155,162-3,169-70; MM.p.p.50,94-5; RR.p.p.60,67.

They refer to different sorts of things. It is prima facie false that the rationality of any particular object is at the same sort of level and can be construed in the same sort of way as the rationality of the universe. Torrance seeks to present rationality as the adoption of modes, but to clarify this a definition of nature of the universe is required over and against particular objects, with explicit in any such definition the relation of rationality to the different things and levels of things, involved. The rationality of my big toe, or indeed of all big toes, is different from and is worthy of different sorts of considerations, from the rationality of the universe and all nature. To call the universe or nature rational seems to be the making of some statement concerning organisation or principles by which organisation can be seen and understood of a massive and intricate system. It can at least be imagined what it would be like to draw up such principles in order to reduce the complexity of any system, or to put it even more neutrally, any grasp of phenomena like the universe, to a more simple level by clarification of the interconnections and interrelations of the parts in what can then be seen to be a whole. To talk of the rationality of the universe is to view it as a system which can be appreciated and grasped, even if this appreciation and grasping is an ideal which is never attained. In comparison to talk of the rationality of a big toe, or a desk, or any thing, must surely be at a different sort of level. It may be that it still is a reference to a principle of organisation and the capacity to reduce a complex to a more simplified systematic account and this to facilitate understanding, but/

but the point is that to use in both this context and that of the universe and nature, the term "rationality" without some qualification or explication, leaves no wiser than when started.

As will be considered, one is also confronted with the difficulty of interpreting nature, the universe, desks, God, etc., as objects. This will be related to the specific definition of rationality, but for the moment, it may be seen that by talking of the variety of things and the reference of rationality as being applicable to all these different sorts of things, there is a danger of smuggling in implicitly the doctrine of objects, which are to be approached with the proper mode of rationality. But the universe is not an object in the same way as my big toe, if the universe is in any sense an object. Against it is the setting together of different levels of things, and different sorts of terms, and suggesting by the use of the term "rationality" that there is some sort of common ground to be understood, or rather in the way of understanding each and all of them. The rationality of scientists is totally different from the rationality of the universe, yet no examination is offered and delineation of the way that the term "rationality" is being used, in the one case, as a characteristic of human beings, and in the other case, some sort of principle of organisation or understanding open to humans to grasp, if but approached correctly.

If one of the notions is examined which Torrance mentions, that of the rationality of the universe, or of nature, or that of the rationality in the nature of things, (one is again unclear whether these are all the same thing or three different things), it can be seen that there is a problem/

problem to be taken account of. The presence of evil in the world must count against the apparent rationality of nature, and in turn, of the universe, for evil is apparently discontinuity. Torrance himself talks of the problem of evil in "Faith and Philosophy", where he says that "where evil is not regarded as relative, but as radical, any philosophy which attempts a unitary interpretation of existence is confronted by shipwreck modern philosophy ... realises the surd-character of evil. Somehow evil posits itself and cannot be rationalised.....Evil is fundamentally discontinuity".¹¹ However this is countered by the fact that "faith insists on taking the discontinuity and contradictions in human life seriously and honestly and challenges the superficiality of the philosopher who thinks that by dialectic he can reach a coherent interpretation of existence in which the gaps of evil and sin and pain are healed by the activity of reason alone".¹² The only other reference to the problem of evil in the four major works dealt with comes in "Theological Science" in his discussion of the problems of logic. He says that in "religious experience and knowledge we work with the problem of the faithfulness of God, and we live and plan our lives accordingly. But we keep meeting evil and suffering which rise up before us as manifestations of disconnection and disorder in the nature of things and we are shocked at their deformity, i.e. their contradiction of rational form. And so we are driven to meditate upon/

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11. FP.p.240; see above chapter two, "The Value of the Alternative Theory", p.p. 34-5, 110-118
 12. FP. p.p.240 ff.

upon them more profoundly for even disorder argues for order, seeking to reduce our understanding of experience to full intelligibility. We still believe that God is reliable and faithful, and that form and order belong to the fabric of the universe, and that behind creation and the fall there remains God eternally and infinitely loving and wise. From the point of view of logical form there is a grave disconnection between the goodness and the power of God and the facts of evil and suffering in the creation; for faith this element of incoherence is a problem only vis-a-vis ultimate coherence, faith insists in asking whether this is not to work with a superficial notion of uniformity, in which our formalization of things has been allowed to run ahead of the facts and to impose a false and illusory unity on them, e.g. by deriving a notion of 'omnipotence' through a logical construction out of the kind of power that we find in nature, brute force, formalizing its abstract possibility to the nth degree, and then setting beside it a notion of 'infinite goodness' derived in a similar way through logical construction and projection out of our common human ideas, only to find that they contradict each other in the face of the evil and suffering of our world. It is the Cross of Christ, however, that faith penetrates deeply into its understanding of the faithfulness of God, for there He is found at work in the depth of measureless evil and the unappeasable agony of mankind overcoming contradiction, achieving reconciliation and bringing unity through atonement".¹³ This is quoted at length for this is the fullest/

13. T.p.p.264-5

fullest and only account given in the major works selected for study, and well typifies the line which Torrance takes on this question. What is offered in his remarks from "Faith and Philosophy" and "Theological Science" is not a clear-cut account of the relation of the surd-like quality of evil to the inherent intelligibility of the universe and the world. Rather he suggests that the problem of evil arises because of a simplistic uni-level approach to what is complex and multi-levelled. There is a tension in the remarks, for, on the one side, there is the willingness to admit the genuine nature of evil, the "surd character", "deformity", and with this the tacit admission that evil is a problem, for it is something that in spite of which we "still believe that God is reliable and faithful". (My emphasis),¹⁴ But on the other hand, evil is only an "element of incoherence", which results from working with a "superficial notion of uniformity", as well as apparently from a false construction of "omnipotence", at least that is the given example. The problem of evil seems, however, more of a problem than is allowed for in this setting. If its "surd-character" is taken seriously it must be asked whether this "surd character" results from a faulty analysis of a systematic whole, or else is itself genuinely and really surd. If it merely results from a faulty analysis, it seems to be coming round to say that evil only appears to be evil, given a particular understanding which is limited and imposes a false unity. If, on the other hand, it is genuinely surd, it follows that it must count seriously against any claim/

14. T.p.264.

claim of rationality for the world, nature and the universe. If it is taken seriously, it must lead to serious problems of the scope of rationality, when applied to the world and the universe. If it is not taken seriously, then rationality is saved, but at the cost of belittling the reality of evil and its irrational appearance.

Torrance's account needs to be further understood in two aspects. He states that in being confronted with evil in the nature of things we are "driven to meditate upon them more profoundly for even disorder argues for order, seeking to reduce our understanding of experience to fuller intelligibility". (My emphasis). To suggest that disorder argues for order is difficult to allow without argument. If one tries to reduce things in an orderly fashion, then certainly when confronted with a disordered set of things, one will try to reduce the disorder to order, but that reduction of order from disorder results not from the disorder in the things themselves, but rather the ordering drive in oneself. It is just not the case that when confronted with a disorder, automatically and immediately it is thought that it is order gone wrong, out of hand, or about to be corrected. The clothes strewn around the teenager's room certainly to the mind of the tidy parent argues for a kind of order, but to the teenager it does not. Paint slapped on to canvas by means of a rotary spray-gun may well appear to the would-be avantgarde art critic the order of a new form of art, but it is still also just disordered paint blobs. Evil and disorder need not necessarily lead to saying "Ah, order gone wrong here!" or "We need order here". It may, but it need not. It may, for instance, given/

given the other aspect of Torrance's account. In dealing with the problem of evil the presuppositions at work in Torrance's view are seen very clearly. He makes no apology for such presuppositions in "Theological Science",¹⁵ but in the discussion of evil, it is first of all set in the framework of the faithfulness of God, creation and the fall, and is finally to be solved in the mystery of the atonement in the cross of Christ. There is no necessity to discuss the details of how evil is related to such a view, but rather to make the point that for Torrance, the problem of evil is integrally bound up with a view of God, His relation to the world, and His work in and through the Person of Christ. What is difficult is not so much the making sense of the problem of evil in such a religious context, but rather that in a discussion of rationality and in the relation of rationality as it refers to the universe, and of the world, such a religious thesis for the nature of the problem of evil is only one possible account and explanation, but certainly not the only or necessarily the correct one. Evil is a problem in any claim that nature is rational, and that the universe is rational, but if its correct understanding is possible only in and through the religious thesis, this thesis must be shown to be superior to all others, and the faults, weaknesses, and failure on the part of the other views or accounts of evil pointed out, and the positions argued for. Torrance's solution to the problem may or may not be another solution, but it needs careful comparison with other accounts successfully to make out its case.

Torrance's/

15. See Preface of Theological Science.

Torrance's statement of the rationality of nature, things, and the universe must, therefore, be further explicated particularly vis-a-vis the problem of evil and his view of God's providence and goodness, before his case can be accepted. Attention is turned now to one of the other terms of which, or of whom, Torrance tells us rationality is a feature. What sense can be made of talk of the rationality of God? Later the relation of God's rationality to other rationalities will be examined but now concentration is on what the notion of the rationality of God can mean. "Rational", "reasonable", and the other synonyms, seem to have a close relation with the notion of persons. People are rational, or irrational, and they have or fail to have rational understanding. As has been seen in Torrance's account, it is people, things, the universe, and God which are all rational, or all have rationality, but this cannot be in the same sense for all. First of all, in what sense is God like a person who is rational? There are so many things which make sense when referred to persons and their qualities, which are difficult to relate to God. Does God have intentions and purposes, and are these rational? It can be imagined that people will fail to behave as rationally as they might, but God could not fail to be rational, if He is the all perfect One. It seems odd to imagine that God has intentions or purposes which He thinks of, thinks over, examines, and then executes and awaits the results. God is not rational in the same sense as human beings are rational. His rationality would and must be unlimited and perfect, and His expression of rationality must be in different modes. For instance, it is claimed that to be rational is to behave in a fashion appropriate to the/

the object, and to adopt a mode of rationality appropriate to that object. But what sense can be had of God's behaving or not behaving? Behaviour requires a body and certain physical characteristics. What could it mean for God to adopt or not to adopt a mode of rationality, setting aside the problem of what this might mean in itself, and concentrating on the idea that God has to do something, as if He is not in the situation of it always and only being done as it ought to be done? In other words, as in all talk of God, there are considerable difficulties bound up with the concept of God and any expression of it. Now this is not at all to suggest that by careful consideration, these difficulties cannot be surmounted, but rather that in the context of talk of the rationality of God, these problems are exacerbated and require all the more careful treatment. But Torrance is not so simplistic as may appear to be suggested, for he has two lines of approach open and he utilises both. He centres on the Person of Christ in the Incarnation, and thus seeks to show God entering into space and time, into created form, and thus hoping to deal with the problems of the gap between God and man in the atonement on the cross and in the very life and Person of Christ. This may be the case or not, but it is beside the point, for the objection rests upon the belief in God from eternity to eternity, not as the God-man, but as the God of heaven and earth and all that is therein. Of course, for Torrance, God cannot adequately be grasped apart from Christ, but there still remain difficulties within the concept of God, which the living reality of Christ and the revelation He brings cannot dissolve for they are related to the understanding of God as God, and it is in this context/

context that the question of the rationality of God is raised.

However, Torrance does suggest that the rationality of God is very different from the rationality which we grasp in the created order, and what is required is the stretching of concepts. The danger with stretching concepts to cover or bridge the gap of transcendent to created rationality lies just in the extent of the difference, and the problem not of overstretching, but of annihilating our concepts. To talk of God adopting rationality, or behaving rationally makes little sense, and would appear to leave only some sort of definitional axiom that God is rational. If an example is taken of a rational man who is confronted with a need to choose between two courses of action, it can be seen that to talk of God in relation to behaving rationally is difficult. The rational man confronted with a decision is in the situation where he can see the problem and how it arose. He can see the alternatives before him, or can work them out, and then think through what will happen if he does one thing rather than the other. The rational man can see the consequences and then decide which of these consequences are acceptable and which are not, then that person will take the action necessary to begin the chain of consequences which leads to the desired effect. He then can look back and see the initial action and its consequences and and measure the success or failure of his planning and action. In contrast, the God Who is not in time can have no process of planning, working out of consequences, weighing up alternatives, deciding to act, acting, and then evaluating the action and its effects. The God of christianity is usually conceived of as "seeing" things simul stant - all at once - with no attached problems of action or time sequences.

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To predicate rationality of God without careful delineation of difference from rationality in man, only leads to internal difficulties in any view of rationality. What meaning this can have in terms of significance and importance is difficult to see, and it tends towards a reduction of God to rationality. To predicate rationality properly of God, the understanding and definition of rationality would have to be transcended so that one could never formulate far less grasp what this was. This leads to Torrance's doctrine of the work and Person of the Holy Spirit. This, of course, presupposes the Christian view of man and the bulk of Christian doctrine, but it also typifies a tension in Torrance between the subjective and the objective, for if appreciation of rationality can only come by the work of the Holy Spirit, then man's freedom to be rational and to make rational choices, runs the risk of disappearing in the action of a grace which not only gives, but also gives the capacity to receive. The rational man is usually accounted to be the free man who can withstand all outside pressures and can understand and choose for himself regardless of what others say, and do, but in Torrance's work the freedom of man becomes interpreted as proper freedom only when the Holy Spirit totally influences and guides man to appreciate the truth both by revealing the truth to him and giving him the capacity to receive the truth and see that it is true. Meynell presents the problem with such religious assumptions as Torrance holds to be necessary when he states, "Given that Christian theology is an intellectual discipline by means of which one can apprehend the truth at all, given that God the creator really does reveal himself to man through Jesus Christ and the Scriptures, Torrance's method is admirably conceived. But the premises may be questioned; it may be asked what evidence exists that there is/

is a God, that he has revealed himself to men at all, or that he has revealed himself in Jesus Christ - apart from the subjective conviction of the believers that these things are so".^{15a} Is it the case that God has presented Himself in a particular way which shows that He is of a particular nature, or is this Torrance's own construction of particular events? [REDACTED] How is it known that God is thus and not so? "Jesus Christ shows us"., comes the reply. How can it be accepted that Jesus Christ shows that God is thus and not so? This is an illegitimate question, for it seeks, Torrance states, to step outside of the actual revelation of God. This leads to the view that all theology is to be called in question by the Truth, but that Truth is in fact a very specific theology centred in Jesus Christ. One still feels that it is very much to the point to ask whether Torrance is entitled to assume that God is rational, that God is truly the Creator of man, and that revelation is thus rather than so. It must be asked how it can be known that God is rational, that He has saved our rationality, or that He can do so, and that the object and our apprehension of it coincide by the grace of God, for though these questions are illegitimate to Torrance, they are the foundations of his systematic view and unless the foundations are sure and secure, the superstructure cannot properly be supported.

Some doubts have been raised as to the presentation of rationality as a feature of many things which are so varied and essentially different/

15a. Philosophical Quarterly July 1970, p.315-6, Review of Torrance.

different in kind, and the appropriateness of the one term to cover the nature of all these things queried. Two specific examples of Torrance's have been taken and some basic questions raised as to the rationality of the universe and of nature in relation to the problem of evil, and then as to what meaning can be attached to the rationality of God. Attention is turned now from these general problems of approach and detail of approach to the detail of Torrance's account. The outline of the details of his view will be followed as earlier presented in order to preserve coherence and order in seeking to grasp the nature and role of rationality as part of Torrance's view. This next section of criticism will concentrate of Torrance's view of objectivity and its relation to subjectivity. The limited effect of his thesis will be shown and the way this affects his own view. The differences between verification in science and theology will be examined especially in relation to the continuing presence of subjective factors not merely contingently, but necessarily.

The main theme of Torrance's account of rationality is its close relation with objectivity and therefore the stress he puts on the idea that to be rational is to adopt a mode of rationality appropriate to the nature of the object.¹⁶ At the very outset it was seen that this was the necessary corrective to the irrationalism and subjectivity which has influenced modern theology. The problem of today is the flight from objectivity in religious beliefs and doctrines into irrationality.¹⁷ This irrationality is characterised by subjectivity,¹⁸ phenomenism,¹⁹ personalism,²⁰ and egocentricity.²¹

Man/

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16. See above p.p. 146ff.
 17. MM.p.p.270-1,231,69; S.p.p.vii,4-5,44,185.
 18. MM.p.p.231,270-1; S.p.p.17,37,40-1,61.
 19. S.p.p.3,107; RR.p.p.47-8.
 20. T.p.xiv.
 21. MM.p.p.270-1; S.p.p.29,51-2,60.

Man is the measure of all things and his religious views are merely the modes of a particular kind of self-expression and self-understanding.²² Man's view of himself and his reason is out of proper proportion.²³ Thus man is involved in mechanism,²⁴ subjectivism,²⁵ abstraction,²⁶ and the false separation of the physical from the spiritual, thought from life, and God from the world.²⁷ Religion becomes merely phenomenology or sociology,²⁸ or else a form of existentialism as characterised particularly by Bultmann.²⁹ Torrance suggests that man is diseased with the obsession of self-understanding,³⁰ and that religious folk are autistic and aphatic.³¹ As was seen this subjectivity leads to irrational behaviour, man's imposition of his own patterns, man's inability to distinguish himself over and against reality, and finally into meaninglessness and futility. The same is true in the working of autonomous reason. The cure for all this is attachment to the object and so the adoption of the correct mode of rationality as prescribed by the nature of the object.³² This is all well and good, there will be an examination of what this return to objectivity means on its own grounds, but it is only part of what Torrance says, though the stress in his work is constantly on this aspect. There exists however, a tension between this objectivity and a return to true rationality and the very subjectivity Torrance seeks to avoid and cure. This tension is to be found in his own work and it must be considered/

22. MM.p.p.270-1,263,231; RR.p.p.vii,47-8; S.pp.55,69-70.

23. S.p.p.6,51-2,29; T.p.83; MM.p.69

24. S.p.p.3,44.

25. MM.p.p.270-1.

26. RR.p.p.40-1; S.p.17.

27. S.p.p.4,16,59,106-7; MM.p.263.

28. S.p.p.3,107; RR.p.p.47-8.

29. S.p.p.58,61-3,106.

30. MM.p.p.270-1; S.p.55.

31. S.p.p.vii-viii.

32. MM.p.p.231,259; S.p.p.42,68.

considered whether or not it is a happy tension. Torrance sums up the problem as how to "refer thoughts and statements genuinely beyond ourselves, how to reach knowledge of reality in which we do not obtrude ourselves distortingly into the picture, and yet how to retain the full and integral place of the human subject in it all".³³ Can, on Torrance's own account, a full place be given to both these emphases? Undoubtedly there is a greater emphasis on the objective side: upon the reality being allowed to disclose itself, but the subjective cannot be totally overcome. Torrance stresses that "A. Eddington, M. Polanyi, and von Weizsacker in their different ways have successfully shown how the personal factor inevitably enters into scientific knowledge for the very fact of our knowing explicitly enters into what we know. It is therefore unscientific to pretend that the subjective element is eliminated when it cannot be. Scientific thinking must operate with a severely self-critical and controlled subjectivity, for we can only advance to new knowledge by rigorous re-interpretation, and sometimes only by renunciation of previous modes of knowing".³⁴ (My emphasis). In relation to von Weizsacker and Heisenberg one learns that "in so far as our scientific propositions are of stages in nature which we help to produce, they are statements about what we can do as well as statements about nature itself. Hence scientific laws are expressions of our modes of cognition as well as of realities in themselves. Thus the whole subject-object relation is such that we are unable to distinguish completely/

33. T.p.xvii.

34. T.p.93.

completely between things-in-themselves and our ways of knowing and speaking of them". (My emphasis).³⁵

What is thus entailed for science by the account of the subjective factors that Torrance is now including is that "if the knowledge of nature is inescapably bound up with the human subject, if it is his knowledge, then it is finite and limited, not only because practically he is limited and finite, but because knowledge is limited by the fact that his knowing is inescapably a part of it, limited therefore at its very root which it can never transcend without ceasing altogether.

Experimental science can never transcend its starting-point, or its own limited instruments and therefore attain to God's knowledge, i.e. from an absolute point where it transcends all anthropomorphism". (my emphasis except "his")³⁶ This means that "what we do in science is to reduce to knowledge the relation between ourselves and the external world, relations that are active on our part as well as passive. We do not describe the realities we know as they are merely in themselves, for we cannot separate them entirely by themselves apart from the processes in our knowing of them but if so this does not allow us to argue that it is finally we who impose form and order upon things and that we have no really objective knowledge of them in accordance with their own nature and rationality. What it does teach us is that the rigorous formalizations of our knowledge are not to be treated like transcripts of reality but precisely as scientific instruments and demonstrative indicators referring us away from ourselves to the things we seek to know,/"

35. T.p.94.

36. T.p.100.

know, so that by their nature they are engaged in the relentless service of objectivity. The relativity of our knowledge to external reality and its objectivity are but the obverse of each other". (My emphasis).³⁷

What Torrance now appears to be saying is that there will always be personal factors involved in all knowing so that we are only in a position of controlled subjectivity. The aspect of personal judgment is a necessary part of the assessment of evidence, thus one can never attain fixed categories or ultimate truth. Reality can never be totally captured, for it outruns what can be specified and we are unable to eliminate the noetic structure of thought and language in the attempt to be true to the ontic structure of things, What this in turn means for Torrance's main emphasis on the flight from such subjectivity and the cure of objectivity and rationality, is that such a cure is limited and endless in its application. Instead of some brave new way in philosophy and theology and science (or rather the old but forgotten way) where the object is everything and we are nothing, it seems that we are going to be something and that something is constantly going to have to be dealt with. It seems that we are left much in the place we were before we started with the object and the subject, but perhaps even worse for Torrance, for if the subjective always intrudes, it would seem that it has necessarily intruded into even his presentation of the cure for subjectivity, /

37. T.p.p.295-6; S.p.p.45,113; T.p.p.84,91 Footnote,93,94-5,100,291,296.

subjectivity, so also his view must be subjected to revision and critical testing and retesting. Certainly the dramatic effect of his thesis is cast into a much more modified belief when the full implications of the continuing role of the subjective in all science are realised. Whether in natural science or theological science it is not the case that "science (can) detach itself from the humanity that is involved in it, cutting off knowledge of the object from the fact that it is knowledge by a human subject, and since in each case it is only too easy for us to impose masterful forms of thought upon the realities we seek to investigate, we must constantly engage in acts of fundamental reorientation in which our concepts and terms are matched with their material content".³⁸ It means too that in verification, for natural science, there is required in the last resort "a personal judgment in assessment of the evidence. No theoretical demonstration will ever give formal certainty in the realm of the empirical, so that the scientist must judge whether he will commit himself to the pressure of the facts upon him".³⁹ In theology this means that "for verification we can only cast ourselves ultimately upon the justifying grace of God, since in the last resort verification of our knowledge of God must come to us from without from God Himself".⁴⁰

The problem with this last point concerning the nature of theological verification is that what it appears to suggest is a basic difference between verification in natural science and in theology. In the one case we judge and commit ourselves, in the other, God does it by His grace. There is a danger that what this essentially amounts to/

38. S.p.113.

39. T.p.197, Footnotes; T.p.291.

40. T.p.197.

to is that theology is not really a science at all for the subjective factors are dealt with sufficiently distinctively enough to ensure true objectivity⁴¹ in the one but not in the other, but so another tension remains. If it is accepted that Torrance is permitted to hold a tension between the subjective and the objective as he appears to require, if this is then applied to theology and the other sciences, is he to say that theology is exactly the same (given the difference of the object, of course), or is it different? If theology is the same then the universal and authoritative statement of God's work and our relation to God must be cast in doubt, as all scientific theories are till proven true, regardless of whether by proof we mean inductive success or fertility in casting light on other problems. If theology is different, in as much as the Object studied is of such a nature that the subjective is totally controlled and we do have contact with the truly objective, then it seems to amount to a radical disjunction between theology as a science and all other sciences.⁴² This problem, however, only arises if it is allowed that Torrance can hold the two factors of the subjective and the objective. This is more difficult for there seems a need for considerable modification in presentation and exposition of the view he offers, for he appears to offer a cure for subjectivity and irrationality by attachment to the object, then, as it were in the small print, certainly as it compares in the space devoted to the objective side and how that deals with subjectivity, it is discovered that, of course, we are still conditioned by the subjective factors, but what is to be done is
tc/

41. S.p.113.

42. Mitchell, Review, The oriel Record, p.69, Review The Times Literary Supplement 25.12.69; J. Hick, Review The Expository Times

to use open concepts and field theory to worm a way into the interior logic of things, so that the subjectivity is properly controlled by attachment to the object. There is, then, in Torrance's account a tension, which is uneasy in relation to the claims he makes for his own view, which is to end "the romantic irrationality and bloated subjectivity of modern theology", and in its place to return to theological rationality.⁴³ The subjectivity may be deflated, but it is not exorcised.

Attention has been centred on the notion of objectivity and the difficulties which are related to the inability to dispense with subjective features in all knowing whether this is in science or theology. Now a positive value is mentioned, that of the integration of the intellectual with the rest of life and knowledge. Consideration is then given to the notion of "object" on Torrance's account, in particular questioning the degree of differences between objects, the definition of objects, and certain candidates for the status of "object", such as "mind", historical events, scientific objects, and God. Then the problems attached to precategorisation, over personalising, intuition, and the use of figurative language will be raised and analysed.

Before returning to consider the stress on objectivity in Torrance, in the capacity to refer to what is not ourselves, his view must be commended that rationality is not just intellectual but must affect every aspect of life. One of the dangers facing any account of the nature and scope of rationality is to limit it to the power of the mind and thus overlook the integral relation with behaviour. Whatever rationality may be seen to be, it is surely complex and affects every facet of our lives as human beings. For too long we have suffered from a false separation/

43. T.p.p.xvii; S.p.viii.

separation of knowing and doing in moral philosophy without due attention to the notion of "akrasia", weakness of will. In philosophy, in general terms, there is a danger of over-intellectualising - perhaps it is just against this that ordinary language philosophy became so much in vogue but certainly if we seek to explicate the notion of rationality and what it is to be reasonable, it is necessary to consider man's life in all its moral, aesthetic, and social aspects as well as in its scientific and intellectual ones. Torrance is right to draw attention to the importance of rational activity in every aspect of human life.

It is essential to come to grips with the heart of Torrance's view and this can only be summed up in the stress that what we know, the object, must prescribe for us the mode of rationality we are to adopt towards it.⁴⁴ An attempt has been made to draw out from Torrance's work the centrality of this notion in his presentation, but lest it be thought that the examples given are highly selective, and to impress the centrality of this notion in his view. I list some of the explicit references in the work under consideration, with risk of pedantry, but the importance of the doctrine for his work cannot be overstated. Torrance refers to this doctrine in at least the following places:- F.P.p.p.243-4; T.p.p.xii,xiii,xvii,3,9-10,11,25-26,33,34,35,38,54,85,93,106-7,124,129,131,185,197,198,208,281,303,338; MM.p.p.15,53,57-8,66,72-3,74-5,95,143,231-2,268,269; S.p.p.4-5,9-10,11,15,35,42,52-3,68,72,82,91,93,113,114,115,116,119-20,156,182,187,198. Torrance equates rationality with human knowing and in particular the objective way that each object must prescribe the mode of rationality which we adopt towards it./

44. See above, p.p. 146ff

it. If every object, from the universe to God Almighty, is not known by this definition of rational behaviour, then Torrance's thesis must be in doubt. There is an implicit tension in Torrance's account. On the one hand, he presents the one basic human way of knowing, the scientific way, the rational way of all knowledge. So one looks for this one method which will solve all epistemological problems if it is followed through rigorously, but it is discovered, on the other hand, that there are as many different ways of knowing as there are objects. Every object prescribes the mode of rationality we are to adopt towards it: all our knowing is to be conditioned by the nature of the object, and objects are very different. Is there then any benefit to be gained from the thesis of the object determining the mode of rationality adopted? The unitariness involved in describing such as the one basic way of knowing is a strangely tenuous unity, which is united only by the degree of generality which such a remark must rest on, given, as we are given, that every object is different and we must not apply the categories from one sphere of knowing to another. Does not the degree of diversity of objects and, therefore, of ways of knowing, detract from a stress of the unity of all sciences to such an extent that it may become merely a truism parallel to the Aristotelian notion that we can only have the degree of exactitude which is appropriate to the objects of each science, which is true, but makes no inroads into the approach to the objects or to the degree of exactitude we are able to reach and actually do reach. Everything is, as it were, left as it is. The unity of science is the diversity of its objects and the appropriate approaches to these objects.

Given/

Given, however, that Torrance is not propounding a truism at least to his own way of thinking, it must be inquired what sense can be made of his thesis. The first problem must be whether or not it is possible easily to separate out each object and each field of inquiry, and thus the different modes of rationality required for appropriateness. An example may be taken from the subject of one of the Gifford Lecture series, "The Phenomenon of Mind".⁴⁵ Let it be granted for the sake of argument that "mind" is in some sense an object, if only in the sense that it has meaning within a specific field of discourse. The composition of the Gifford Lecture team shows very clearly the inability to separate the various fields of inquiry into the respective objects without being in danger of failing to do justice to the complexity and nature of the object. Is "mind" the province of psychology, neuro-physiology, or philosophy, of all three, of more than three, or of none at all? There is a very basic problem in suggesting that rationality centres on the nature of the object and the path it prescribes for its proper understanding. Again, if we take an historical event, which in some sense is an object, e.g. the French Revolution. This can be seen in social, economic, historical, psychological, political, and religious terms as well as a combination of all these and more. To say that the object determines the mode of rationality we are to adopt helps not one whit to reduce the complexity of a full and proper understanding of the "object", unless it merely states the obvious. To grasp properly the object a highly complicated amalgam of the different rationalities which derive from the different fields of study is required. But this seems far from what Torrance is saying.

But/

45. J. Lucas and A. Kenny both philosophers, C. Waddington a biologist, J. Longuet Higgins, a linguist.

But the problem is more severe, for it must be inquired what sense can be attached to the notion of "object". Torrance states that every object is to prescribe the mode of rationality to be adopted, and this is presented as the truly scientific method of approach to everything. This is what rationality is and, if we are to be rational, we must follow it. But while desks and people are obviously "objects" for all the world to come into contact with, it is less clear that "mind" or the "French Revolution" are "objects". What kind of object is the mind? Is it a physical, a spiritual, a psychological, a neuro-physiological object, is it one thing, or many different sorts of things? There seems no one thing, no one object which is mind, hence the Gifford Lectures and the wealth of modern literature on the nature of mind both from psychological and philosophical sources. In reading the variety of accounts, one is conscious that whatever "mind" in fact is, the different writers certainly regard it in very different ways and their descriptions seem to have little or no overlap. The only genuinely obvious common ground is the fact of linguistic usage and the common "term", but this is of no value to Torrance's account of the way the world actually is. So too it is difficult to understand what sort of "object" the French Revolution is. It is an event, and it is past, but then the problems begin. When did it begin and when did it end? Did it begin with the Oath of the Tennis Court, the execution of Louis, or was it much further back with the harvest failures, or the influence of the American War of Independence, and did it end with the rise of Napoleon, the fall of Napoleon, or is it still going on? What is the "object" that historians and/

and novelists seek to portray?. Is it an object at all, in even the most attenuated sense of the word? Or is the response to these questions that it is just in all the complexity of such notions and events that one finds the need to be fixed on the object for the proper mode of rationality. Torrance himself raises the question of the relevance of Historical Science, though at the general level and specifically in relation to Christ.⁴⁶ It is inappropriate to examine this in detail, but two points may be considered related to the difficulties raised. Talking of historical science and the data from eye witnesses in documentary form and oral tradition, Torrance states that "so we try to determine what was directly observed and what actually happened. This is not a simple but a complicated procedure in which we seek both to bring to light the grounds upon which our historical knowledge is based and to establish it evidentially upon those grounds in such a way that we exhibit a thoroughgoing consistency between our reconstruction of the events as they really happened and the facts themselves, but in a measured degree it is the rationality and coherence of our reconstruction that enables us to discriminate the real facts from accretions and fictions".⁴⁷ Torrance here talks as if it is possible to get through the data of history to the actual event itself or the actual facts of the situation. It is difficult for us to rid our own questions and approach in interpreting the historical events,⁴⁸ but how much more difficult it is to make sense of ridding the subjective interpretations from the works of an author and somehow reaching the real "facts" of the matter./

46. T.p.p.312ff.

47. T.p.313.

48. T.p.p.322ff.

matter. Of course it is possible to go some sort of way towards this, e.g. that Caesar's "Gallic Wars" will be considerably different from a Gaul's account of the same wars, but even given that there are two opposing sources, which is rarely the case, it is hard to see that we could ever come to say that this and not that was the actual event or course of events, and even less likely, that we could then claim it to be the truth. Torrance also talks in this same section of "what the scientist does in any field is to seek to achieve an orderly understanding of events in which he can grasp them as a connected and intelligible whole and so be able to penetrate into their inner rationality. He does not invent that rationality but discovers it, even though he must act with imagination and insight in detecting and developing the right clues and act creatively in constructing forms of thought and knowledge through which he can discern the basic rationality and let his thinking fall under its direction as he offers even a descriptive account of the events."⁴⁹

If we couple this with the fact that "in historical events we operate with a different kind of rationality which we have described as intention or purpose, rationality in its personal rather than its impersonal form",⁵⁰ it must then be wondered what sense can be made of, and what coherent, intelligible picture⁵¹ may be presented of actions which fail in intention and purpose, actions which lack intention and purpose, the frenzies of a madman, and the quirks of fate, e.g. the storm that blew the Spanish ships round the West of England and Scotland after Drakes' victory, rather than to the comparative safety of Cadiz. It is difficult in relation to history/

49. T.p.p.318-9.

50. T.p.321.

51. T.p.p.318-9

history to be confident that there is an inherent intelligibility in historical events and processes, and that it is possible to construct a rational account of history based on intention and purpose. Some philosophers have problems enough with the intentions of those they can see.

What sense can be made of the notion of "objects" in Torrance's account? Problems have been shown with "mind" and with history, but even in science there must be questions raised as to the implications of the word "object". Do scientists work with "objects", and do they regard what they work with as "objects"? Normally, scientists are thought of as working in the field of phenomena, and it is difficult to interpret photons and neutrons as objects, rather than as manifestations of phenomenal occurrences. The sorts of experiments that scientists use seem to concentrate on the phenomena in a vast variety of conditions rather than on specific "objects". Are forces and fields "objects" and in what sense do they "exist"? Are the waves and particles which now offer a fuller explanation of the nature of light than was previously possible, "objects" or are they "constructs", "hypothetical constructions", or disclosure models for a more adequate account of what is involved in light, but without any claim as an ontological basis? The main "Object" for Torrance is, of course, God, Who is to prescribe for us the mode of rationality which is appropriate to His nature. Torrance lays great stress on the uniqueness of this Object, and therefore of the danger of seeking to apply understanding from any one sphere to the sphere of the knowledge/

knowledge of God, but the problem may not so much be the application of foreign moulds to knowledge of God, but rather the very uniqueness of the religious Object. It first of all creates tension for the notion that all objects are subject to the one basic mode of knowing, but, more crucially, it also puts strain on the nature of "objects". Can there be talk in the same sense, and in relation to the same method of epistemology, of the "object" desk and the "Object" God, without meaning something so totally different by "object" and in method of epistemological approach, that there is no helpful parallelism between what is done in the one case and what is done in the other. The problem is not relieved by stressing that God is not just "Object", but also "Subject", therefore we must look for proper parallels in the realm of human personal relations. This is not to suggest in the least that Torrance is extrapolating from human relations to relations with God, but rather that the sense of knowing God is best paralleled by the human knowing of other persons, but whether this is sufficiently illuminating as a parallel given the necessary differences between God as Person and man as person, remains to be seen.

The basic problem with Torrance's account is what sense can be attached to his notion of "object". Some of the specific examples have been examined to try to show that these create difficulties and tension within his account, such that the notion of "object" is unclear and that without the capacity to state the object and to know what the object is, it is impossible on Torrance's account, to be truly rational, for we would have no prescription concerning the mode of rationality to be adopted.

There/

There is, in this position, however, a subtle problem, which it is easy to slide over. An attempt has been made to show that there are problems in clarifying the notion of "object" in Torrance. When his own examples are taken - a desk, a person - we are told that we adopt modes of rationality which these different sorts of things prescribe for us. However, before we adopt a mode of rationality we must know what the object is, but to know what the object is is already to have categorised it, and thus to have in some sense adopted a mode of rationality which is appropriate. Some judgment is made that this is a particular kind of object, a particular example of an object, and so it is treated as all other such objects are treated. But this prejudgment is what delimits the mode of rationality we are to adopt. It is because we describe x as an x that we treat it as we treat all other x 's and behave in a manner appropriate to it. The difficulty for Torrance's account is how one may allow the object to determine for us the mode of rationality we are to adopt, if we have to categorise it as such and such an object rather than some other kind. Torrance's kind of response to this would be that we must rid ourselves of the subjective notions we bring to the object, by submitting to the object. However, this means that it must be possible to discover that our categorisation of the object is not fully appropriate to that object, and one wonders the extent to which this is possible, and further, the extent to which we can rid ourselves of such subjective factors. Torrance himself has stressed the necessity for subjective factors in knowing, and the question is merely whether or not this basic categorisation of x as an x may not be one of the necessary subjective factors for there to be human knowing at all.

A/

A slightly different version of the same point centres around the different kinds of objects which Torrance delineates. He talks of "mute" objects to which we are to put questions, and "speaking" objects and Objects, which address us and to which we listen. The problem is, however, how it is possible to differentiate the presence of a mute object from one which is capable of self-expression. To know whether or not an object is mute or capable of self-expression is already to have adopted a mode appropriate to that object. But the danger is surely of failing to discern between a mute object and a speaking reality who is reduced to silence because of my asking the wrong questions in the wrong way. Some standard of differentiation is required between objects and of the nature of the objects involved. This is all the more crucial, when we are told that every object is to prescribe the mode of rationality which is appropriate for us to adopt towards it. The problem is a specific and general one, for it is specific in relation to the doctrine of objects prescribing for us the mode of rationality to be adopted, and it is general for it recurs in Torrance's language. The sort of thing that Torrance says is that "in authentic knowledge being shows through",⁵² "there is a disclosure of being", "a rationality that seizes us from above and beyond ourselves",⁵³ "axiomsforce themselves upon us",⁵⁴ "a rationality....which forces itself upon us".⁵⁵ Torrance talks of the disclosure of objects, nature and God. The danger is of over-personalising these/

52. S.p.175.

53. S.p.p.96-7.

54. S.p.100.

55. S.p.100.

these concepts. How do we know that being can disclose itself, or that it can disclose itself successfully? We may imbue objects with qualities they do not in fact possess. The sense of "disclosure" is somewhat attenuated, as is the sense of the object's "prescription" of modes of rationality. How do we know this, how is it done, how do we differentiate correct over and against incorrect disclosures and prescriptions? Torrance does realise the point of these questions, for he states that "when we speak of the 'self-disclosure' of realities we are aware that this must often be a figure of speech - i.e. when we are concerned with impersonal, dumb, and dead things, for we have to force them to react to our probes in a 'yes' and 'no' way and so yield the answers to our questions. But in so far as we interrogate personal realities actual self-disclosure comes more into play, and we have to acquire more and more a disciplined readiness to listen so that we may really understand them out of themselves".⁵⁶

Here is the admission of the dangers of over-personalisation and of the figurative fashion of part of his account, but if the figure is reduced to reality is it any more than an evocative picture? The part we play in putting and framing questions is only modified, if with Torrance it is possible to take the step of faith that the object is able to disclose itself if properly questioned and approached, and that given long enough and sufficient skill in questioning, the objective state of affairs will eventually be reached that is that our adopted mode of rationality will be appropriate to the nature of the object. What is not clear in this faith is how one could judge when it is false and when correct.

Ultimately/

56. T.p.331; Times Literary Supplement 25.12.69.

Ultimately Torrance comes down to "intuition".⁵⁷ One of the main problems with intuition or a retreat to a statement that that is the way things are, may be seen from a description of a situation in which X seeks to point Y to a particular object. X tells Y that he must rid himself of all subjective overtones in order to be faithful to the object. Y must allow the reality to break through upon him. Y follows X's suggestions and tries to do exactly as X has told him, but fails to intuit the object. Y angrily denies the existence of any object. X hotly denies that Y has properly conducted the test. If you properly conduct the test, then you will see the object, but you did not see it, therefore you did not properly conduct the test. Heads I win and tails you lose. This is another example of the dictatorial strategy which was drawn attention to in the discussion of recent writing on Bartley's view.⁵⁸ This means that the critic has no ground to stand on and can do nothing at all to present any alternative to what is held. Like the person betting on the tail-side of a double-headed penny, the critic is bound to lose. Yet the idea of argument and discussion seems to leave the outcome to some extent open according to the strengths and weaknesses of the particular positions under discussion and the arguments which are used in support and attack on these positions. On Torrance's account, the critic not only has no ground to stand on, but no genuine argument is possible, for there can be no area of agreement or disagreement drawn over and against Torrance, and the critic can not have common terms with Torrance without being obliged to share his whole view. Torrance's intuition rules out all criticism and alternative intuition and this is part of the general complaint against his position that the critic has no ground to stand on.

This/

57. MM.p.p.79,84; T.p.p.166,165; S.p.21.

58. Chapter Two "Recent Discussion of Bartley".

This situation urgently requires some criteria for conducting the test or failing to do so, other than the intuition of the object. If there can be no such test, then a much more detailed account is required of what exactly this intuition is and how to succeed in obtaining it. The fear is that Torrance's talk in terms of figures of speech and models pointing to a reality which discloses itself, entails that there can be no argument but only looking and seeing. This is counter-intuitive. We can and do argue about pointers, models, looking and failing to see, or seeing, and the successes of all these, but more detail is necessary on which to conduct such an argument.

In concentrating upon the role of "object" in Torrance's account difficulties have been raised concerning the ability to separate out each object from every field of inquiry, what sense can be attached to the notion of "object", and in this context "mind" the "French Revolution", scientific "objects", and God were examined. Then there was an examination of the notion of categorising objects and the threat of over-personalization, with Torrance's response in terms of the use of figurative language, and the danger this leads to of too great stretching of concepts and the need for some sort of check on such use. Attention is now turned to the other part of the formula in which the object is to prescribe for us the mode of rationality which we are to adopt. There are two sorts of things involved of which no differentiation is offered. There is rationality in the sense of the inherent rationality of the universe, of objects, and of God, and there is a mode of rationality which we are to adopt. Presumably one is the structure which can be grasped, the other the capacity or method by which to grasp that structure. But/

But what is a mode of rationality? The dictionary defines "mode" as the form, fashion, or manner.⁵⁹ Rationality it seems has as many forms as there are objects to be known. But rationality is normally considered to be a feature of man and perhaps of animals rather than of inanimate objects, like things and the universe. Torrance seems to equate rationality both with intelligibility in the sense of understandable, and in the sense of having the capacity to understand. The intelligibility of people relates to their intentions and purposes and to their behaviour, but acorns and universes do not behave in any genuinely similar sense. Can it be conceived and admitted that there are as many different approaches or modes of approach as there are objects? If Torrance is to be taken seriously, this must be accepted, but again it reduces to the problem of definition of "object" in order to delineate the mode of rationality to be adopted. The danger is that the definition of rationality as being conditioned by the nature of the object may reduce to little more than a slogan unless it can be cashed out to cast light on how to deal with complex things such as "mind" and the "French Revolution". If it does not, it reduces to something trivial and self-evident, but it may also be false. It suggests that it is not possible to use the same method or mode of rationality in the study of different things, even though this may be highly successful. Torrance is, of course, at pains to preserve the sui generis character of the Object of theology from any infiltration of notions from other spheres of knowledge, though he does allow that the approaches can give insight. There seems to/

59. Webster's Dictionary "mode".

to be too strong a separation between fields of knowledge in which the expert in one field may say to the expert in another field, "Thus and no further". But the methods appropriate in one field are often appropriate to those in another. Is it not the case that, in fact, Torrance's attempt to marry theology with science relies on just this claim to fruitfulness in the application of the ideas of, for example, field theory, complementarity, disclosure models, and relativity to theological spheres. Torrance seems to want to have his cake at the same time as eating it. The object may prescribe the mode of rationality we are to adopt, but the extent of the differences is usually much more limited than is suggested. In the study of mind, as has already been noted, one would wish to suggest that it is at least a psychological, neuro-physiological, and philosophical construct and requires for true and proper understanding approaches from all these angles and more, and some blend of these. Now if Torrance is only saying just this very thing, it seems that his novelty is much less than was at first suspected, and he is leaving everything as it is and merely bringing to our notice what we in fact do. But his claim seems much stronger in that he is offering the path to true rational understanding and an escape from subjectivity and irrationality. In a sense, the difficulty rests in the way that one would describe and cash out in practice what is involved in the "appropriateness" of the mode of rationality we are to adopt. This would ultimately hinge on the capacity of that mode to lead to enlightenment as regards the true nature of the object. This in turn in Torrance's account comes to a doctrine of the fertility of the theory and apprehension of the inherent rationality of the thing and of all things. It could thus appear that in/

in the last analysis Torrance's thesis as to the nature of rationality reduces to a pragmatic account. If you do this and this, this will result. If this does not result, you have not done it properly. As regards the theological outlook it is unclear what sort of pragmatic test would be appropriate, what counts as having done the test or failed to do it, and what counts as having passed or failed the test; and then, as regards the level of the thesis itself, whether one can step outwith the pragmatic test and actual practice to present the way that it is all done without that itself being subject to pragmatic testing in turn.

Torrance tells us that the object is to prescribe for us the mode of rationality we are to adopt. But is rationality the sort of thing that can be adopted or **not adopted**, , that can be chosen or rejected, that can be changed or not changed as the fancy or the object strikes us? The rationality or mode of rationality which can be chosen is crucially different from the generally accepted view of rationality as part of man's being a rational animal able to reason out things for himself, and able to act on that basis and to act in accordance with these reasons. Rationality is usually understood to be something which we have, rather than something which we can choose or refuse to choose to acquire. This can perhaps best be understood by stressing the close relation of the understanding of what is rational with particular reference to what counts as rational behaviour in a particular context. If men held firmly to the belief that they ought to walk on their hands and always and only on their hands, it would be totally rational of them to walk on their hands, given their system of beliefs. Rationality in behaviour refers to the consistency of behaviour with regard to belief rather than to/

to a right belief about the facts, though of course, the two are usually interconnected. In most talk of rationality it seems to be assumed that this is something men have in virtue of being men, rather than something which can be adopted or not adopted. What seems to be overlooked is a distinction between being rational in a particular context and being rational in a more absolute and universal sense. These are very different levels and this will be returned to in the account of rationality in the last chapter. Torrance seems to move from the one level to the other without signposting his movement, but in this section, of course, his concern is with rationality in a particular context, or as he puts it, with the mode of rationality to be adopted on the basis of the prescription of the objects. But talk of adoption puts too strong an emphasis on a kind of decisionism, which is in strange contrast to the implacability of the object breaking through our forms and disclosing itself to us. If the picture of the object, which Torrance gives is correct, it would seem inappropriate for us to think of adopting or not adopting the appropriate mode of rationality, for it would be forced upon us. But again there is tension between the subjective and the objective, which Torrance's account leaves us with and offers no radically new solution of this tension.

Attention is turned now from the role of the modes of rationality which we are to adopt, to consider the general implications of Torrance's view that the object prescribes for us the mode of rationality we are to adopt. If it is allowed for the sake of argument that some clear sense can be attached to the notion of the object and the notion of the mode of rationality to be adopted in light of that object, Torrance appears to have proved too much. It is not possible on this basis to debar astrology, /

astrology, alchemy, or fairy-lore from their claims to be proper sciences each with a methodology conditioned by the very specific nature of their particular objects. If one specific example is taken that of astrology. The astrologer may say that we cannot understand the influence of the stars unless and until we ourselves are under the influence of the stars, believing in their power to guide and direct our lives, and recognising and admitting that this is so. The nature of the influence of the stars is such that properly to appreciate it, you must follow every day exactly what it says in your horoscope in the "Morning Star". If you doubt the reality of the influence of the stars, it is because you have not been properly open to the object and have tried to rationalise it away in terms of your own subjectivity that self-evident influence as if it were a series of coincidental freaks instead of part of the nature of things. Astrology is a special science whose object is totally different from all other objects, but, of course, it is still a science for it is subject to the same basic human way of knowing in which we allow the object to prescribe for us the mode of rationality we are to adopt towards it. This means that unless you approach astrology and your fate in the stars in the proper fashion, believing that it is there and that there is inherent intelligibility involved such that when you frame questions and put them to the stars, you yourself and your questions will be modified, until you grasp the true object. Unless you do these things you will be trapped in your own subjectivities and fall into meaninglessness. The object, of course, is totally different from all other objects, but this merely serves to show the importance of not seeking to apply a mode of rationality from one sphere to another sphere where/

where it is totally inappropriate. It is only if one is in a living relationship with the stars and aware of their influence in one's own life, that is to say, it is only within the knowing relation, that basic epistemological questions may be raised. All this is more than vaguely reminiscent of Nowell-Smith, when he describes a man who says that "certain events in the past were caused by boojums; but I cannot tell you on what principles boojums operate or what they will do in the future; my hypothesis inevitably involves this consequence".⁶⁰ The problem with the influence of the stars and boojums, as well as alchemy and fairy stories, is that the majority of the population would wish to deny the reality of the objects involved and certainly to withdraw the name of a full-blooded science from them, and in the place of both of these offer some sort of psychological or cultural account in terms of man's basic needs and the variety of means he takes to fulfil them. But apart from Torrance's position it is difficult to see how these views could ever be rejected, if confronted with a "scientific" astrologer, alchemist and so on, who were to say that the object determines the mode of rationality which is appropriate to the nature of the object and that their particular object is such that only if we follow their methodology are we being truly rational, that is, only thus are we properly able to overcome the subjective tendencies of our autonomous reason, and only if we agree with their conclusions have we grasped the inherent intelligibility of the object in all its fulness and reality. In other words, genuine argument and discussion are ruled out by Torrance's account of rationality.

The/

60. A. Flew, A. McIntyre (eds) New Essays in Philosophical Theology p.250

The astrologist, alchemist, and believer in fairy-lore cannot be criticised and offer no room for the critic, and this position is derived from Torrance's own immunity from criticism. To any and all attempts at criticism all these listed can simply respond that the critic has failed to get himself properly in touch with the appropriate object. Their views can never be rejected because there is no ground from which to criticise, there is no ground from which there can be any final dealing with an opposing view, and there is no basis on which discussion can take place. Real argument and discussion on the other hand allow both views to present their details and to offer some hope of the one view overcoming the other by strength of argument where the inadequacies of the opposing view can be seen and the increased benefits from the other view clearly presented. This is another example of the basis of our general criticism of Torrance in terms of his failure to examine important features and limits of rationality, the inadequacy of the Torrance view in terms of dealing with the complexity of the topic of rationality on his own grounds, and finally the unacceptable conclusion of excluding the critic from any attack on or query against Torrance. Torrance's view fails to exclude what requires to be excluded, and so there is a need to grasp the tests to satisfy whether or not there in fact is an object and whether or not the object is of the type and nature that is suggested. Where we cannot differentiate the false theory and object, we cannot likewise know the truth.

The problem of exclusion of what ought to be excluded may also be seen in relation to other possible religious views. Torrance's picture of/
of/

of theology is not the only one current and acceptable to most avowed religionists; yet we are offered a mode of rationality which is appropriate to the nature of the Object, God. God's uniqueness lies in the fact that in coming into a relation with God not only is He known by us, but we receive the capacity to know Him properly. He is ultimate rationality and so in relation to Him we discover (or rather it is revealed to us) what rationality truly is. However, using the same motif of the Object determining the mode of rationality, the Roman Catholic might argue that what is given, or revealed, or disclosed by the Object, God, is a theology which is much more centred on the Pope and the Virgin Mary, and that any theology which does not give these their full and proper place, has allowed subjectivity to blind it from the appropriate mode of rationality which the Object prescribes and through which is revealed what others have found to be revealed. The problem reduces to a question of interpretation of the Christ event and the work and Person of Christ, and it is difficult to allow that on the basis of the general dogma, that the Object prescribes for us the mode of rationality which we are to adopt, Torrance is entitled to claim that this Object is of such a nature, unless he is able at the same time to rebut similar but contrary claims on similar grounds from other views of the nature of the Object e.g. Catholic views. The same sort of point is made rather more harshly by Basil Mitchell, who suggests that we are presented "with a fully developed doctrinal scheme based not on simply Christian theology, but on a highly determinate Calvinistic form of/

of Christian theology. Assuming throughout the truth of this theology he (Torrance) develops in terms of it a thesis about the way in which alone God can be know, viz. only in so far as he reveals himself in Christ,"⁶¹ and by John Hick who almost viciously parodies Torrance's view as the words of a "modern Parson Thwackum: When I say scientific theology I mean Christian theology; and not only Christian theology but Reformed theology; and not only Reformed theology but the theology of Karl Barth as interpreted by Edinburgh".⁶²

Torrance's account of the Object runs into problems by its failure to exclude things like astrology and alchemy, because it is in itself unable to deal with the counter claims of Catholic views, made allegedly on the same basis, but also because its uniqueness may be queried by other world religions. The Buddhist or the Bahai makes very specific claims about the object of their religious belief and would wish proper understanding of that belief to be controlled by a manner of approach which was appropriate to that object. They can equally claim the necessity to be true to the proper object and in relation to that, grasping the inherent intelligibility of all things coupled with the fact that verification only makes sense within an actual relation to the object, and that failure to appreciate the object as it in fact is only proves the inability of the subject to take the appropriate mode of rationality. This type of response on the part of the upholder of the different world-religions or indeed from an opposing Catholic or Protestant view again illustrates the weakness in Torrance's account with/

61. B. Mitchell, Review, The Oriel Record 1969

62. J. Hick, The Expository Times Nov. 1969, p.35. It is of course, easy to underestimate the degree of difference between Torrance's view and Bartley and this requires much more careful treatment than Hick could hope for in a review.

with regard to the ground which a critic may occupy. If Torrance is immune from criticism, so also is the Bahai, Buddhist and Catholic. The critic of each and all of these views can always be reduced to silence by the retreat of the devotee to the uniqueness of their particular object of worship and the absolute necessity to approach the object only in the way which they prescribe. To attempt to do anything else necessarily leads to the wrong conclusions of the critic. In other words, the critic is debarred from the very start of making any judgment, offering any alternative, and even entering into discussion on the basis of any doubts he may have, for all doubt is excluded. One sees as the believer sees or one can say nothing, for one has not grasped the reality in a manner which is appropriate to it. This is another example based on the general grounds of criticism against Torrance.

The acceptance of such counter-views to Torrance's cannot be simply judged on the basis of the maxim that the object prescribes the mode of rationality which is to be adopted, for it can be claimed by both sides as an account of what in fact they are doing. The crux of Torrance's theology and the test for its truth or falsity lies not in the reliance on the general theme which he propounds, but rather within the detail and context of its application in the realm of theology. Torrance's account of rationality fails to exclude theories and views which mostly would be held to be false, other and opposing religious interpretations of the unique Object he claims for his view, and other religious objects which may be the subject of similar claims on the part of their devotees.

In regarding Torrance's thesis at the general level, he not only fails to exclude things which seem to be required to be excluded, but he also fails to do justice to the complexity of rationality. This refers/

refers back to the first and second grounds of criticism against Torrance in terms of his failure to do justice to the limits of rationality and important features of it, as well as the inadequacy of his own account on its own terms, and in terms of the complexity of the problem. His stock example of what is involved in his thesis is that desks and people are different sorts of objects, therefore different rationalities are appropriate to the knowing of and behaving in light of them. Yet this leaves a great deal unsaid. If one takes any object of art, painting, a piece of sculpture, or a piece of music, then it can be seen that there is a different approach to these objects from that of the approach to trees or a thunderstorm, and yet that remark has said little or nothing about appreciation or the lack of it as regards specific modes of art. If another example, is taken for example, animals, it is difficult to ally the approach of the pet-lover and the anti-vivisectionist with that of the huntsman and the socially-minded physiologist and to reduce these together into the over-simple model of rationality which Torrance offers. Mentally diseased people may be like cabbages, but is then the proper mode of rationality which is appropriate to them that of the doctor, who wishes to preserve all life regardless of its quality, or of the parent who wishes to be relieved of the agony and responsibility of the deformed child, or of the psychiatrist, who finds the phenomenon interesting and worthy of study, or of the Hitlerian, who experiments on the basis of eagerness to produce a master race? Some of these attitudes may be vicious, but they are not inappropriate or unscientific according to a particular background and view of the nature of the object. So with/

with the object of art, for the painting may be to one an excellent example of what true art is, to another a degenerate form of what art ought to be, and to a third a meaningless splurge of paint which is only reminiscent of a dog's breakfast. If such an object of art is due to be sold abroad and a large sum of money is required to keep it for the nation in a particular country, whose advice of the three is to be followed, and who has the approach which is appropriate to the nature of the object, in other words, which is the rational approach? Torrance's thesis gives no advice or guidance on how to deal with such specific problems on the basis of his general thesis, which is too simple to cope with the actual complexity of such situations and there seems to be something much more to say in these examples than that they are all rational given a particular view of what the object in question is and how that object discloses itself. The something more to be said would involve a much more detailed account of the nature of the situation in which the object is seen as an object. In such a total description of the situation, greater stress could be put on the cultural and social aspects, the background, the bases of appreciation, and the relation and influence of all these on the object and the individuals or groups who seek to grasp what the object is and to describe it. It is again a return to a differentiation between rationality in some general sense, and rationality as it refers to a specific context and the actions and understanding which is appropriate to that situation in all its complexity. A fuller account is required of the complexity of "objects" and the situations in which it makes sense to talk of rational behaviour and attitudes, rationality needs to be imagined along a much less formalised, simplistic/

simplistic structure as perhaps on a sliding-scale in which more and less, and degrees of satisfactoriness and unsatisfactoriness are appropriate on the basis of some kind of preference-order. With this elucidation of the complexity of rational behaviour in any given situation, a much closer analysis is needed of the relation of the object and our view of the object against the background of a particular world-view, or set of experiences.

In examining the central notion involved in Torrance's account of rationality as the object prescribing the mode of rationality which is appropriate for us to adopt, questions have been raised concerning the relation of each object and the various fields of inquiry, the sense of "object" in relation to the examples of "mind", the "French Revolution", scientific "objects", and God. The criticism then turned to the categorisation of the objects, the overpersonalising tendency in Torrance, which is mitigated by stress on the figurative use of language, which in turn raised problems of the over-stretching of language and the need for some sort of check. The critique then concentrated on the theme of the mode of rationality to be adopted and raised queries concerning different levels of rationality, what such modes were, and whether or not the same mode might be employed in relation to different objects with a good degree of success. Examination was made of appropriateness, pragmatic tests, and the notion of adopting or failing to adopt rationality and the attendant peculiarities. The emphasis then moved from the particular thesis to its general implications specifically that it proved too much in failing to exclude other fields of study such as astrology and alchemy, and it offered no grounds in itself for acceptance over and against a different/

different Christian interpretation, e.g. catholicism, or against non-Christian claims to revelation. Torrance's account, it was argued, fails to do justice, to the complexity of rationality and the different contexts in which the term is applied and of which we seek to understand on a rational basis.

He also makes discussion and argument impossible by excluding the possibility of any criticism. Unfortunately this has a boomerang effect, for not only is his own position immune from criticism, because of the riposte that one is guilty of subjectivity and failure to allow the object to prescribe the appropriate mode of rationality which must be adopted to grasp the reality involved, but so are all other views, even those he must wish to exclude and those which are in direct opposition to his own such as the Catholic or the Buddhist. They can use the same attack on the critic, so that no criticism is possible, and so no discussion, argument, change, adaptation and development of any view, for one either sees it or one does not, and if one does not one can only try to get into the correct position to receive the message of reality loudly and clearly. In general, then Torrance's view is not in itself adequate as an account of rationality because of internal difficulties. It omits features and detailed analysis of these in terms of rationality which are important, and his account excludes the possibility of genuine criticism of any view whether it is his own or some contrary one.

Torrance's account of rationality, though based on the doctrine of relating modes of rationality to their objects, also includes an account of inherent rationality and the relation between such created rationality/

rationality and transcendent rationality.⁶³ There will be an examination of his presentation of these factors and comment on them in turn. All science, he states is the bringing to view of the inherent rationality in nature. He gives examples of the sort of thing he means by this when he describes the anatomist or physiologist laying bare the structure of the body, or the examination of crystalline formations in rocks, for in both cases, it is claimed, there is no creation or imposition of patterns of one's own invention, but rather the discovery of and the thinking of the patterns which are found embedded in the structure of things. In other words, the laying bare of the rationality which is inherent in the nature of things. The examples sound convincing in as much as there is certainly a measure of given material which can be seen by all. There are muscles and nerves, or lines and circles in the rocks, but is this sufficient to talk of the inherent intelligibility of things. Firstly, is one to describe this particular internal tissue as muscle or nerve for in the way that it is described, some account of what it is and its function will be offered? Is the pineal gland the seat of the soul as Descartes thought, or has it to do with the pituitaries and metabolism? The gland, in and of itself, cannot tell us, but what is crucial is the interpretation. There is shape in the rock formation: it looks like a duck, but to the other observer it looks like a rabbit. Both are asked to draw what they see and both draw the same thing, but one calls it a duck-shape, the other a rabbit-shape, and cannot see it as what the other suggests.

Often/

63. See above p.p. 150ff

Often there is involved in the seeing of something, or more generally, the appreciation of something a high degree of interpretation. It is not clear that even on a minimal account there can be agreement as to what is seen, and so there cannot thus be the basis for extrapolation to inherent intelligibility, or at the very most, even if there were agreement as to the rationality inherent in the thing, it would be entirely different inherent rationalities which were being considered and agreed to. The artist looks at the picture and sees the colour, the style, the placing, all with the eye of the expert, while the disinterested passer-by sees the general effect. Do both see the same thing? The concern here is not to try to show that one sees what is really there, but rather to stress the different things seen and the different accounts of what is seen, so that it would result in a very different picture of inherent rationality. Looking at the crystalline formation, or the physiological structure does not mean that all will see the same, and this leads again back to the problem of categorisation, which was raised earlier, for to see it as an "object", or as a "nerve", or as a formation at all, is already to have interpreted it in a crucial way. It may be that one can produce a minimal picture which is devoid of all interpretation, but whether this will support an account of inherent rationality is a different matter. It may even be doubted whether there will be such a minimal picture, for some experiments with Eskimos, suggest that they do not differentiate walls and doors in walls either in their language or in what they see. If this is the case, then there could not even be agreement as to what was taken to be there.

Quine/

Quine raises the same sort of problem at a different level in his article, "Ontological Relativity",⁶⁴ and if difficulties are found at the level of physical objects, how much more difficult it is to talk of inherent intelligibility in the fields of psychology and psycho-analysis, or in the areas where the basic beliefs of people are related to ontological claims which are exclusive of other equally basic beliefs about the same phenomena. Bambrough⁶⁵ raises the same sort of question in relation to a sea-storm, where the ancient Greek says, "Poseidon is angry", and modern man says "What a sea storm". Of course, there is a sense in which what is being talked of is the same thing, but it is certainly not described as the same, and to a large extent it might be claimed that the accounts given of the object were mutually exclusive. Certainly, they cannot be the basis for claims about inherent intelligibility and rationality in the structure of things, themselves, so that we look and we necessarily see. This may be the way the world ought to be, but it is not the way the world is.

Torrance goes on from this point of the inherent rationality in nature to outline the appropriate attitude to this state of affairs, that of awe at the mystery. By this he refers to Einstein's picture of such awe.⁶⁶ This means that all mathematical equations and new geometries which are constructed are meaningless unless they are applicable to nature. We are to follow the mathematical structure of nature/

64. W.O.V. Quine, "Ontological Relativity", Ontological Relativity and Other Essays.

65. R. Bambrough, Reason, Truth and God.

66. See above p.p. 150-1

nature to allow it to disclose itself to us. One wonders how easily an account of awe and mystery, and perhaps eventually apophaticism, may be married with the stress of inherent rationality and the capacity of the object to break through upon us and disclose itself to us. If, as will be shown, God is the ground of all such rationality, and if He has revealed Himself to us, then surely this rationally may be appreciated without recourse to "awe" and "mystery". It is the setting together of "rationality" and "awe" and "mystery" which is puzzling, for they normally seem to be somewhat exclusive of each other. Torrance, of course, is saying that what rationality is really about involves a proper conception of "mystery" and "awe", and part of this is to ensure always the application of new theories to nature, or else their falling into meaninglessness. It does not seem to be necessary to equate with meaninglessness the non-applicability to reality in the sense of true to reality. Of course, if definitionally one is to say that to be meaningful is to be true to reality the point must be accepted, but it is possible to argue over the definition. But it does not appear to be definitionally, so it must appear doubtful. One can recall some false theories which have been instrumental in the discovery of new ideas and formulae, and which, though eventually not at all appropriate to the nature of the object, were the means of advance and progress in knowledge. Of course, there are equally many, if not more, false theories which have hindered advance, but one exception is sufficient to make the point. Marconi's experiments with radio were based on false assumptions, and even the first broadcast was achieved on the basis of factors quite outwith Marconi's understanding and belief. False theories even if not useful, are still not meaningless, for it is possible to grasp, appreciate, argue/

argue for and against, and finally reject them. This cannot be done with meaningless terms. The danger is of smuggling in part of the theory within specialised use of "meaningless", which needs to be argued for. False theories and false beliefs must be taken account of in history and psychology, and there is perhaps a Pickwickian sense of "Rational" which may be applied to them and their results. They are certainly influential though they are wrong. Columbus discovered America, and Marconi radio. New theories and equations need not thus be applicable to nature to gain meaning, though, of course, they will perhaps (and it is only perhaps) be of greater value, in general, than false theories in relation to nature and things in general.

The importance of Torrance's view of inherent rationality is that without it there could be no science at all.⁶⁷ In every science it is presupposed that what is known is accessible to rational inquiry, or else we are trapped in our own subjectivities. Science seeks to bring this inherent rationality to view and it is thus we are convinced that we are in touch with reality. If the nature of things was not inherently rational then they would be inapprehensible and opaque, and we ourselves would not be able to emerge into rationality. Of course, in the submission of our minds to the disclosure of realities to us, we are still involved in the give and take of subject and object. But if things were not inherently rational, there would be no knowledge and no communication. The need here is for clarification of what is involved in being convinced that we are in touch with reality. What sort/

67. See above p.p.151

sort of test is this, and can we ever be wrong, and if we are ever wrong, how could we correct it, or know that we are wrong, if we were tied to being faithful to the object in the very way which had led us into error? Ultimately it would seem to reduce to Torrance's account of intuition, and, as has been seen, it in turn raises questions. Attention has already been focused too, on the problem of talking of the realities disclosing themselves to us and the danger of overpersonalising. But if Torrance claims that without the nature of things being inherently rational, we could not emerge into rationality, he is overlooking man's capacity to force rationality on things. Language is an example of this sort of thing for man surely decides that this squiggle will stand for this, and that squiggle for something else. The squiggles in themselves have no rationality, but we decide to use them in a particular way and thus impose order upon them. Of course, for most people, language is already a "going concern", but our relation to language may be thus construed as reaffirmation of these signs in becoming and continuing as members of a language-using community. Without inherent rationality, it may not necessarily mean that man is unable to be rational. Man may still strive to force order upon disorder, and meaning upon chaos. In one sense to talk, as Torrance does, of the "compromise of thought and being" and the "give and take" between subject and object, is to admit that it is not just the inherent rationality of things, but man has a role to play. The question remains whether man's rationality is of the same nature, and derived from the same source as the rationality allegedly in the nature of things.

Every/

Even if all things were in chaos, one might still come to realise this, to know that there was no inherent rationality and intelligibility and to be able to communicate this to each other. But as if far more widely held, it might be preferred that we cannot know whether or not there is inherent rationality in the nature of things, but this does not debar us from knowing anything or communicating at all. Most folk are unaware of whether or not there is inherent rationality; yet they know a great deal and communicate it to each other. There are problems then concerning how a person is convinced that he is in touch with reality and whether or not inherent rationality is necessary for knowledge and communication, or whether a person may be successfully agnostic, while still knowing and communicating that knowledge.

Part of what is involved in the seeking in every sphere of knowledge to express the objective rationality that is part and parcel of the object of knowledge is that reason is at work constructing models or developing analogues to put nature to the test and elicit answers from it, while submitting to the realities which shine through its theoretic constructions. The judgment of the applicability of the model or the relevance of the analogue relates to the experience or intuition of the object in increasing understanding through the analogue, or to the fertility of the theory in casting light on stubborn problems and in revealing new facts and facilitating new advances in the field. There has already been mention of the problem of intuition and the difficulties it raises, which are all the problems that any account of intuition must face up to, of false intuitions, and failures to intuit. But fertility is a different sort of goal. The fertility lies in coping with the stubborn problems/

problems and in new advances. Part of the problem here is that seeing something as a problem and something else as an advance is not necessarily accepted by all one's colleagues looking at the same data. The historical changes in perspective which Torrance lays great stress on are all examples of a few individuals, if even that, seeing something as a problem and advancing to something new, but they were out of step with most of their fellow scientists and it is a long and arduous process before such views are accepted as the norm. So the judgment of the fertility of a view is not so straightforward as is suggested. Coupled with this is the fertility of false theories, which in fact Popper has structured into a theory of falsifiability, stressing that one of the crucial ways of learning is to try to disprove. Certainly, there is a need for looking more at the complexity of the situation where claims to intuition and fertility of theory are made, especially if it is difficult to see how problems with the old system could arise. The most crucial example of this could be whether or not it was possible for a basic question to arise which would call in question not only Torrance's account of inherent rationality, but also of the relation of objects to modes of rationality. But it is difficult to see what sense this question could make for Torrance's view and correspondingly, what sense can be attached to fertility in dealing with stubborn problems and leading to new advances. These seem strangely unquantifiable but if Torrance complains that this is what modern science is doing, it is still the case that modern science is on this basis having a great deal of pragmatic effect. It is open to the sceptic to question whether such/

such pragmatic effect would be paralleled by the use of similar standards of fertility or lack of it in relation to theology. Talk of models and analogues, while certainly in scientific vogue, still leaves the question of standards for the modes and bases for the analogy, and so the need for the characterisation of standards and description of the bases of such models and analogues and their successful application. Of course, this could only occur within a specific field of knowledge, but again, is the difference between a model and analogue in scientific discourse, which deals with created rationalities, not so great as to cast into doubt any extrapolation to or appreciation of transcendent rationality from the created, or even from the level of the transcendent to the level of created rationality.

Inherent rationality is not self-explanatory and in nature one is confronted only with immanent rationalities and for most sciences this can be sufficient to refrain from asking the question as to the ultimate rational ground beyond any and every field of knowledge. In comparison with this, theology is concerned to penetrate into transcendent and fontal rationality which is the ultimate source of all that is intelligible to man. This transcendent element is not identified with God, but it does cry for God to explain it. G. Moorhouse has commented on this notion that "the more scientists discover there is rationality about the moon and eventually about other planets - the greater need to posit transcendent rationality to account for it all".⁶⁸ This raises the problem between created/

68. Review of Theological Science, The Guardian.

created and transcendent rationality. One is forced to ask why one cannot be satisfied with created rationality, if indeed it is necessary to construe it as created. One might instead hold that the rationality discovered in the world, given that such a view can be supported was in itself sufficient. Perhaps it did not offer ultimate explanation, but one can be content with proximate explanation. Or one might be agnostic as to the source of this rationality, but nevertheless be content and well able to go on one's way without danger of meaninglessness or fearing that one's knowledge had no ultimate explanation and accordingly has to be doubted.

There is some tension in Torrance on this point, for on the one hand he seems to suggest that it is only in theology that we can go on to ask the ground of all rationality, but the scientist in other fields may be satisfied at a different level, but he also quotes with approval Polanyi on the fact that there can be no pure science without dedicated service to transcendent rationality.⁶⁹ There is an uneasy balance between the two, for most scientists would uphold agnosticism as to the ultimate ground of rationality or set it on a different basis from that within their own spheres of study, while claiming satisfaction on rational grounds for their own fields. Is the scientist being the true scientist who is faithful to the object of knowledge; and if that object is a created object, with created rationality imparted to it, surely then the true scientist must go on to discover the true and total nature of the object, which involves discovery of its ultimate ground?. Einstein, whose work forms much of the basis of Torrance's view/

69. S.p.30.

view of rationality, did not find it necessary to posit God as the source of all rationality, but rather interpreted the universe as a rational creature. The implication behind the positing of God's transcendent rationality is that there can be no proper knowledge without an ultimate reference to God. However, rational knowledge and behaviour do seem possible without God, certainly in as much as Einstein was able to formulate the rational theory of relativity without such transcendent reference, and scientists seem well able both to describe and utilize phenomena in a thoroughly rational fashion without explicit or implicit reference to transcendent rationality. It is difficult to see that rationality needs to be created, or that one could ever know whether or not it was created, and that it does require a transcendent rationality to be **acceptable as true knowledge** ~~knowledge~~.

Torrance may well be guilty of begging the question in his own favour by the way he imparts talk of "immanent" and "transcendent". The danger is that these are smuggling in an implicit theological flavour which needs to be argued for. If something is immanent it is immanent over and against something else, and if so what? If something is transcendent, what does it transcend and how do we discover this transcendence? In the relation of inherent rationality to transcendent, we are aware of the tension between being satisfied with this-worldly explanation, and that of going on to other-worldly explanations, of the knowledge of creation, immanence, transcendence, and the interrelations of these. This inevitably leads to a doctrine of revelation and the crucial importance in accepting and working, in Torrance's account of rationality, with a strong/

strong doctrine of revelation. But the sources, standards, and use of such revelation and its interrelation with the rest of the theory require therefore to be stressed and examined.

In the passing Torrance states that even to attempt to formulate the question of inherent rationality raises problems, for to question the ground of such rationality is itself to be forced to use it. This is one of the ultimate boundaries in thought, which reduces man to awe and demands acknowledgement. This, however, does not prove that such rationality is objective in the state of things, for it may equally be taken as a sign of subjective necessity, in that it is impossible to form categories, think, speak, etc. without assuming such rationality, but this assumption rests on the nature of mind rather than on the nature of the universe. Torrance himself may come nearer to this than he thinks in his talk of an "ultimate boundary of thought" (My emphasis), and in the admission of the necessity for subjective factors so that our knowing remains human knowing.

Torrance claims that it is only possible to make ultimate sense of immanent rationality by following it through to its ground in the transcendent rationality of God.⁷⁰ Such knowledge of the ultimate rationality of God is reached at the point where our human reason becomes enlightened from beyond the limits of created rationality and where an infinite extension of intelligibility beyond ourselves is disclosed./

70. See above p.p. 163ff.

disclosed, but only in the way that the ultimate rationality sets up its law in the depth of our human rationality and is recognised and respected as the norm and source of our rational illumination. Again it must be asked why immanent rationality, if what this is can be understood and what "immanent" means here, needs God, rather than a World Spirit, or merely the realisation that this is the way the world is. Even if it was accepted that there was a need for the transcendent to explain the immanent, why must we then cease there and not go on to ask what ground there is for the transcendent rationality? Of course, to Torrance, this would be the same as asking "who made the world?" and then "Who made God?". Presumably we realise that we are confronted with the ultimate when we are, but Torrance describes this as when "an infinite extension of intelligibility beyond ourselves is disclosed", and it is difficult to make sense of this "disclosure", for what sort of thing is an "infinite extension of intelligibility" especially one beyond us? Is it not so far beyond us that we could not grasp what it was? At the very least it is hard to see how we could know in any experience of anything that here is something of which the intelligibility extends infinitely beyond us, for the limit may be over the horizon, or in some other sense. It is one thing to claim that one is confronted with such, but quite another to make out a rational case on a rational basis, with rational evidence for such a claim.

Torrance records that rationality in the universe is created by God out of nothing and that space and time are created forms of rationality.⁷¹ This is what makes the Incarnation so crucial, for in/

71. See above p.p. 164ff.

in it is seen the relation between created and transcendent rationality at work in the establishing of one upon the other. The problem is how to know that it is created rather than uncreated, and this is solved by revelation. But the problem with revelation is that of standards to settle between competing revelations, to deal with false revelations, and to explain when one has or has not had a revelation and any change in revelation which might take place. Without a much clearer outline of the standard for revelation we are again confronted with the position where the critic has no ground to stand on. If I claim to have had a revelation and you seek to criticise this, if my retort is that you must have it for yourself to understand what it really means and anything else is just the bloated subjectivity of someone who has not approached the revelation in the proper manner, and necessarily has been misled, then there is no room for argument, discussion, doubt, development, or communication except on terms which have already predetermined the issue in question. Again Torrance excludes genuine criticism.

It is not clear either why space and time must be construed as created forms of rationality along Torrance's line, rather than along the lines of Kant as categorical forms, in terms of subjective necessities by virtue of the nature of man and his knowledge. In space and time in themselves, there is no evidence given one way or the other. So again it is back to increased fertility or to revelation, with the attendant problem in both cases.

Created rationality for Torrance is not a simplistic notion, for it has two main forms, that of number and word rationality.⁷² Historical events/

72. See above p.p. 165ff.

events are different from natural events and require therefore different modes of rationality to explicate them. Of course, there is some interrelation, for the spiritual and physical existence is inseparable, e.g. in the Incarnation, and man interacts with nature. These different levels depend on God Who holds them together in co-ordination. Yet it is in and through man that both forms of rationality emerge into the open so that creation, including man, attains to full being. There has already been discussion of some aspects of the problem of historical events, but in this context, it must be inquired whether it is possible to separate historical events from natural events, or rather, whether it is not the case that in any historical event, the natural happenings and the intentions and purposes are so closely intermingled that we cannot say that historical events require word rationality while natural events require number rationality. Are these, as has been already asked such clearly defined kinds and modes of rationality without overlap? If man is taken as an example, there are in him both physical characteristics appropriate to number rationality - "the very hairs of his head are numbered" - and intentions and purposes appropriate to word rationality, but it would be difficult to separate the two, in fact, to do so would be to return to the sort of Cartesianism which Torrance abhors. But if it was impossible to separate them, can we clearly distinguish the one from the other and clarify the relation and interrelation of the one to the other? Mind affects matter and vice-versa, but precisely how is not yet known. But Torrance suggests that these forms of rationality are at different levels and are co-ordinated together. This leaves the problem/

problem of the separation of these different levels and the basis for this separation, and likewise the need for standards for co-ordinating levels which show appropriateness and inappropriateness, and the means and sources of such standards.

However, Torrance remains adamant that without transcendent rationality there can be no true science and that scientific conscience is a counterpart or echo of the transcendent element of a logic beyond our own minds, which thrusts itself unrelentingly upon us. There can be no pure science pursued freely for its own sake without dedicated service to a transcendent rationality.⁷³ As has already been suggested, there are many scientists who are engaged in science without reference to transcendent rationality, and who, if forced in argument, might rather reject such a transcendent rationality than interpret it as a necessary part of what they are, in the ultimate analysis, seeking to achieve. It is difficult to see how we could know that scientific conscience is the "counterpart" or "echo" of actual events and to see the relation between these. But what this stress on the necessary grounding of science in the ultimate rationality of God leads to is what Torrance suggests when he states that it is from the study of God that we properly understand objectivity and indeed the universe itself, for this created rationality cries out for God's transcendent rationality to explain it. It must therefore, follow that the man who knows God, who is in a proper relation to God, who has allowed the Object to prescribe for him the mode of rationality he has adopted, and who is constantly allowing that Object to/

73. See above, p.p. 168

to break through the circle of his subjectivities, must also be the man best fitted to give the ultimate explanation of any of the natural sciences, for he alone (or rather in the community of believers) has grasped the true realities of the situation as they ultimately are and is best able to give the fullest possible explanation. It is not true that the non-Christian cannot do properly either physics or any of the physical sciences, or that without God or belief in God there is no full and adequate ultimate explanation for those outwith the Christian circle of belief as it is defined by Torrance.

In examining Torrance's account of rationality there has been analysis of the question of context, inherence, and created rationality over against transcendent rationality and its ground in God, as well as the forms of rationality Torrance draws our attention to. There has been discussion on the relation of "seeing" to "seeing as", the benefits of false theories, the tests and standards for revelation, the exclusion of the critic from all argument, fertility, models and analogues. Questions have been raised as to the relation of created to uncreated rationality and the sense of immanence and transcendence involved in this relationship. It has been inquired why the line ought to be drawn at transcendent rationality when it must not be drawn at created rationality. There has been examination of the kinds of rationality and their forms and the connections between them, and the presentation of certain difficulties in all these areas to try to show that Torrance's account raises important questions which require a tightening up and expansion of what is involved in his thesis. His account of rationality is not in itself sufficient and is not adequate to the complexity of rationality.

Earlier/

Earlier it was seen that on the basis of inherent rationality and the aim of knowledge as an experience of objective rationality there were three things to bear in mind: that we must in theology use open concepts, that presuppositions must be questioned, and that if we failed to understand something it was our fault.⁷⁴ Open concepts in theology are open to God but closed to men, and are indications of the human condition. It is just this tension between openness at one end and closed at the other which is the difficulty in relating the notion of "open" concepts to theology. If one takes for example, the concept "God", it is not clear what it would mean to close the concept. If all this means is that we form a fixed idea and will allow nothing to change it, this is obviously faulty, but at the same time one would wonder to what extent Christians would or could allow certain basic concepts to be changed and adapted. If Bambrough's picture of the sea is recalled he offers an adaptation of the concept of Poseidon's anger, which ultimately reduces to a mere metaphor and in which the ontological claim is squeezed out to allow for the figurative and moralistic use. Such must be the fear for the Christian, for one can imagine that the Christian might allow conceptual change in one direction, e.g., God revealing another facet of His character, but at the same time setting limits to the degree of conceptual change, for fear that the notion of God becomes, as it has to Tillich and Robinson, the ground of being, and apparently little else. Yet unless one is sufficiently open to allow this to happen, has not one begged the question in one's own favour, that is to say, if Torrance would not and could not envisage such a change, is he then prepared to be/

74. See above p.p.155ff.

be truly open to allow the reality to do to him what it will? In other words, openness in practice for Torrance is not possible, and this is part of the criticism that the critic has no ground to stand on.

The second thing to be borne in mind is the need to question presuppositions in light of the continuing revelation of the object. This questioning involves not just ideas but ourselves. The main difficulty in this process is ourselves and our habits of thought, which leads again to the stress on our fundamental rationality in which we think and act in accordance with what is the case. This notion of holding everything open to criticism and questioning, and the questioning of every question and not only the question but the questioner who must be questioned and requestioned, sounds admirable in a theologian. To be rational, it seems, at least involves holding everything open to question and criticism. The difficulty is, as was seen in relation to William Bartley III, whether this makes any sense.⁷⁵ Does it make any better sense in application to Torrance's work? One does not wish to suggest that he would be totally unwilling to question his own doctrines of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, Scripture, the Church, and the nature of knowledge, but it must be doubtful if under any but the most extreme circumstances Torrance would be willing to set aside any or all of these doctrines. If he did there would be little relation left to traditional Christianity. Rather, like Job, Torrance would tend to say "Yea, though He slay me, yet will I trust Him",⁷⁶ and even if his views of epistemology and rationality were to fall to the ground, and tomorrow a totally new five-dimensional science be discovered which put all of the gains of four-dimensional science in a different perspective, Torrance's theological/

75. See Chapter Two, p.p. 87

76. Job 13, v.15.

theological belief would remain much the same. One wonders what sense can be attached to the notion of questioning the whole system of Torrance's belief by Torrance himself. It may be possible to ask questions, but unless he can specify at least what sort of changes he would be willing to make and the circumstances of such changes, as regards the rejection of apparently basic beliefs, it would seem that such questioning is not genuine. Torrance without such a description has again excluded the possibility of criticisms by removing the ground from under the feet of the critic. The critic can say nothing against Torrance's view, but with this Torrance is also unable to offer criticism of any other view which presents itself in exactly the same way as he presents his own view. He must reap the harvest of his dictatorial strategy. It is also doubtful if, even if it were possible to be open, in the way that Torrance suggests, in general, there is such a radical effect in which we come to know what is different from what is known already.⁷⁷ Is our knowing ever so novel in its impact upon us? It may be that the specialist does undergo some radical shift when he knows something, but surely, even for him, this must be a comparatively rare event rather than the norm. One wonders to what extent our presuppositions are ever changed in so radical a fashion as Torrance suggests by the nature of the object cognised.⁷⁸

The/

77. RR.p.73; T.p.p.44-5;120;147;153-4;184-5.

78. F. O'Collins Heythrop Journal, July, 1966, p.p.344-5. "The claim that theological statements must be called in question must itself be called in question and cannot claim to have the truth in itself".

The third thing to remember is that we are responsible if we fail to understand something as rational, for we have forced it into an alien framework. But the difficulty here is to know when we have something which is inherently rational which we are obstructing by our subjective tendencies, or when we have something which is surd-like, and which we are questioning properly but with no success. If this is related to interpersonal relations, we can be confronted with someone who desires to conceal his true motives from us and so be misled although behaving in a properly rational fashion towards him. His behaviour is not surd-like, but rather misleading, and an example of an object, in this case a subject, who misleads us. Descartes' evil demon is a variation on the same theme. But there are specific procedures for dealing with these cases in personal relations and a whole vocabulary to match. It is not so clear that this can be applied to the world of things and what sort of sense can be made of such a transposition.

Torrance states that Physics is still a model of science⁷⁹ today by its example of determination of its nature by the nature of its own special subject matter. This may be the case, but what is of interest is the relation between Torrance's account and the other sciences. One possible interpretation of what Torrance is doing, may be to see it as an example of a "tu quoque" argument, except that it is presented in what can only be called the "ego quoque" form. One might attempt to describe what Torrance is saying as the move from:- the theologian is doing the same sort of work as the scientist, i.e. being faithful to the object of his study, to:- the scientist is no better off than the theologian in the claims that he can make for his object and method of science/

79. See above p.p. 158-9

science and study. What is being suggested is that Torrance's view is a highly sophisticated form of the "tu quoque" argument indulging in special pleading for his own particular field of study, i.e. theology. The main difference between this form of the argument and the more traditional forms is that it is reversed in order, putting the emphasis on the parallelism and thus seeking to deny that there is any other basis for knowledge or for science. The success of this depends on the successful parallelism between science and theology. What Torrance requires is to show that the scientist is in exactly the same position as the theologian, and that there is no alternative solution. *Prima facie*, we all do not do the same sort of thing either in every kind of science or in every kind of theology, and the difference between the objects involved is so great that one wonders if there is sufficient support for the parallelism between theology and science.

Torrance's account of rationality was finally linked to man and to the problem of his autonomous reason by which man was unable to be rational, and so must be changed by the renewing of his mind and confronted to the image of God.⁸⁰ Man needs to be prized open from above by faith by a Word from without, and faith then is the only rational thing that reason can do in acknowledgement of something transcendent of itself. This again raises the tension between the subjective and objective factors in relation to the free will of man. Men without a perceived relationship to God have given mankind untold benefits by their scientific discoveries and the quality of their lives has/

80. See above p.p.168.

has certainly been characterised as rational. Their autonomous reason seems to have paid off dividends. One could hold that faith was a prize open from above and necessary for true rationality, only if no one was able to be truly rational without such faith, and if those who had such faith were alone truly rational. Unfortunately this does not appear in either case to be generally typical. The problem is also that some people who once would have claimed that they were in a relationship with God and able to believe in what they once termed a rational fashion, may now claim that such faith is not rational and that they were wrong. If this is possible in their case, it may also be possible in Torrance's case. But certainly the difficulty is to make good such an absolute claim for rationality, which is not *prima facie* substantiated.

Torrance's account of man's relation to rationality ends in the relation to the communication of this rationality to others by persuading them to submit to the same rationality, and it is only within a community that this is properly realised. Others must think only as they are compelled to think by the nature of the divine realities themselves, and this is only truly possible in community, which acts as the basis of the verification procedures.⁸¹ There has already been mention of one particular example of communication in the example of discussion of criteria. Torrance's stress on community is important. However, it seems that Einstein himself came to form his view, or discover it, outwith and in marked contradiction to the community of science, to such an extent/

81. S.p.113.

extent that few, if any understood what he was saying. Of course, it is the case that the verification of his theory has taken place within a community of verifiers, but there may still be a problem as to how to draw the boundaries of such a community and to describe how one enters or leaves that community. It would certainly be odd if a man claimed to discover the truth and died having been unable to convince anyone else that this was the truth. Though there may be some sort of parallel with the area of art appreciation in Van Gogh and the Impressionist School, it was well after most of their deaths that their work was recognised and appreciated. The prophet only too often is not received in his own community. But turning to Torrance's stress on assisting the other to submit to the inherent intelligibility of the Object and eventually convincing him of the need to do this, it is seen that we have communicated successfully when they perceive what we have perceived. There are three different levels of problem involved here. The first is whether, strictly speaking, it makes sense to say that we communicate God to anyone. The epistemological relevance of the Holy Spirit is that He opens up the individual in such a way that subjectivity is subordinated to objectivity, the capacity to appropriate the object in its true rationality is given, and the actual experience and knowing takes place.⁸² If it is the work of the Holy Spirit, can I properly communicate anything, and may I be blamed for the failure to communicate? In other words, if the other person does not see, how could it ever be my fault, provided I have been true to the object? Torrance comments that in personal relations it may be the other person's fault,⁸³ but again/

82. See above p.p. 137 and footnote 49.

83. T.p.275

again one seems left with a failure of the power of the Holy Spirit to do His work, or success in His work such that man is not genuinely free. If this is the case then it is even more true of the critic who on Torrance's account is free neither to believe nor not to believe. The critic cannot by himself come to an understanding of the true nature of theology, but is rather dependent on the grace of the Holy Spirit. But neither can the critic express any disagreement, for not only has he no ground to stand on, but he is not free and responsible for his failure to grasp what can only be grasped by the gracious activity of the Spirit. The sort of response Torrance would wish to make would be to seek to show that man is only properly free and responsible within a proper relation to God and the Holy Spirit, and this indeed may make sense within the system of belief. The question is whether or not the same argument is sufficient in the case of the adoption or rejection of that whole system.

The second level is to enquire whether or not in the act of communication of the gospel as described by Torrance, there can be room for discussion and argument. We are not to preach at people, but to direct their minds to the reality of God.⁸⁴ Is normal communication like this? We are surely able to talk, discuss, and argue without necessarily feeling that the point and purpose of such interrelation is to direct the other's mind to some reality or other. Though, of course, there may often be this element involved in communication, and Torrance is right to draw attention to it. But he seems to suggest that/

84. MM.p.p.32,91,270; RR.p.viii; S.p.183; T.p.p.173,177.

that unless this is the case we are not genuinely involved in questioning. His point that genuine questions must in some way affect the way we live is perfectly correct,⁸⁵ but what is more doubtful is whether or not all communication can be construed as a form of questioning. All discussion is certainly not conducted in the interrogative mode. The fear behind these comments is of the kind of hubris in which we, the believers, point you, the unbelievers, to the reality which you cannot grasp yourselves. The unbeliever is represented as too passive for this to be construed as fully human communication. Of course, as Torrance suggests, the unbeliever is not passive in the sense that he must struggle against the habits of mind which falsify objects. This may be true, but it does not seem an adequate account of communication between humans in all its variety and richness, with rather the willingness to be modified by the other person and his views, being necessary on the part of both parties in the act of communication. On the basis of Torrance's theological outlook, there seems no room for modification in relation to someone outwith faith, for this would be to apply inappropriate modes of rationality from other fields of study. Again the exclusion of the critic from all comment against Torrance is obvious.

The third level is to apply this last point of the decision between believer and unbeliever, to the discussion and communication between believers. It is most certainly the case that theologians disagree with Torrance's view of the nature and content of theology. One merely needs to read Torrance's own critique of Bultmann and Robinson to /

85. T.p.p.122ff.

to see this. The problem thus arises as to whether or not they are genuinely believers. Torrance may not feel that this is a proper question for him to answer, but in all his stress upon the role of theology within a community structure, one must assume that it is possible to identify members of the community from non-members. One can imagine the traditional theologian or would-be-theologian seeking to learn from all different kinds of theological positions and seeking to extract the seeds of truth from each view to plant in his own garden. To such-minded theologians Torrance's uncompromising stance must come as a shock. If Torrance is correct, then Robinson and Bultmann are wrong and irrational. It is essential that it is clear how, on Torrance's account, to define the theologian from the non-theologian, the believer from the unbeliever, and how to account for the writing and the theological ideas which Torrance agrees with in the writers he attacks.

There is a great deal of tacit knowledge in what we know, yet may not offer any claim to know, or even be able to say that we know or how we know. Understanding is not synonymous with knowledge of the reality and it is possible to talk of insight and appreciation in ways which are characteristic of the difficulty of verbalising. There are specific experiences which are more opaque to verbalising, for example, experiences of the mysterious or the numinous. Everyone is not able to verbalise; yet children, deaf mutes, and the mentally-disturbed may still exercise a great deal of understanding and appreciation without having the capacity to verbalise. For Torrance communication is the putting in touch with reality of another person.

Yet/

Yet we can and do communicate successfully with each other without directly referring to reality or pointing others to reality. When we say that we communicate without direct reference to reality, this does not, of course, mean, that one could not ultimately reduce the statements in the communication to some relation with reality, but rather that communication does not entail explicit pointing to any reality to be successful. For example, we do understand what the members of a tribe are talking about when they refer to their gods, even though we have no experience of, and perhaps hold that we could have no experience of, the non-existent. We understand and sympathise with a person's grief even though we ourselves may have no direct experience of the reality which it involves. Understanding and communication are both multi-levelled, and Torrance's model seems to reduce to over-simplicity the complexity of both.

In general, Torrance's account of communication and the claims to rational knowledge involved in this, seem in strange contrast to the New Testament ideas of seeing through a glass darkly,⁸⁶ having not seen and yet believing,⁸⁷ and of one day both seeing and knowing.⁸⁸ Given that our knowledge of God is limited by sin and human frailty, and that God is greater than our knowing of Him, humility in presenting what we believe and in claiming truth, must be the marks appropriate to the communication and the nature of the object. There are many elements of wonder, awe, the incomprehensible, the numinous, and the mysterious which/

86. 1 Corinthians, 13, v.12.

87. Hebrews 1, 1 John 3, John 20.

88. 1 Corinthians, 13.

which cannot be fathomed or hoped to be. To call these rational needs more than a fiat of definition. It is hardly rational that God should love us, or that the secret of greatness is to humble oneself and become as a little child.⁸⁹ Faith is something much more at risk. This is why it is faith, which it is believed will one day give fruit into knowledge. Man's knowing is only in part and not in full. Torrance's view of man's part in communication leads to some questions concerning the nature and role of the community in communication, and the role of the Holy Spirit, discussion with unbelievers and fellow believers, of understanding and verbalising, and some New Testament queries in relation to knowledge and claims to knowledge. Before summing up the criticisms of Torrance's view of rationality, a more general question will be raised which is difficult to understand on Torrance's account. That is to inquire whether there is any ground for the critic to stand on in relation to Torrance's view. It would appear that the critic has no grounds on which to formulate his argument against Torrance, but this must raise the question of whether or not Torrance has himself any ground to stand on. There must be grounds for his view, but can they be separated from its content? Torrance argues that to try to do this is to be guilty of false reasoning. The positivist responds that we need to be "persuaded by non-theological reasoning that there was such a man (as Christ) and that he was of such a character as to warrant the claim that in him we encounter God".⁹⁰ Torrance lays great stress on the/

89. Matthew 18, Mark 9, Luke 9.

90. B. Mitchell, The Oriel Record, 1969, p.55

the openness of concepts and constant questioning of one's questions, but it is difficult to see how the critic can have any effect on Torrance's system because of its generality in relation to the object's prescription of modes of rationality. The problem is that always the critic can be reduced to silence by being told that he is guilty of subjectivism and that he is not being faithful to the object. One cannot, of course, expect Torrance to state what would count as the defeating of his view, but there is a need to clarify on what basis the critic, with a different attitude to epistemology, can criticise Torrance's account and the effect that such criticism would have. But it appears on Torrance's account that criticism is impossible, with no ground for the critic to stand on.

In this section an attempt has been made to come to grips with Torrance's account of rationality believing that the issues he raises are important in any account of rationality and that there is important use to be made of these concepts. It was seen that Torrance's discussion was not in the main stream of work in the area of rationality at present and needed some account of relation to other competing views. There was then examination of the notion of objectivity in its application to a wide variety of things, and then concentration on the notion of "object" in some particular contexts such as "mind", "French Revolution", and the "universe", specifically in connection with the problem of evil, and then "God". Attention was then turned to the account of rationality which was presented with reference to Torrance's work and looking at the problem/

problem of the tension between the subjective and objective factors in his work, and the correct stress on the relevance of rationality to every part of our lives. Then consideration was given to the dogma that what we know is to prescribe for us the mode of rationality which we are to adopt and the problems that this raised. From this analysis was given the stress on modes of rationality and the difficulties this raised were presented, for example, his failure to exclude what ought to be excluded and failing to do justice to the complexity of rationality. The relations of inherent rationality to transcendent rationality were examined in light of what Torrance offered and then the questions which his account gave rise to. In turn then the ideas of open concepts, the questioning of presuppositions, and physics as a model of pure science were examined. Finally the role of man and his reasoning in Torrance's account and its relevance for communication within community, was dealt with, before querying the scope for the critic as regards the position of Torrance.

In general terms then the criticism of Torrance has paralleled that of Bartley. First of all it was complained that there was the overlooking of certain important features of the nature of rationality particularly related to the limits of rationality as these are understood from actual argument and discussion. Then criticism of Torrance's own theory of rationality on its own terms was offered and a variety of criticisms which were appropriate to the specific content of Torrance's theory presented. It was found that his account is inadequate and cannot support any superstructure, though this point does not necessarily mean that/

that Torrance does support his theology in this way, only that his account of rationality in itself is not adequate to the complexity of rationality. Then it was shown within the context of a general attack on Torrance's view that one of the unfortunate effects of his view is the removal of any ground for the critic to stand on to query Torrance's position and with this the corollary that Torrance himself has no ground to stand on in criticism of any opposing view which presents its material in the same sort of way that he does with its special claims for intuition, revelation, and objectivity. Examples were seen of the use of the dictatorial strategy as outlined in the Bartley chapter, the inability to exclude views which were in sharp disagreement with Torrance both in respect of differing theologies and also in terms of astrology and alchemy which he would reject as false pseudo-sciences. It was seen that in terms of intuition, revelation, the work of the Holy Spirit and in outlining possible room for criticism, Torrance's thesis led to the impossibility of discussion and argument from a critic, and the total immunity of any view which might be presented on the same terms as Torrance presents his own view. This is not adequate to any account of the rationality which finds its expression in the processes of rational argument and discussion, and it is necessary therefore to go on to offer an account of Rationality which allows this while at the same time being true to the complexity of rationality in practice.

While the general basis of the criticism offered against Torrance has been on the three grounds outlined above and at the commencement of this/

this chapter, the actual form that the criticism has been presented in has followed the form in which Torrance has presented his own material rather than attempting to draw his position into line with the general areas of criticism. Thus the specific complaints concerning his omissions, the unfortunate conclusion his view leads to, and more obviously, the failure of his own account to do what he claims it can do on its own terms as well as its failure to measure up to what must be required of an account of rationality which will cover the complexity of the subject-matter. The effect of the criticism is cumulative, yet related directly to the specific points and the order of these points made by Torrance and as set down in sections two and three of this chapter.

Some of the problems which Torrance's account gives rise to have been presented, because the central idea of his account is striking in its apparent simplicity and the far-reaching consequences claimed for it. In light of the degree and extent of the difficulties over Torrance's account of rationality, it is difficult to see that his thesis in its present form is either an adequate account of rationality or sufficient to play the central role it appears to do in his theological system. This is not, it must be stressed, to deny the content of that theological position, but merely the ground of it as it seems to be given.

5. The Value of the Theory

The criticism of Torrance has not been intended to defeat his view, or to cast doubt on the theological insights which he offers. It is my belief that his theological doctrine is not dependent on the account of science which he appears to think essential. Thus the criticism has centred rather on the prolegomena to a theological science, and I have tried to show that in this area his account runs into considerable difficulties specifically as to his theory of objectivity and rationality.

What is important in his work for theology in general is his desire to rid theology of subjectivism and to base theology on firm ground. The direction he takes may not succeed, but it is certainly the right direction. He wishes to clarify what God means for a scientific age. As he makes clear there is a need for theology to examine its language, logic, and concepts and to make these appropriate. The work here can hardly be said even to have begun. His view of the status of natural theology is a return to Anselm's "fides quaerens intellectum", which needs to be filled out.

However the choice of Torrance was not for his theological insight, but for the questions he raises and the account he gives of rationality. The major points of importance will be listed with a view to integrating some of them in the final chapter to form an account of the nature and scope of rationality.

1. Torrance's writing on the subject of knowledge is important. There is a need to examine the different kinds of knowledge and the different objects of knowledge. His stress on the community aspects of knowledge are useful, as is his stress on the fact that knowledge must/

must affect both what we do and what we are. This has relevance especially in discussion and argument. There must also be account taken of knowing only within the knowledge relation and what this entails for communication.

2. What there is and how it relates to what we know and how we know is essential in a full discussion of rationality.

3. Torrance provides a useful corrective to subjectivism with his stress on objectivity. He also offers a corrective to extreme empiricism in his constant reference to the variety of objects and of the approaches to them.

4. The idea of different levels of rationality is important, though Torrance's model is too simple to be adequate and what is needed in particular is a closer look at the limits of rationality as they are to be discovered in the actual process of argument and discussion.

5. The interrelation of all knowledge is important, but again the basic unity of a single form of knowing is not sufficient.

6. In his account of knowledge, he mentions the importance of personal, social and psychological factors. These must all be taken account of.

7. The role of criticism, though difficult on Torrance's view, must still be clarified in its relation to rationality.

8. His account of communication and genuine questioning is unhelpful. The main difficulty is that on Torrance's own account it is difficult to see how this can take place, for there seems no point from which a seeker after truth or an unpleasant critic can launch/

launch their attacks and queries. Nevertheless, he does mention our inbuilt aversion to change and this will be examined under the psychological and social limits of rationality, and this relates too to his notion of living within different frames of reference. Part of this is also, as he sees correctly, that the way that we ask questions conditions the kind of answers that we will receive.

9. Torrance's account of language and particularly the central role of reference and the openness of concepts is of note.

10. Torrance places a great deal of stress on the influence and essential role of the community, but he does not develop this sufficiently, and an attempt is made to rectify this in the discussion of the limits of rationality.¹

11. Torrance's aim is the reintegration of man in his spiritual and physical parts. Certainly too many theories of rationality and the nature of man have too limited a view of the complexity of man and his needs and capacities.

In toto, both positively and negatively, it is possible to learn from Torrance what form an adequate account of rationality must take to ensure that the limits of rationality are properly defined, that the account is valid in and of itself as well as equal to the complexity of the subject matter, and, finally, that there is room for the critic so that genuine discussion and argument may take place in the best tradition of rational thought and action.

1. See below, section two, "The Limits of Rationality".

CHAPTER FOUR - THE USE OF RATIONALITY IN
RELIGIOUS AND METAPHYSICAL ARGUMENT

Section 1. - The Senses of Rationality

1. Two Senses of "Rationality"

At the outset I presented the thinking which lead to the examination of Bartley and Torrance as centring upon the breakdown of argument and discussion in the fields of morals, metaphysics and religion. It was the contention that accounts of rationality and their failure, and the more general failure to appreciate certain basic features of the nature of rationality led into difficulties in discussion and the feeling that one's opponent was arguing at total cross purposes to oneself and was guilty of irrelevancy and inability to see what was genuinely important. I then went on to examine two accounts of rationality on the part of a metaphysician and a theologian and found that there were in both cases three areas of disagreement which were clearly definable. These were, first of all, that while to some extent there was an appreciation of the fact that rationality was subject to certain limits there was a failure to draw the lines of such limitations and to spell out what these limits were especially in the practical situation of discussion and argument. I then looked at the particular theories of rationality which Bartley and Torrance offered and found that these accounts were faulty in their own terms and not sufficient to the wealth and complexity of the concept of rationality as it is used and generally understood. Then a detailed examination and criticism of their views was offered along the lines that the men had themselves drawn in an attempt to show the failure of the account/

account on its own terms. In the midst of this criticism attention was constantly drawn to one of the effects that both accounts had though in different ways and for different reasons. This was the removal of the possibility of criticism and discussion by the removal of any ground for the critic or the questioner to stand on. This dictatorial strategy meant that there was no possibility that either Torrance or Bartley could be wrong and anyone else right. There seemed to be no room even for debate of the issue and it is my contention that any account of rationality which removes all possibility of argument and discussion is an inadequate one, and must on that ground alone be rejected. Of course, I also hold that there are other grounds for the rejection of Torrance and Bartley and these are the failure to give an adequate account of the limits of rationality and the internal difficulties of each account.

It is now my task to do what I have claimed that Bartley and Torrance have failed to do: that is to offer an adequate account of rationality in relation to the limits of rationality and also to ensure that genuine discussion is possible on the basis of that account of rationality. This shall be done in two parts reversing the order. I shall attempt to show that discussion and argument are possible and pave the way for such by giving the critic ground on which to stand and showing that the critic can have a basis for argument and this will be done by removing the charge of irrationality, unreasonableness and unintelligibility. This will be done by showing that there are two senses of rationality bound up in these words which it is easy to overlook, and such oversight leads to the breakdown of discussion for the/

the critic has no basis for argument if he is irrational, totally unreasonable, and unintelligible. I shall show that there is a basic distinction and attempt to draw it in relation to rationality, irrationality, persons and beliefs, reason and reasons, and intelligibility. Then attention will be turned to the area of the limits of rationality and on the basis of the distinction drawn, I shall try to put flesh and blood on the bone structure of the two senses of rationality. This will be a presentation of the limits of rationality which is in fact a description of what we understand by rationality in the practice of argument and discussion. An argument will be offered which will not only leave room for the critic to take up his position, but will be in itself a description of how such discussion and argument may take place in the hope of genuine communication and change. The natural, situational, social, and psychological limits of rationality will be examined.

The importance of this sort of conceptual clarification - for this is what it is - rests on the divergence of views which consists in the subjects of morals, metaphysics, and religion. Divergence is not in and of itself a bad thing, but it is the scope and intensity of the divergence which is puzzling, particularly as it has led to a common belief that philosophy, morals and religion are all in a state of flux and that these ultimately reduce to a form of cultural relativism. With this sort of man-in-the-street attitude there is also the idea that those who are professionally involved in these areas are totally unrelated to real life and the real issues of the day, as well as being unable to reach any sort of agreement or final conclusion on anything that genuinely is important. Important questions as to the value and point/

point of philosophy, ethics and political study, as well as religion, thus underlie the present aporia.

By seeking to present some of the necessary features of rationality for the purposes of genuine argument and discussion, it is intended to draw more clearly the way in which any discussion of a particular view, belief, action or piece of behaviour is to be conducted especially in the reference to such behaviour and beliefs as rational, irrational, or non-rational. Earlier there was examination of two examples of the sort of divergence which causes concern as neither side seems able to appreciate what the other is saying nor their reason for saying it.¹ There is extreme divergence as to what constitutes the facts of the situation and the accusation that the other has overlooked what is in fact essential for a true grasp of what is in question.

With this sort of accusation in philosophy, it is often difficult for the person outside the dispute, and perhaps those in it also, to see what sort of dispute it is and what is expected of each side by the other. Rather than believing that this is an essential feature of philosophy, it seems that it is rather the occupational hazard and can and must be avoided by clearly drawing the basic features of what it is to be rational. I shall first of all examine the referring of rationality to oneself by way of introduction of a basic distinction between two senses of rationality. But it may be helpful to offer an outline of what is meant by rationality in the two senses, before going on to argue the case, though the details of the description rest on the argument offered/

1. Chapter One, p.p. 6ff.

offered and not vice versa. When mention is made here of rationality, as has been throughout the work, it is in the sense of what is ascribed to human beings in terms of a capacity or ability to do something or to come up to a particular standard. It is that which separates man from the ape or the amoeba as well as from the computer, and in this sense it is a characteristic of human beings in terms of their capacity and ability.

Sense one of "rationality" is concerned with part of the definition of what it is to be a man. It is an overall, total, basic description which says something about all and every man in light of which he may be called a man. It is not an absolute; yet it rules out the possibility of being irrational unless the rights and privileges of society are withdrawn and one is either put in prison or in a mental hospital. It is only applied when a very basic question of security or total immorality arises and the threat of the withdrawal of basic human rights and responsibilities is in doubt. It refers to the capacity to reason, to appreciate the facts of a situation and the necessity of evidence for beliefs and the appropriateness of demands for justification and explanation when one is queried as to one's behaviour. It is the ability to appreciate the need for justification and explanation and to go at least some way in trying to provide it, by appropriate and adequate means. It will be seen that it is also related to action and goal-directed behaviour. In contrast, the sense two of "rationality" deals with what relates to highly specific contexts. It varies according to the context, and its nature will be more easily and clearly seen in contrast to sense one as it is described in the detailed/

detailed argument. This basic distinction is drawn as it relates to rationality then to irrationality. It is then applied to talk and description of persons and beliefs. Then it is applied to reason and reasons looking at explanation, action and wishing, and finally, intelligibility is examined. If this distinction is genuine then it makes it possible for the critic to have a position from which he can question or argue and then the limits of rationality will be looked at seeing the form of such argument and discussion. But a start will be made with the notion of the reference of rationality to oneself.

I wish to suggest that there is more than oddity involved in the idea of referring to oneself as rational and that such a reference is neither necessary nor sufficient to the claim for rationality. It is not necessary to be able to refer to oneself as being rational. This is the case for it is possible to act rationally and yet to be unable to say that it is rational.² This may be either because the person does not know what "rational" means or that it is not appropriate to apply such a term. One may also act rationally and yet be unable to give an explanation for it. For example, one may imagine a novice skier sweeping down the slopes of Glenshee straight towards a tree. This novice has not yet learned how to stop or even how to turn. He sits down and stops. The instructor is delighted and inquires how he knew to do that, because most people just fall flat on their faces and stop somewhat painfully. The skier can only confess that he just did it. Yet the behaviour is rational given an understanding of skiing and time/

2. See above, p.p.41

time to consider the mechanics involved. But this particular novice has no grasp of the refinements or even the basics, yet has shown natural ability and aptitude of the same sort as the small boy in the laboratory who makes ingenious suggestions which are useful and which actually work. One may behave in a way which is called rational and seem to be rational, but be unable to say why one has done it and to have a total lack of appreciation of the effects of one's action.³

The necessity of being able to describe in rational terms one's actions or beliefs is even more doubtful if we consider the example of an individual who may have faith in a person without what most folk would call good reasons for such faith. In fact, this faith in, for example, the habitual criminal, may run contrary to all appearances and all facts in the context; yet despite this, the faith in the individual, the willingness to trust far beyond the point of apparent common sense, the defence against any and all criticism no matter how justified, are all held strongly, but without necessarily the ability to express the grounds of such faith or any reason for the attitude. Or perhaps there are some grounds offered, but these are totally inadequate to support the degree and extent of the faith involved and the actions which follow such faith. In parallel fashion, one may be very much in love with an individual, or out of love, and yet be unable to express the reason for one's state of mind, or indeed confess that there are no reasons while strongly believing and affirming that it is still the case that you feel what you feel, and know what you know. The poet expresses it thus

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3. P. Alexander, "Rational Behaviour and Psychoanalytic Explanation", p.331.

"I do not love you, Dr. Fell.

But why I cannot tell,

But this I know full well,

I do not love you, Dr. Fell."⁴

This may be an example of the heart having its reasons which the mind cannot grasp, or it may rather point to the need to regard rationality, not as a narrow feature of mental operations, but as more integrated in the whole of man in all his variety of thought, will, and emotions.

It is not only not necessary to refer rationality to oneself, but it is also not sufficient. One can give to others what is to oneself a totally rational explanation of one's behaviour, but they might regard it as irrational. The deranged person when asked why he is sticking mousetraps on the wall may reply that they are to catch the pink rats which are running up and down the walls, but this is not usually held to be rational behaviour. When we behave in what to us is a perfectly sensible way, we are puzzled and annoyed when others fail to see why we did something, and even after explanation, still regard us askance.

Rationality is not only insufficient in reference to oneself, but may point to a much more important aspect, that of rationality itself never being totally sufficient. Hume's attack on rationalism is designed to show that reason itself is not and by the nature of the case cannot be sufficient in itself. One is not and cannot be totally rational.⁵ This releases us from trying to live up to an impossible standard of rationality, in/

4. See above, Chapter two, p.p. 41

5. In relation to morals, D. Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature Book iii, Part I Section I, p.455; "Of Scepticism with regard to Reason", Book I, Part IV Section I, p.p. 180ff, (ed.) Selby-Bigge.

in the sort of way that Bartley has in mind a propos the rationalist crisis of integrity⁶. Hume is trying to bring attention to certain basic facts which he regards as limiting the role that reason plays and can play in metaphysics and morals. What is crucial in this is that when we talk of "rational" and "reasonable" with all other synonyms, we are not meaning these in any absolute sense, but always and only in a relative sense. That is to say that there is not and cannot be a totally rational man for he would no longer be a man but an automaton or a divinity. And parallel with this, there cannot be a totally irrational man, for he too would lose his right to be called a man or treated as a man.

Individual self-reference of rationality is neither necessary nor sufficient. But more importantly, it is odd to refer ever to oneself as being rational. In what sort of circumstances can one make sense of the self-ascription of rationality? There is the need to characterise this sort of occasion, for in the normal course of events we would be extremely puzzled to hear someone proclaiming his rationality to one and all. One would say that one is rational or that one's behaviour is rational only in the context in which some question arises as to the rationality of action. This is not, except in the cases of dementia, a question as to the total irrationality of the action or person involved, but rather expressing that the person is not as one would expect him to be or that his action is not in keeping with the usual pattern of behaviour which he exhibits.

The oddity of the self-reference of rationality is the background against which it can be seen that there are two basic senses of "rational" which must be clearly separated, and the confusion of the two in argument and/

6. Bartley, R.C., Chapter 1; See above Chapter Two p.p.27

and judgment avoided. The first and most basic meaning of "rational" is included in the idea that all men are rational. It is in this sense that Popper and Watkins have recently written of the "Rationality Principle".⁷ This rationality is taken as part of the definition of what it is to be a man. It is an overall, total, basic description which says something about all and every man in light of which he is what he is. This is what entitles a man to be called a man, the fact that he is rational.

What is meant by "rational" in this basic and overall sense, is not however, something absolute. It does not and cannot imply total perfection. An attempt will be made to draw out the reasons why rationality is not absolute but rather relative in actual situational terms. But here it can be seen that conceptually to be totally rational or totally irrational must inevitably involve the removal of a large area of crucial discourse of willing, failing, sinning, guilt, responsibility, punishment and the cluster of notions around these terms.⁸

Being rational must imply neither the capacity to be totally rational nor the capacity to be totally irrational./

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7. J.W.N. Watkins, "Imperfect Rationality"; K. Popper, "Rationality and the Status of the Rationality Principle".
8. S. Hampshire makes a similar point in relation to freewill and determinism in Thought and Action, especially chapter two. G. Warnock, The Object of Morality, p.p.143-4

irrational. If one was always and only rational, then the sense of "rational" would be nearly Pickwickian. Thus, if one was only and always irrational, the sense of "irrational" would lose its meaning over and against all the varying degrees of success and failure in the enterprise. The man who can only be rational is no longer a man but a computer-like machine. The man who can only be irrational is no longer a man but a psychopath.

Popper suggests that at this level the rationality principle is trivial and false but is nevertheless essential.⁹ I shall not enter into discussion as to whether or not his description is adequate but shall concentrate on the level which Popper fails to distinguish from the level of the rationality principle, and which is different in kind and scope and has led to much of the confusion between differing views as to what is rational in belief and behaviour.

The second basic sense of "rational" is that which is directly related to man's behaviour and beliefs. It is what a rational man actually does and believes, but this in the context that he could have done differently, but did not.¹⁰ It is in this sense that it is possible to see the crucial difference between the two senses, for in the first sense, that of man as rational, it is impossible for man to be irrational. This is not to say that there are not totally irrational men, but that those who are totally irrational lose the right to be called men, and more importantly, to be treated as men, so they are put in mental hospitals/

9. Popper, "Rationality and the Status of the Rationality Principle."

10. This type of argument relates closely to discussion of "can" and "could". See M. Ayers, The Refutation of Determinism, particularly in relation to the idea that free will involves the capacity to do otherwise.

hospitals or prison and the basic rights as individuals which the rest of society enjoys are withdrawn from them. In sense two of "rational" it is possible to behave irrationally and to hold irrational ideas and beliefs. But this can only be done on occasions and in particular contexts and situations. These situations limit the nature of the description of the irrationality that can be given.

In sense one of "rational" one is always fully rational for to fall short in this sense is to be in need of hospitalisation. However, in sense two there is the assumption that one is not and need not be fully rational. This sense allows room for falling short. The same point has been made in different places. For example, in parallel with rule-guided behaviour. "The notion of following a rule is logically inseparable from the notion of making a mistake. If it is possible to say of someone that he is following a rule that means that one can ask whether he is doing what he does correctly or not".¹¹ The same thing applies to "rational" in sense two, that there is necessarily room for falling short. Bennett comments that "having an ability to carry out some kind of intellectual task entails having an ability to know when one has done it wrongly."¹² This in turn entails the possibility that one can do it wrongly.

There has already been stress on the importance of context for the second sense of "rational". This importance can be similarly seen from two other sources. S. Lukes comments on discussion of the context-dependent/

11. P. Winch, the Idea of a Social Science, p.32

12. J. Bennett, Rationality, p.92; See also his discussion of Bees and rule-guided behaviour in p.p. 17-18, ibid

dependent nature of some features of rationality, that, "There are (obviously) contextually-provided criteria of meaning. Again there are contextually-provided criteria which make particular beliefs appropriate in particular circumstances. There are also contextually-provided criteria which specify the best way to arrive at and hold beliefs. In general, these are contextually-provided criteria for deciding what counts as a 'good reason' for holding a belief"¹³

It is just this sense of having good reasons for a belief or for a course of action which is central to the second sense of "rational". The same sort of point is made in a discussion of Freudian explanation. "Similarly, it may be rational to behave in a particular way given the beliefs I have about certain matters of fact but these beliefs may be irrational because they conflict with the evidence I have or evidence I could easily get or are based on careless or mistaken reasoning. But if I believe that w is the case and that in consequence, I ought to aim to produce y then, behaviour that tends to produce y may be rational, within the narrower context, no matter how wrong is my belief about w. The rationality of behaviour is relative to context."¹⁴

It is my contention that this is certainly the case for sense two of "rational", but not so for sense one, which lays stress on the universal and absolute qualities of rationality in relation to the nature of man.

Both senses of "rational" have, however, a limiting case. This is the point at which one would withdraw the epithet "rational". Here the/

13. S. Lukes, "Some Problems about Rationality", B. Wilson (ed) Rationality, p. 211.

14. P. Alexander, ibid, p.332.

the two senses must run into each other. In sense two of "rational", if a man continually did things which were seen to be irrational in all and every situation and context, this would inevitably lead us to consider whether he was "rational" in sense one, that of all men being rational. It is the mad man, the totally criminal, or the totally immoral man who causes us to withdraw even this basic sense and to lock up the person in question on the grounds of the safety and well-being of society and of the individual himself. At this point, however, there has developed a counter-move to the withdrawal of rationality.

Freudian theory has presented us with explanations of the most apparently irrational and pointless pieces of behaviour. Slips of the tongue, lapses of memory, behaviour habits, all can be made to fit into a general view of what the individual concerned has experienced, particularly in early childhood. Not only can an explanation be given of the behaviour as a result of Freudian analysis, but the individual concerned can himself come to recognise the truth of what is said though this is often a long and painful process. It can, it is claimed, eventually lead to the successful treatment and disappearance of the neurosis in question. Behaviour which once appeared to be totally irrational, can be seen to be rational by virtue of the Freudian analysis.

If a specific example of irrational behaviour is taken which can be interpreted on Freudian terms as rational, one becomes aware of the subtle shift in the meaning of "rational" and "irrational". A prominent jeweller suddenly begins to wash floors, each floor over and over again.

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The mood passes, but in three months time, he begins again scrubbing the same floors over and over. This is an example of irrational action. The Freudian seeks to analyse the patient, and to probe into his subconscious. He discovers that as a child the jeweller had seen his mother forced to scrub floors by his father if she in some way failed to please him. He had forgotten this. On each occasion he had begun himself to wash floors he had had a tiff with his wife of a very minor nature, but this, however, the Freudian states, was sufficient to elicit from him the necessity of making appeasement in the most primitive and basic form that he knew, which was to wash floors. The "irrational" action can thus be seen to be in fact perfectly rational given all the knowledge of the facts and the background of the situation. On this type of account, the sadist is not behaving irrationally, but quite rationally, when he beats his sexual partner because given his outlook, desires, tastes, and background, he is right in the sense of "rational" to behave as he does.

The problem with these accounts is that there is the feeling on the one hand that they make a genuine point and give some sort of explanation, while at the same time an uneasy feeling indescribing of the behaviour of the jeweller or the sadist as "rational". Both instincts are correct. It must be admitted that there is a sense in which a Freudian analysis explains what is difficult to understand. It may be only one sort of explanation and it may not be a sufficient explanation - to discover the extent of its success leads into the realms of/

of psychology and psychiatry, as well as psycho-analysis. But at the very least it does offer some kind of explanation. This is not to say that it offers a total explanation, or that it qualifies the ascription of "rational" to any and all odd behaviour which can be subjected to this account. If it is "rational", it is "rational" within a very peculiar context in which actions and slips of the tongue and memory have gained an unwarranted significance and exercise and unreasonable control. It is "rational" only from the viewpoint of the Freudian, hence the need for psycho-analysis by a Freudian, who has himself been psycho-analysed and the convincing of the patient, not only of the relation of his behaviour to pieces of past experience, but at the same time, the propounding of the particular theory which needs to be accepted before the pattern of connection of behaviour and past can itself be accepted. When the Freudian claims to cure the patient, the patient must become a Freudian to appreciate and experience that cure. What is important, then, is that in this context the word "rational" is not being used in a normal sort of way, especially in regard to the lower limit of irrationality. It has sense only in an highly selective context and with reference to a narrow view of man and behaviour. The Freudian explanation is not what is normally accepted as explanation, for it is a different sort of thing altogether. It explains within a particular sphere, but it does not make explicable to any and every man who but looks to see. The mad man, the sadist, the poor jeweller, are not rational simply because their actions can be construed in a particular light and seen to make some sort of sense therein. They/

They are still irrational, and they require treatment and care. When they are cured, when they no longer require treatment and care, when their behaviour conforms to societal norms and explicable patterns, then and only then can they be regarded as rational again.

It may be that when the Freudian offers a "rational" explanation, what he means by "rational" is much less rigid than has been suggested. Some might wish to claim that the explained behaviour was still irrational both to the patient and to the therapist, but that this "irrationality" lay in the fact that the action is unsuitable. The meaning of "unsuitable" is complex in this level of response, for it may refer to the fact that the act is unsuitable to the end desired or it may mean that it is ineffective. Action may be inappropriate in that one does not know the aim and purpose behind the action, in contrast to the situation where one is fully conscious and aware of what one is doing. In this case, "rational" will refer to actions which were teleologically apt, and "irrational" to actions which were "blind", that is to say, inappropriate to the purpose. The patient in realising that his action is "blind", e.g. the washing of floors, may come to see some kind of sense in the action in that he realises that it is inappropriate, certainly as it is not clear what the aim behind such action is. He realises the inappropriateness, but does not necessarily classify the action as "rational", when he or the therapist clarifies what it involves. The action of washing the floor is also ineffective, in that it does not meet the particular need he actually has. One merely expends lots of energy without realising the reasons for/

for it or it bearing fruit. The behaviour is not fitting to deal with the problem. Even after explanation of the action has been given the inefficiency still remains. In this case the "rational" action is the action which achieves the end in view in the most effective way, while "irrational" action is that which may be intelligible, yet is ineffective in expense of energy and inappropriate to meeting the need involved. If this is the position of the Freudian account of rationality there is much to agree with, but it does not appear to be the emphasis offered. Nevertheless, the importance of this sort of account is that it highlights the importance of knowing what one is doing, of being in full possession of one's wits, or, in other words, having a certain capacity to act in an appropriate fashion to the situation. This is crucial in understanding rational behaviour, but it must also be linked with an account of disposition in relation to one's attitude to both the situation and others in the situation as regards the flexibility or rigidity of one's approach in the particular context and in regard to the differing consequences. One must be open to "rational" considerations, as well as having the capacity to act appropriately in the sense of fulfilling one's aim and purpose by suitable behaviour.

The danger of the Freudian attack on irrational behaviour is that it endangers the understanding of what is rational, reasonable, and explicable, and reduces these to something trivial, in the sense that any belief or action at all may be understood if one has a particular context or outlook. This kind of position is paralleled by the danger of/

of cultural relativism, which denies any absolute standards of behaviour right and wrong, good or evil, and instead suggests that all these things are relative to a particular time, place, kind of person, and practical situation, and that it is not possible to generalise in this area, but rather one needs to indulge in description of the context and of the standards within that context. What is rational is rational only within a particular context and at one time within that context, and at one place, or at least within a highly specifiable location. Thus one must beware of imagining that our standards of truth, right and wrong, are in any way superior or inferior to any others, but rather to accept the fact of the differences and indulge merely in description of such differences without passing hasty or considered judgments. We cannot judge, for we shall then ourselves be judged and found just as wanting. This is a very subtle approach and statement of what is a genuine problem. Much will be found to sympathise with in it as regards sense two of "rationality" and its relation to specific contexts. But it will be argued that while there is a great deal to relativism, it is in itself not sufficient for it ignores sense one of "rationality". Relativism tends to overstress the degree of differences between ourselves and others, between cultures and groups, and to talk as if these differences were absolute and totally inexplicable on any other terms but their own. This is not the case. There are certain basic similarities and structures. There is a great deal of common consent and understanding and all this may be typified at the level of "rationality" in sense one.

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I shall in due course seek to delineate the different sorts of features which are related to the different senses of rationality and to propound them in the proper perspective as regards their implication for man as a member of particular groups, a non-member of others, and as a seeker and arguer on the basis of reasons and grounds rather than on shifting sand.

An attempt has been made to delineate a confusion between two senses of "rational". "Rational" in sense one applies to man in general - to all and every man; whereas "rational" in sense two refers to either man or his behaviour and beliefs in light of a particular situation and context where actions and beliefs are appropriate, reasonable, proper, or inappropriate, improper, and unreasonable. To apply sense one of "rationality" to oneself is neither necessary nor sufficient. To apply sense one to other people makes sense only when a very basic question of security and total immorality is concerned, where the withdrawal of the epithet "rational" implies the withdrawal of certain basic human rights and responsibilities. In contrast, the application of "rational" in sense two makes sense in a situation where oneself or another is threatened, questioned, or criticised, and where justification is appropriate. In other words, this is to try to separate two levels of the application of "rational"; the one as being at the level of a regulative principle, which may be trivial and even false, and the other the level of contextual action, behaviour and belief. In some sense this is parallel to the distinction between justifying a principle and justifying a particular action which falls/

falls within the principle.¹⁵

There will be an examination of what is involved in the notion of "rationality" in both senses and what are the important features of these senses. The relevance of this question is to help to clarify what it is we are doing when we state what we believe and behave in accordance with that, and what we are doing when we question what someone else believes and his behaviour in accordance with that belief. What sort of thing is involved in this, what are the standards, if any, involved, and what is implied by both of these? As a result of the responses to these questions, it is hoped to clarify how the rational man can be rational about his behaviour, his beliefs, and his rationality, and how genuine argument and discussion become possible when the methods and form of criticism and justification are drawn in light of the distinction between the two senses of "rational".

15. J.Rawls, "Two Concepts of Rules", Philosophical Review, Vol. LXIV, 1955; "Justice as Fairness", Philosophical Review, Vol. LXVII, 1958.

2. Two Senses of "Irrationality"

In sub-section one, an attempt has been made to delineate a distinction between two senses of "rationality". The first is with reference to the general capacity of all mankind, and is part and parcel of what would normally be accounted to be human. The second sense is related to more specific contexts in which, in light of particular presuppositions or attitudes which one has adopted, a particular way of life, or series of propositions is held to follow rationally. In this latter sense, it is more akin to a kind of consistency, though the need for argument and the nature of the reasons involved in adopting any such view must also be taken account of in clarifying the sense of "rational" in sense two. One way of seeking to understand what rationality involves is, of course, by seeking to understand irrationality and what it involves. There seem to be three important aspects of irrationality which need to be examined to understand rationality and to see the relation of irrationality to the senses of "rationality" already outlined. "Irrationality" in senses one and two in opposition to senses one and two of "rationality" will be examined while recognising that the importance of irrationality in the present situation is seen in the specific doctrine of "irrationalism", and what is involved in such a doctrine.

Hare, in Freedom and Reason, makes the point that, "It is very important to distinguish between things which it would be ridiculous, inapposite, or even misleading to say, and things which would be false or incomprehensible or inconsistent. It is only when it would be false or incomprehensible or inconsistent to say something that philosophers/

philosophers should be professionally interested".¹ While disagreeing with his limitation of the philosopher's professional interest and noting that the central point Hare makes need not be limited only to what is said, but is relevant also to what is believed (and perhaps never said) and to what is done, it must be agreed that Hare makes the germ of a distinction between the two senses of "irrational" which parallel senses one and two of "rational". Before expanding the distinction it is admitted that the total separation of the senses of "irrational" may in practice be impossible, but this is not to say that the distinction is not a valid one, or that it is not necessary in theory to be clear about what the different senses involve, particularly with reference to discussion and argument. Rather the senses will be seen to be related on a sliding scale in which the movement is from an absolute, total, and general level, to the more particular, specific and relative.

If one were to apply the epithet "irrational" in sense one to a person or belief, action, or any feature of a person or group to which such a judgement were appropriate, one would gather the following sort of picture. The individual or group would act without reference to any form of reasoning, or evidence in the sense that the facts of the situation would be unappreciated by the ignoring of such facts or the failure to recognise that there were any such facts at all. This involves/

1. R.Hare, Freedom and Reason, p.58.

involves both the inability to recognise for oneself in the specific situation what the facts are and what reasons there are in favour or against one acting in a particular way, and that when questioned or challenged with reference to one's behaviour, the person concerned would make no attempt at justification or explanation and offer no reason at all for his behaviour, failing to discern either the need for such reasons or failing to grasp what reasons there might be in the situation. There would be no sense (literally "nonsense") involved in what he did and said. His actions and words would serve no purpose and have no reason behind them. The sort of situation in mind is that of the "mindless" - note the common use of such description in these cases - behaviour of "mods" and "rockers" on the rampage in the sea-side resorts, subjecting people and property to vicious violence without any apparent purpose and without any reason which is recognisable as such. To suggest that they did it for fun, or that they enjoyed doing it, makes the absence of a genuine reason all the more terrifying, in that we are at a loss what to say in response to such admissions. The class of actions and persons subsumed under the heading of "irrational" in sense one, are those neurotics and psychotics, infants, or the criminally insane, who are not only not responsible for their actions and words, but are incapable of describing before, during, or after a particular action what they are doing, why they are doing it, and what is involved in their action and its results. It is not the case of the abandoning of logic, reasoning, explanation, or justification, but rather a complete inability to appreciate the relevance of any and all/

all of these to oneself and one's actions to the extent that one is no longer entitled to either the rights or privileges, far less the responsibilities of being accounted a person, or rather a rational human being. The "irrational" man in sense one is one who has no full encounter with reality and thus no proper relation to reality. In this sense "reality" means the relation of cause and effect and action to purpose. Persistence in contradiction in what one says and in what one does destroys all hope of communication and understanding, and therefore of cooperation.

In some ways, sense two of "irrational" is merely a variation on the same theme, but what is important is the degree of variation and what this implies in respect of possible improvement, modification, and change. In sense two, the "irrational" man or group acts against the apparent evidence, or on too few facts, or on the basis of facts which are not properly appreciated. Often they cannot explain their actions and the demand for explanation or justification leads to the adducement of facts which are not obviously relevant to the question under examination. The interpretation of situations and people is odd to the point of perversity and they are ready and willing to dispute over whether or not what most would agree is a reason for something is in actual fact a reason at all, or whether some totally irrelevant feature ought to be considered carefully as integral to any judgment in the situation. Their reasoning is without an adequate basis, and they depart from the accepted norms of reasoning, explanation and justification. All together they seem unreasonable, perverse, foolish, or "thick in the head", and, contrary to Warnock's disclaimer,² such people do often appear/

2. G. Warnock, The Object of Morality.

appear "irrational", though it is in sense two, which is to say that they are irrational from a particular point of view. The crucial difference between the two senses as outlined is the divergence over the eshewing of logic, argument, reasoning, or justification. In sense one, questions of fact, justification, or evidence appear not to arise and to make no sense at all to the "irrational" man or group, whereas in sense two, these questions may at least be allowed, but the type and level of response is far removed from what is normally expected or sought in the asking of such a question. The kinds of reasons, justification and evidence offered in sense two are not apparently totally relevant to the problem at large and the mode of activity is peculiar, while still being recognisable as a form of reasoning, justification, and activity.

S.Lukes, in a discussion of some problems of rationality, offers an account of the irrationality of beliefs on the grounds of various inadequacies. These will be related to the delineation of levels one and two of "irrationality" seeking to illustrate the difference. Lukes suggests that beliefs are irrational: "1. if they are illogical, e.g. inconsistent or (self-)contradictory, consisting of or relying on invalid inferences etc...".³ A propos sense one, this would be true only if this referred to total illogicality in which all and every form of logic was set aside regularly and completely, and that the belief or the individual was regularly and always inconsistent and self-contradictory.

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3. S.Lukes, "Some Problems of Rationality", B.Wilson (ed.) Rationality, pp.194ff. My views on "irrationality" were already formed when I came across Lukes' account, but I draw on this to illustrate both similarities and differences.

It is less clear that Lukes' last point is valid, for a belief may be a true belief yet rely, in the mind of the individual who holds it, on a false premiss or inference, which is, of course, not recognised to be false by the individual concerned. But a belief could be "irrational" in sense two, inasmuch as it had certain illogical features, or in that it appeared inconsistent or even self-contradictory, but the person who held such a belief was willing and able to go some way in arguing over the questions of logic and consistency, and able to offer some alternative definitions. Perhaps even this last point of being able to offer some alternative definition is not essential, but rather it is sufficient if the person is in a situation of unease or aporia, admitting that apparently the argument against him shows his belief to be irrational, but yet being unwilling to accept this, while still being unable to deal with the argument or to offer an alternative account. There would have to be certain limitations on this, e.g. is the doubt on the part of the believer serious, does he in the future attempt to meet the doubt, does he re-examine his position in light of the argument? "Irrationality" in sense two, here refers to the departure of a belief from the established norm for beliefs and the argument and discussion of beliefs, perhaps without any clear notion of the new basis being offered for the "irrational" belief. An example here would be the Copernican thesis of the earth revolving round the sun. This was, and still is, prima facie "irrational" to the ordinary observer, yet it is not the case that Copernicus and his supporters eschewed logic or justification, but rather set about over a long period of time to support this thesis, without being able initially to deal with the apparently/

apparently disconfirming evidence.

S.Lukes' second point on the inadequacy of irrational beliefs is "if they are partially or wholly false".⁴ One wonders whence is derived the standpoint to make such a judgment of falsity, but as it relates to sense one of "irrational", such beliefs or people would always be false without hope of correction or even awareness of the need for correction; while in sense two of "irrational" the upholder of the belief might wish to argue over the truth and falsity, and certainly the degree of falsity, in order to seek to preserve the belief, though making use of apparently irrelevant or unrelated evidence.

"3. If they are nonsensical (though it may be questioned whether they would then qualify as propositions and thus as beliefs)".⁵ In sense one of "irrational", for a belief to be nonsensical would mean that it could not be stated or propounded with the support of any evidence at all, whereas in sense two of "irrational", a belief might well be nonsensical given the prevailing views of mankind and the cultural outlook, yet the believer would try to explain what he meant and to offer alternative definitions, or perhaps rather express, though unknowingly, the necessity for such alternative definition. The difference seems rather that a belief is "irrational" in sense one at this point if it is nonsensical from all and every viewpoint, and nonsensical in sense two if it is "irrational" from most or some points of view, but not necessarily all.

Lukes/

4. Lukes, ibid., pp.194ff.

5. Lukes, ibid.

Lukes' fourth point is more difficult to grasp. It is that beliefs are irrational "if they are situationally specific or ad hoc, i.e. not universalized because bound to particular occasions".⁶ One sees no reason why anyone, rational or not, should not hold beliefs which are relevant and non-universalizable in that they refer only to a very specific situation. For example, one might believe that when one is confronted with a red and black cabbage which sings "Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary", one ought to respond by singing "Baa, Baa, Black Sheep". Of course, this is universalizable in the sense that it is relevant to all and every confrontation of a singing red and black cabbage, when the tune is appropriate, but it is also bound to particular occasions which are highly specific and exceedingly rare. The irrationality perhaps arises in that, for the "irrational" belief in sense one, there is no relation of this belief to anything else whether it be other beliefs or other situations. The belief which is "irrational" in sense two is that because it is not the sort of belief which relates to anything obviously, but given a fuller account of the crucial nature of red and black singing cabbages, there might be some mitigation against outright and total rejection of the belief.

Luke's fifth and final example is the most detailed and crucial. Beliefs are irrational "if the ways in which they come to be held or the manner in which they are held are seen as deficient in some respect. For example: (a) the beliefs may be based, partially or wholly, on irrelevant considerations; (b) they may be based on insufficient evidence; (c) they may be held uncritically, i.e. not held open to refutation or modification by experience (d) the beliefs may be held /

6. Lukes, ibid.

held unreflectively, without conscious consideration of their assumptions and implications, relations to other beliefs etc."⁷ To be understood as "irrational" in sense one, one would need to change the wording of Lukes' initial description to: "if the ways in which they come to be held or the manner in which they are held are seen as deficient in every respect", whereas "irrational" in sense two would read as originally presented with the emphasis falling on "...deficient in some respect". If each of the four subsections is taken in turn, the differences between "irrational" in sense one and two must lie in the degree of irrelevance and the basis of such a judgement, the separation of no evidence at all being offered, or evidence which is not evidence at all, from evidence which is evidence but is not convincing as it stands, the nature of the uncritical holding of the belief, in other words, why one holds the belief to be beyond refutation or modification and whether or not one says any more than the mere statement of its non-refutability or non-modifiability, or whether one seeks to explain that in light of X,Y, and Z, then there can be no refutation, and finally, whether the holding of beliefs unreflectingly means the holding of a belief without any reason at all, or rather the holding of a belief without being conscious of why one holds it, but still having the capacity to inquire into the nature and grounds of one's belief, given that the need for such clarification is made clear. It is necessary to relate the holding of belief in an uncritical and unreflective fashion to the concept of "dissonance".⁸ What is meant by dissonance may be clarified by reference to a social science investigation called "When Prophecy Fails". The author/

7. Lukes, ibid.

8. Festinger, Riecken, Schachter, When Prophecy Fails, p.27.

authors of this investigation of a sect, who prophesied catastrophe for the world on a specific date and their own departure before the disaster culminated, examined the reaction of the believers after disconfirmation, and outlined the central notion of dissonance as follows: "Two opinions, or beliefs, or items of knowledge are dissonant with each other if they do not fit together - that is, if they are inconsistent, or if, considering only the two particular items, one does not follow from the other. For example, a cigarette smoker who believes that smoking is bad for his health has an opinion that is dissonant with the knowledge that he is continuing to smoke. He may have many other opinions, beliefs, or items of knowledge that are consonant with continuing to smoke but the dissonance nevertheless exists too".⁹ The test for irrationality as outlined by Lukes with reference to uncritical and unreflective holding of beliefs needs to be modified in relation to dissonance, in that, if there is no dissonant evidence, belief or situation, then it is difficult to hold that one must still exercise criticism and reflection on all and every one of one's beliefs. Rather the pattern seems to be that whenever our beliefs come into conflict, or some new fact arises which casts doubt on an old belief, in other words, when dissonance arises, then and only then do we undergo the kind of critical reflection which Lukes outlines. It is possible that one might hold such critical reflection to be one's methodological presupposition in one's work, e.g. a scientist seeking to disprove his own theories, but the point is that it is impossible to do this all the time for everything, and that to do this requires the uncritical/

9. Festinger, Riecken, Schachter, ibid., p.p.25-6.

uncritical and unreflective holding of some other beliefs in order to be critically reflective on the problem in hand.¹⁰

Most often it would seem to be the case that the manifestation of dissonance leads to some critical reflection on one's belief in the following manner. "Dissonance produces discomfort and, correspondingly, there will arise pressures to reduce or eliminate the dissonance. Attempts to reduce dissonance represent the observable manifestations that dissonance exists. Such attempts may take any or all of three forms. The person may try to change one or more of the beliefs, opinions, or behaviour involved in the dissonance; to acquire new information or beliefs that will increase the existing consonance and thus cause the total dissonance to be reduced; or to forget or reduce the importance of these cognitions that are in a dissonant relationship.

If any of the above attempts are to be successful, they must meet with the support from either the physical or the social environment. In the absence of such support, the most determined efforts to reduce dissonance may be unsuccessful".¹¹

Without dissonance, the attempt to overcome it which may be defined as some form of critical reflection, is neither necessary nor to the point. The importance of this concept will be returned to and its role in argument and discussion, when the pattern of change involved in one set of beliefs giving place to another, or in the giving up of particular beliefs is examined.

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10. See above, Chapter Two. p.p. 87

11. Festinger, Riecken, Schachter, *ibid.*, p.26.

The differences in senses one and two of "irrationality" relate to the degree and kind of irrationality involved in illogicality, falsity the genesis and continued upholding of a belief, and in relation to evidence and uncritical reflection or lack of it. Sense one refers to the total setting aside of all logic, sense, and meaning, without the awareness of what is involved in this. One doubts what cannot (logically possibly) be doubted, and is certain of what cannot (logically possibly) be held to be true. Sense two refers to the conscious setting aside of the accepted norms of logic, proof and sense, either in some general way on the basis of other considerations, or only in one particular and definite instance again based on considerations. In the latter case one is willing to continue the argument, and is aware of the need and point of such an argument, without necessarily having the capacity to engage in such argumentation. One doubts what normally cannot (physically and/or psychologically possibly) be doubted, and is certain of what cannot (physically and/or psychologically) be held to be true as far as most people are concerned. The last phrase is the most difficult, for one must allow room for a new Einstein, who will fly in the face of all generally accepted truth with apparent incomprehensible nonsense, which in the end of the day will be shown to be correct and meaningful, while at the same time protecting society and clarifying the nature of that protection from insane cranks. This is why the difference between senses one and two appears to be based on some sort of sliding scale from the particular to the absolute, the exceptional to the totally impossible/

impossible (and that in all senses). It may well be that some sort of time factor is the dividing line between ingenious invention and crazed delusion, in as much as if no one else ever was convinced of the truth of one's theory it would be difficult to allow that the theory had any truth other than the merely logically possible, but in practice it may be literally thousands of years after the initial idea, belief, or experiment that the truth is finally upheld, and "common-sense" refuted. It, therefore, seems rather informal in detailed separation, yet hopefully clear in the intent and the basis of the distinction.

Another possible way of expressing what is in mind may be derived from T.F. Torrance's account of irrationality. Torrance states that "In modern science undue emphasis upon the place of the human subject leads quickly into an irrational situation in which it is claimed that man himself imposes patterns of his own upon nature through his own inventions. Not only is man unable to distinguish a given reality from his own constructions, but even to think of trying to do so, is to fall from the pure ideal of science as complete technological control of nature"¹² What Torrance means by irrationality is defined as the "ultimately irrational failure to distinguish the objective reality from the subjective states of our own consciousness, or to distinguish what is not ourselves from ourselves."¹³ In practice, this means for Torrance that, "I cognise this table and typewriter truly when I let myself be compelled by what is there, and think accordingly. When I think thus under the compulsion of the facts I am rational, but I am irrational/

12. T.p.p.xvi-xvii.

13. T.p.32.

irrational when I think that the table is a car and the typewriter is a steering-wheel".¹⁴ Torrance, in these examples, is referring to a detachment from reality, specifically in concentration upon the subject himself rather than the object, but what he does not mean is the total detachment from reality in which there is nothing at all of the objective, but rather only the situation where there is insufficient of the objective to be satisfactory. He talks of "bloated selfhood", and "undue emphasis",¹⁵ rather than of something totally subjective with no objective relation at all. Thus Torrance is outlining something of what is meant by sense two of "irrational" in which there is a departure from the norm and ideal, though I have already tried to show that Torrance's account of this departure does not solve the problem as he requires it to be solved.¹⁶ Nevertheless, his account does offer another example of the distinction between senses one and two of "irrational", in which Torrance's picture of irrationality is that of sense two, with Torrance's own view that man can be corrected and the problem solved by the controlling of subjectivity. In contrast, sense one of "irrationality" would seem to be incurable along the lines of Torrance's approach, and it is this realm of insanity which is pointed to. Torrance only suggests that man is too self-centred, not that he is totally insane. One may argue and gesticulate towards the truth with the self-centred person, but one is wasting one's time in that direction with the insane.

Not/

14. S.p.198.

15. T.p.xvi.

16. See above, Chapter Three, p.p.195

Not all agree, however, that one need dismiss anyone as insane and we have already discussed one attempt to reduce the sense one of "irrational" in the examination of Freudian theory and what exactly it has to show about irrational behaviour. The argument may be summed up in that context by reference to P. Alexander's article on "Rational Behaviour and Psychoanalytic Explanation", where he expresses the point as follows:- "If we say that our irrational behaviour has been shown to be 'really rational' we allow 'rational' to be used only in contrast to 'non-rational'. It is not very instructive merely to distinguish our faintings and unavoidable accidents from all the rest of our behaviour, and to make no further distinctions. In making moral judgements, ascribing responsibility, assessing intelligence, cleverness, reliability and a host of other activities it is essential to make finer distinctions. Moreover, the problems in which psychoanalysis originated depend upon this distinction. The meaning of 'rational' in such contexts involves the contrast with both 'irrational' and 'non-rational'. If this is so, to assert that our irrational behaviour has been shown to be rational is to use 'rational' in an unfamiliar and new sense while pretending to use it in the familiar sense, for it leaves us no behaviour which can be said to be, either consciously or unconsciously, irrational."¹⁷ If, as has been shown, the Freudian theory is unsuccessful if it is claiming to make "rational" what is "irrational" because of a subtle yet real shift in the meaning of "rational" then there is totally irrational action as in sense one, where no amount of causal explanation can make any difference, but/

17. P. Alexander "Rational Behaviour and Psychoanalytic Explanation", p.335.

but rather reinforce our attitude of withdrawal of ordinary human and personal status and rights, in favour of some form of treatment or internment, rather than argument and reasoning which would still be appropriate to behaviour and beliefs in sense two of "irrational".

However, even if Freudian theory does not, except by its shortcomings cast light on irrational behaviour, there is still a movement which claims to uphold irrationalism. This tends to be associated in the minds of philosophers with religious theorists or apologists, though, it is just as relevant in the moral and political realm. What sense then can be made of thoroughgoing irrationalism as a doctrine?

That there is a doctrine of irrationalism is testified to by Bambrough, as he examines some of the conflicting views in theology. He states that, "Neither piety nor unbelief could ever give good grounds for the irrationalism which infects so many partisans of all parties in so many theological disputes. Neither in theology nor anywhere else is there any question which is, in the parrot-phrase of the irrationalist, 'beyond argument'. Wherever there is a question there is scope for reasoning; wherever there is a dispute, there is something to be said that is relevant to the termination of that dispute. There is always scope for argument wherever there is disagreement."¹⁸ What Bambrough is saying of the irrationalist philosophy is that it entails the setting of a limit to argument and the processes of reasoning. In other words, it says that this is something which reason cannot grasp, which argument cannot prove and, which therefore, must be achieved accepted/

18. R. Bambrough, Reason, Truth and God, p.p.46-7

accepted, believed, or adopted by some other means. H.A. Hodges, however, wishes to clarify still further what is meant. Hodges' concern is in the query he makes, "When people raise the bogey of 'irrationalism' or a 'flight from reason', what do they mean by 'reason' and why should we be so eager to safeguard it?"¹⁹ Hodges goes on to attempt to answer his own question.

He asks what "irrationalism" means, and whether what is being suggested is that discursive reasoning needs to be replaced by something like "intuition", "feeling", or something similar. Hodges maintains that this is not the case for he holds that reasoning is not a primary source of truth, because to reason at all requires the acceptance of facts and principles. He holds therefore that "will" is prior to reason and makes it possible. To be "irrational" on Hodges' terms is to fail to take account of this. But Hodges' is still in danger of failing to come to grips with the threat of "irrationalism", as it exists in at least the minds of Bambrough and Bartley. However, he also asks whether "irrationalism" means rather that anyone can believe whatever he likes or chooses, and that all beliefs are accordingly "arbitrary". This is analysed into two parts. Hodges argues that people cannot think what they like simply by choice. The possibilities of choice in this area are very limited, and particularly so with reference to consistency on the part of any person. Yet the fact remains that people do make different choices, so Hodges asks whether or not there are criteria/

19. H. Hodges, "Languages, Standpoints, and Attitudes", Riddell Memorial Lecture, 1953, p.61.

criteria by which to judge the correctness or otherwise of these choices. He states that unless there is a conception of "reasonable" which can make some claim to general acceptance, there can be no reasoned judgement on attitudes, standpoints and beliefs, no normative discussion of them, and metaphysics thus reduces to type-psychology.

"Irrationalism" is then, not merely a putting a stop to argument by the claim that at such and such a point reason and argument are of no use, but seems also to involve the threat of arbitrariness in opinions.²⁰ The case for "irrationalism" is usually presented, like the case for moral relativism, by first stressing the extent of the variety and the degree of difference in opinions which men actually hold, and then showing that no argument is sufficient to change a man's views or to convince someone of the truth or falsity of an opinion. Thus reason and argument can have no part to play. But that is merely one form of the argument, for within the religious framework, the first premiss is rather the nature of the subject to hand. If one is dealing with the ineffable, the incomprehensible, the totally other, then there is no room and no role for the effable, comprehensible power of reasoning and argument. This is, of course, to overstate grossly the fideist view, but it typifies, in the last analysis, the problem as far as the rationalist critics are concerned./

20. Lecky makes the same point in The History of Rationalism, in his discussion of Montaigne. "Montaigne, looking with an impartial eye on the immense variety of opinions that were maintained with equal confidence by men of equal ability, and judging all subjects by a keen, worldly, and somewhat superficial common sense, arrived at the conclusion that it was hopeless seeking to ascertain what is true; that such a task transcended the limits of human power; and that it was the part of a wise man to remain poised with an indifferent mind between opposing sects." Vol. II, p.p.57-8.

concerned. Bartley's critique of fideism was based on the grounds that the "tu quoque" provided a "rational excuse" for irrationalism".²¹ He views his success as follows "My argument does not force anyone to be a rationalist; it only destroys the rational or logical excuse for being an irrationalist".²² This is certainly the cause for unease on the part of rationalistic critics: the logical presentation of the irrationalist view. As has been shown, Bartley's account is not in itself sufficient to deal with the problem, but before attempting to do that, it must be inquired how this account of "irrationalism" can be related to the different senses of "rational" and "irrational".

When Bambrough presents the picture of "irrationalism", he is referring to sense one of "irrational", while Hodges seems nearer to sense two. To offer a philosophy in sense one of "irrationalism" is to attempt to say that there is no scope for reasoning at all. Argument, discussion, and reasoning in all and every form are inappropriate because they are useless. This kind of irrationalist if there be such, is attempting to abandon the practice of argument in itself, perhaps because he regards reason's powers as inadequate to the problem. Of course, there is a further problem for the irrationalist as was seen in the Bartley chapter. The question arises whether or not the irrationalist can even express his irrationalism without contradicting himself by rationally expressing the irrational.²³ So it would seem that the irrationalist in sense one is not so much the person who eschews reason but/

21. See above, Chapter Two, p.p. 24

22. Q.p. 326.

23. See above, Chapter Two, p.p. 43

but one who cannot even use language and be irrational in sense one. If a person is unable to recognise the implicit reasoning in language, then the epithet of "rational" may be withdrawn from him. Sense two of "irrationalism" is rather in relation to the fideistic claim that here is something special which is beyond or above argument. This is not at all to seek to abandon argument either in every case or even in this particular case, but rather to state that when argument and the powers of reasoning are confronted by this case, they cannot hope to solve it. It seems that there are two very different types of problem involved. Sense one of "rationalism" is an attempt to undermine the whole process of argument and reasoning and to replace it in toto. Collingwood had something of this in mind in offering his "raison d'etre" for the "Essay on Metaphysics". "Prominent among these is the conviction on the part of educated persons, including both the class of professional thinkers and the class of persons who, though not thinkers by vocation, are qualified by training and inclination to understand what the thinkers by vocation are doing, that truth is supremely worth pursuing and that scientific thinking must at all costs go on. If this conviction holds, the epidemic of irrationalism will be stayed. But if educated persons commit themselves to the view that truth is not worth pursuing and this is what they do commit themselves to, knowingly or unknowingly, if they decide that metaphysics is impossible, they will surrender their faith in science, and thus remove what may prove the only serious obstacle to the overthrow of European civilisation."²⁴ It is this abandonment of the "pursuit/

24. R.G. Collingwood, Essay on Metaphysics, p.234

"pursuit of truth" or the belief in argument and reasoning, that is the hallmark of "irrationalism" in sense one.

In contrast, "irrationalism" in sense two, is not motivated by the desire to set aside the normal processes of reasoning but rather to abandon argument at a particular point in a particular instance. "Irrationalism" in sense one puts its position beyond argument from the very start, while "irrationalism" in sense two seeks to put its position beyond argument only at the point at which argument is of no further avail, because of the nature of the subject-matter under question. What is important here is whether or not the claim for special privilege can be made good for this particular subject-matter over and against the usual processes of reason. The "irrationalist" in sense two, rather than set aside all forms of reasoning, would offer a new sort of account of what form of reasoning would be appropriate, though this would be different in nature from the normally accepted modes of reasoning. The type of situation where one might label the other as "irrationalist" in sense two is seen in the common occurrence of two different interpretations, e.g., "To one who is a christian, his own interpretations are bound to seem the natural and obvious ones, and the others will appear forced and unreasonable; while to one who is not a christian the reverse will appear to be the case. For this reason, argument between adherents of such conflicting systems is usually a mere beating of the air. Each participant remains at the end where he was at the beginning, only marvelling at the unreasonableness of his opponent".²⁵

Perhaps/

25. H. Hodges, ibid p.p.57-8

Perhaps the best example of the difference between senses one and two of "irrationalism" may be seen from Gardiner's article on "Irrationalism".²⁶ "It might be said for instance, that to describe a writer as an irrationalist is to speak of him as denying the authority of reason. But how is the notion of 'reason' itself to be understood and in what respects is its authority supposed to be flouted? It would scarcely be sufficient to reply that denial of reason consists in illogicality or confusion of thought, or that it manifests itself in a tendency to arrive at unaccepted conclusions; for this could apply to the work of many thinkers to whom the label 'irrationalist' is clearly inapplicable.... It is only insofar as he maintains some specific doctrine concerning such things as the status and role of reason, or the relevance of rational standards within various domains of experience or inquiry that he can be called an irrationalist Attention is focused not on an unwitting failure to conform to norms of generally recognised validity, but on the explicit repudiation, or putting into question of such norms in the light of certain considerations or in relation to certain contexts."²⁷ Where Gardiner needs to go further is in the realisation that opponents do term as "irrational" those whose views are marked by illogicality, confusion of thought and unacceptable claims, and also that "irrational" in sense one is not so much the explicit repudiation of the norms only in regard to certain contexts, but in regard to every and all situations.

Given/

26. Gardiner, "Irrationalism" Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Vol.4.p.213.

27. Gardiner, ibid, p.213.

Given that one is confronted with two different senses of "irrationalism" what sense can be made of them in and of themselves, and what approach may be adopted to deal with them? Bartley holds that it is still possible to be an "irrationalist" in sense one, as is seen, where he states, "Anyone who wishes or who is personally able to do so, may remain an irrationalist. And it may be difficult indeed to argue with any such person, for he will have abandoned argument. No one, for instance, can expect to convince a neurotic that he is ill if he cannot or will not accept the diagnosis. A person who fervently believes that one is equal to zero need never admit that two and two equal four. One cannot easily convince a man like Hitler that murder is wrong. And one hardly knows where to begin arguing with a person like the Anglican Canon who announced in 1958 that mental patients are not ill but are really possessed by evil spirits."²⁸

Bartley is wrong on two counts. The first is that he has failed to distinguish between "irrational" in senses one and two, with reference to the different kinds of cases he offers. The contention is that the neurotic, the believer in one's equality with zero, and Hitler and those like him are "irrational" in sense one; the sense in which it would be wished to withdraw from them the rights to which they are entitled as human beings, because of their inability to relate properly to the world as a whole, and to the processes of reasoning in particular. There is no place for argument with them. But the Anglican clergyman is not "irrational" in the same way but in sense two. Bartley is surely in error when he suggests that we do not know where to begin argument with the Canon. One would ask the canon in what way being ill differed from being possessed/

28. Q.p.p.326-7.

possessed by evil spirits. Why he believed that in mental illness it was evil spirits who were involved? One could imagine tests of exorcism. Laying on of hands, and the evaluation of the evidence in favour of his view both historically and anthropologically, as well as from experiential work in specific instances. At the end of all this, of course, neither the canon nor his opponent might have succeeded in convincing the other, but they would agree hopefully, that there was at least scope for presenting the differences of view and for the description of the views, and perhaps even for testing the view for final confirmation or disconfirmation. But they do at least know how to begin the argument, if they do not know necessarily how to conclude it. But Bartley's other error is more relevant to sense one of "irrational". It is not so much that it is "difficult" to argue with an upholder of "irrationalism" in sense one; rather it is impossible. This is why it is so important to stress the difference with the case of the canon, where argument is appropriate, and obvious, rather than the situation where there is nothing that can be said.

"Persistence in contradiction is the death of rational discussion and investigation".²⁹ A. MacIntyre makes a similar point that, "The difficulty with all irrationalism is that the abandonment of the criterion of rationality leaves us defenceless before the most morally outrageous appeals to emotion".³⁰

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29. P. Nidditch, "The Intellectual Virtues", Inaugural Lecture, University of Sheffield, 1970.

30. A. MacIntyre, "Myth", Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Vol.5, p.437.

The "irrationalist" in sense one is not even able to state his position without contradiction. One cannot rationally give an account of one's irrationality, without in some sense suggesting that irrationality is itself rational. The parallel problem is the attempt by logic to prove that logic is inappropriate. There can be no rational mode of presentation of the thesis of irrationalism in sense one without the very crisis of integrity, which Bartley describes as the mark of the rationalist. The irrationalist cannot use language, state in statements, make propositions, move from premiss to conclusion without contradicting the very position he seeks to uphold. In what sense can he or we even form the notion of "upholding his "irrationalism"? The "irrationalist" in sense one, is unable to communicate his irrationalism and its nature to anyone else especially in the form of persuasion or argument without failing to be properly irrational. The irrationalist must be ultimately reduced to silence or gibberish. Such an irrationalist is not to be argued with, for he cannot be, rather he is to be treated or locked up.

In contrast with the failure of the doctrine of "irrationalism" in sense one, there is the example of the Anglican canon, who, while not on the same par as the neurotic, most certainly has strange views for twentieth century man, as is proved by Bartley's faulty use of him as an example. The Anglican canon offers an example of "irrationalism" in sense two. Certainly he appears to be departing from the generally accepted norms of reasoning and argument. His view is out of step with that of modern man, but it is not the case that he can say nothing in defence or support of his view. There is a whole host of manoeuvres open/

open to the canon in seeking to prove his thesis as to the role of evil spirits, and it may well be that at the end of such manoeuvres, he will come to say that reason can take you no further here, but one requires faith, or one merely intuits, or one leaps. There is room within his position for argument, the use of critical techniques,³¹ and the description and proclamation of his view. There may be a limitation set on the power of reasoning and the place of argument in such presentation, but there is no denial of its, at least limited efficacy in other areas, and even in this particular context. The case in mind would be for example, "There is no ground for objecting to solving a problem by non-rational methods if no others are available, and if some choice has to be made....."³²

If it has been established that there are two different senses of "irrational" and that one of these refers to our basic capacity to be considered a person, while the other is related to particular contexts, and that one cannot argue without total contradiction for the position of "irrationalism" in sense one, while one may uphold "irrationalism" in sense two, one is still left with the problem of how to deal with such views. Such dealing cannot be separated from a clear picture of "rational" in sense two, and so it is necessary in time to offer an account of what is involved in rational discussion and argument, particularly between those who uphold radically differing views, and therefore, what is involved in the changing of such views, the justification of opinions, and the effect that attack and defence of our views ought to have and does have.

31. See above, Chapter Two, p.p.52

32. T. Penelhum, Religion and Rationality, p.214.

3. Persons, Beliefs and Theories

An attempt has been made to derive a basic distinction between two senses of "rational" and "irrational", to clarify what is involved in ascriptions of rationality or irrationality to a particular person or belief, and accordingly, how such a person, or belief ought to be approached. W. Kneale expresses the distinction with reference to the English language, when he states in "Objectivity in Morals", "For when in English we say that a man is reasonable, we mean not only that he is capable of reasoning, but also that he is willing to consider reasons for modifying his own preferences".¹ Sense one of "rationality" refers to the "capacity of reasoning", while sense two is related to the willingness "to consider reasons for modifying" one's own preferences". Having derived this distinction, it will be related to modern views as to the nature of reality, reason, intelligibility, and some of the limitations upon these features. These different areas will be examined in two spheres: the relation to persons, and the relation to beliefs, theories, opinions and views. The epithets "rational", "reasonable" and "reasoning" refer to both the personal nature of the individual and his actions, as well as to the specific content of his outlook, in other words, to his belief and opinions themselves.² To avoid confusion, these will be separated in order to clarify the relation of "rational" in senses one and two in turn to both.

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1. W. Kneale, "Objectivity in Morals", Sellars and Hospers (eds) Readings in Ethical Theory, p. 692
 2. Alexander attempts to make this distinction, or one very like it, with reference to rational beliefs and rational behaviour. "It may be rational or irrational to hold a given belief but given that I hold it, I may act rationally or irrationally on its basis. If I firmly believe, falsely and on insufficient evidence, that my neighbour is planning to poison me, that is irrational. But it is rational, given my firm belief, to avoid drinking tea in his house and to instruct my wife not to leave him alone in our kitchen", "Rational Behaviour and Psychoanalytic Explanation", p.328.

The term "rationality" is used with reference to persons in a variety of ways in modern literature. Some of these ways will be examined in relation to the emphasis on a person's capacities of reasoning, then attention turned to the relation of "rationality" to belief, and opinion, and finally in this section, we will attend to the emphasis on the humanity involved in the rational person in relation to, particularly, a moral outlook.

J. Bennett envisages the problem of clarifying what rationality is with reference to the belief that humans are rational.³ He links this initially with the difference between the level of intellectual ability of humans and that of animals, or as he calls them, "other terrestrial creatures". He states that, "It is commonly believed that this difference is in some important way one of kind rather than of degree; that between a genius and a stupid man there is a smooth slide while between a stupid man and an ape there is a sharp drop, not just in the sense that there are no creatures intellectually half-way between apes and stupid men, but in the sense that there could not be such creatures".⁴ On his own admission, he is not at pains to draw all the nature of rationality but is concentrating on those features which clearly separate man from animals. Bennett says, "I merely restrict my attention to the criteria which underlie our everyday belief that human beings indulge in reasoning processes like honey-bees and earthworms do not, or - what may be the same belief - that humans are rational while honey-bees and earthworms are not. These criteria are plainly behavioural in nature, and involve no/

3. J. Bennett, Rationality.

4. Bennett, ibid, p.p.4-6

no Cartesian speculations about private mental states. Even where the notion of privacy seems least problematical, namely in the case of oneself, one's claim to be rational or to have thought - processes is in the last resort answerable to behavioural criteria".⁵

Bennett's method is to imagine that one particular example of "lower" life becomes rational and to inquire what it is that allows us to bridge the gap between man and creature. He describes this as follows, "My assumption here and throughout the present work is that there could be rational bees, or little buzzing animals whose use of a basically apian repertoire of physical movements compelled us to regard them as rational; and I wish to know what we are saying when we deny that actual honey-bees are of this kind".⁶ He therefore seeks to analyse "bees-talk" in particular in the phenomenon of bee-dances to inquire at what point we would reckon this form of communication, given that it is a form of communication, to be the result of rational creatures. The conclusions of this analysis come to rest on the capacity to express dated and universal judgements. Why these are important for rationality is seen when he writes "This is what generalising and talking about the past have in common: they are both departures from that which is present and particular. This common feature is what links them with rationality. The idea of rationality is that of the ability, given certain present and particular data, to unite or relate them with other data in certain appropriate ways. This is the Kantian idea of concepts as/

5. Bennett, ibid., p.p.10-11.

6. Bennett, ibid., p.11.

as unifiers, binders-together, creators of a multum in parvo. For there to be a "multum" we must at one time intellectually possess more particular data than are present to one at that time, and for it to be "in parvo" one must have rules or universal statements under which the particular data of which one is possessed can be subsumed. Thus: dated judgements and universal judgements".⁷ To have any chance of satisfying the conditions for rationality, Bennett felt that it was necessary to concentrate the linguistic context for "only linguistic behaviour can be appropriate or inappropriate to that which is not both particular and present".⁸

Bennett's point is that to possess a language is not in itself sufficient for rationality. That is merely the necessary ground for rationality. Rather, as a result of analysis of bee-language, Bennett concludes that, "The expression of dated and universal judgement is both necessary and sufficient for rationality"⁹

Bennett's claim that the central notion of rationality is bound up with a particular intellectual capacity, that of the ability to express dated and universal judgements, may be seen as relating to sense of "rationality". His concern is to differentiate absolutely between man and other creatures in relation to intellectual capacity and to examine, what he holds to be, the correct belief that man is superior. This is tantamount to stating that anything or anyone who fails to achieve this standard of expression of dated and universal judgements and statements is unable to be human, i.e. is not rational. Such a failure of the capacity/

7. Bennett, ibid, p.85

8. Bennett, ibid, p.p.86-7

9. Bennett, ibid, p.94

capacity to make universal and dated judgement relates to the inability to go beyond one's present experience in either relating it to past experiences or in using it to assist in future experiences. This is exactly the type of dislocation which is common among the mentally-ill in their failure to relate properly to their time sequence of events and experiences, and likewise their failure to put each particular experience in an appropriate context. But Bennett's point is simply relevant to sense one of "rationality", and not therefore useful in casting light upon the more problematic sense two of "rational". Bennett himself helps make this distinction of relevance for it is Bennett who argues that we can allow rationality for bees and not the bees themselves who so argue. There are tried and tested means of discovering whether or not a person is insane and certainly part and parcel of that is the way that they cope with universal and dated judgements, but the problem is more severe when we are confronted by someone who has these capacities, but is propounding a view which is to the majority of people "nonsense", or which is apparently based on what is not normally accounted as evidence; yet this same person argues for and behaves in light of their belief. When their rationality is questioned it is rather in sense two that such a questioning is meant to be understood.

Torrance's account of rationality, as has already been outlined, is that, "To be rational, therefore, means to behave not in terms of our own nature, but in terms of our knowledge of the world outside of us, of things and persons, in accordance with their own natures".¹⁰ This is/

10. MM.p.232; T.p.p.106-7.

is otherwise expressed as the need to learn to distinguish what we know from our subjective states and conditions. "This is one way to state the basic scientific principle of objectivity, but it is only an extension of our fundamental mode of rationality. We are rational when we act in accordance with the nature of the object".¹¹ This objectivity means that "You know something only in accordance with its nature, and you develop your knowledge of it as you allow its nature to prescribe for you the mode of rationality appropriate to it. That is the kind of objectivity we adopt in all rational behaviour whatsoever."¹²

There has already been examination of Torrance's view but what is seen in his description of the personal aspect of rationality, that is our ability to behave in terms of other things apart from ourselves according to their nature, is that this doctrine apparently does not fit into the classification of "rational" in two senses. Yet what Torrance is saying, is, on my view, obscured by the failure to make just the distinction I attempt to outline, for Torrance talks freely of irrationality,¹³ bloated subjectivity,¹⁴ autism,¹⁵ and the need for spiritual psychiatry.¹⁶ The force of these notions rests on the confusion between senses one and two of "rational", for when Torrance complains of the faults of modern theology he does not literally mean to suggest that his fellow-theologians, who disagree with him, are insane, though it must be noted, that this is the implication at least in the spiritual realm on a literal interpretation./

11. S.p.p.115-6.

12. S.p.p.52-3,114; MM.p.232.

13. MM.p.p.69,231,270-1; S.p.p.vii,4-5,44,185.

14. S.p.p.vii-viii.

15. MM.p.p.231,259; S.p.p.42,68.

16. R.C.p.viii, footnote.

interpretation. His claim is surely rather that they are guilty of improper thinking and that the nature of this improper thinking is the failure to distinguish adequately the subjective from the objective factors. This is, as it were the key to the whole matter. It is not that they fail completely to distinguish any objective factors from the host of subjective impressions to the extent of "living in a world of their own" but, in Torrance's eyes, they do not have the proper balance between the two aspects of the subjective and the objective, and this imbalance tends to be slanted towards a concentration upon the subjective nature of knowledge, thus belittling the objective aspect of all knowing. It is in sense two of "rational" and "irrational" that Torrance is stressing the importance of being true to the nature of the object, and not in sense one, though this is the prima facie reading from the words themselves.

Bartley's view of rationality as it relates to persons has already as with Torrance's view, been outlined. While Bennett was concerned to stress the crucial nature of a particular linguistic capacity, and Torrance to stress the need for a proper relation of subjectivity and objectivity, Bartley, as it were, provides one of the possible means for the exercise of such a proper relation by the use of critical techniques. His initial definition of "rationalism" was that, "the term may also be used to refer, in the most general way, to the tradition whose members are dedicated to the task of trying to learn more about the world through the practice of critical argument."^{16A} The problem as Bartley/

16A. See above p.44.

Bartley sees it, is expressed by Kekes:- "Can rationalism be defended in a rational way?".¹⁷ Bartley analyses this problem into the logical limits of rationality, and analyses the rationalist crisis of integrity today in relation to the inability to justify the adoption of rationalism in itself.

Bartley's problem of being rational about one's rationalism and his psychological description of the crisis of integrity derived what impact it has because of a slide between the two senses of "rational". To demand that one be rational about one's rationalism is parallel to the demand to be logical about one's logic, and moral about one's morality. One cannot dismiss logic by means of logical procedures, nor can one rationally argue for the replacement of rationality altogether.¹⁸ What these refer to is sense one of "rational", that in which it is a basic feature of mankind, one part of that by which man is defined as man. One is confronted with the dilemma of what else one can do but be logical, moral, or rational? We are logical, rational, and moral, and these in some basic human sense, in as much as we do human things, that is to say, in that we reason things out, relate effectively to the world, and are concerned about other people. To imagine that we can be different is a very different thing from the attempt to use any of these basic traits to disprove themselves. Winch sums up the point./

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17. J. Kekes, "Watkins on Rationalism", Philosophy, Vol. XLVI, No. 175, p. 52
S. Richmond, "Can a Rationalist be Rational about His Rationalism?", Philosophy, Vol. XLVI, No. 175, "A rationalist can only be inconsistent if he is not rational about what can logically be rational", p. 54.
18. See above Chapter Two, p.p. 70

point. "Rationality is not just a concept in a language like any other; it is this too, for like any other concept it must be circumscribed by an established use: a use, that is, established in the language..... It is a concept necessary to the existence of any language: to say of a society that it has a language is also to say that it has a concept of rationality.....Where there is language it must make a difference what is said and this is only possible where the saying of one thing rules out, on pain of failure to communicate, the saying of something else."¹⁹ This level of rationality is, of course, a very basic one, and refers to "rational" in sense one.

But at the same time Bartley is suggesting that we do experience what appears to be a choosing of rational procedures, and that this involves crises of integrity and identity. And he is correct, but only with reference to "rational" in sense two. When there is talk of choosing a standard of rationality, we are referring to the problem of differing standards and viewpoints, and the fact that different people, or more clearly, groups of people, have at different times adopted not only different, but contradictory standards of what is rational, and descriptions of rational behaviour. This is true, but when we draw attention to this phenomenon we are not claiming that one group is insane while the other perfectly normal, but rather seeking to discover how to approach rationality within a particular context. This is sense two of "rational" which is self-ascriptive and relates to discussion and/

19. P. Winch, "Understanding a Primitive Society". B. Wilson (ed.) Rationality, p.99

and argument on the basis of different views.²⁰ Bartley fails to separate these two senses and therefore makes capital out of the confusion, to make the problem seem far worse and more severe than in reality it is. He relates the choice of rationality to authority and the problem is then why we should adopt the authority of reason over and against other claims to authority. Bartley's cure is that of Comprehensively Critical Rationalism. "A comprehensively critical rationalist, like other men, holds countless unexamined presuppositions and assumptions, many of which may be false. His rationality consists in his willingness to submit these to critical consideration when he discovers them or when they are pointed out to him. When one belief is subjected to criticism, many others have to be taken for granted - including those with which the criticism is being carried out. The latter are used as the basis of criticism, not because they are themselves justified or beyond criticism, but because they are unproblematical at present: we possess no criticism of them. For the time being these are, in that sense alone, beyond criticism. And one belief that is nearly always taken for granted when one or another belief is being criticised is the belief in criticism itself".²¹ What is involved in this criticism is, of course, an attempt at falsification, but Bartley's thesis is in close relation to Popper's doctrine, which is even more explicit./

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20. R.C. Franklin makes a similar point in "Can Philosophers Reach the Truth"? Inaugural Lecture, University of New England, 1968, p.8. "What philosophers have in common is that they are prepared to stand or fall by the soundness of the arguments they produce. A philosopher may indeed employ his reason to ask what the limits of reason are, and may even, in religious contexts, claim like Kant¹ that he has to 'destroy knowledge' in order to make room for faith'. But he still aims at a rational destruction of knowledge: or, to use a less suicidal metaphor, at a rational explanation of the bounds of human reason". (1. Critique of Pure Reason, B.xxx.)
21. R.C. p.p.151-2; K. Popper, "Back to the Pre-Socratics", Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Vol. LIX, 1958-9, p.p.1-24.

explicit. Popper suggests, "assume that we have deliberately made it our task to live in this unknown world of ours: to adjust ourselves to it as well as we can;....and to explain it, if possible (we need not assume that it is) and as far as possible, with help of laws and explanatory theories. If we have made this our task, then there is no more rational procedure than the method of ... conjecture and refutation: of boldly proposing theories; of trying our best to show that these are erroneous, and of accepting them tentatively if our critical efforts are unsuccessful".²²

The view of rationality is in essence aligned with a view of what it is to be scientific. This involves a belief in oneself and one's capacity to reason correctly, to be able to disprove something, and to be able to act accordingly and constantly correct what one believes and the way that one thinks. I have already examined some of the questions that this raises in detail. But the general philosophy behind the position is worth drawing attention to. J. Agassi, in a discussion of whether religion can go beyond reason, isolates the attitude as follows: "It is this attitude which we call variously reason, science, humanistic agnosticism, mature self-reliance, rational responsibility. This attitude embodies a certain contempt towards those who rely on people whom they cannot or would not question (priests or party leaders) or on ideas they cannot or would not present and examine critically (the catechism or party-line).

Is/

22. K. Popper, Conjecture and Refutation, p.51

Is this self-reliance rationality? Or is it empirical science?
It is hard to tell."²³

Bartley' and Popper's concern is not with "rational" in sense one, but with sense two. They are more than aware of the problem of divergent beliefs and opinions and are offering one particular mode of dealing with the problem by criticism. It was shown that this runs into major problems, though it does offer interesting insight into the crucial role which criticism must play in relation to sense two of "rational", and the approach that must follow in discussion and argument between those who are concerned with a particular belief either as believers or doubters. In this section a development has been shown in theories of rationality a propos persons from a general linguistic capacity to a means of dealing with beliefs and a style of argument. An outline has been given of the relation of the basic senses of rationality as they relate to these views, but there are also certain modern views derived mostly from sociology and perhaps psychology, which need to be taken account of. J. Rawls gives a definition of "rational" which will allow the correction of the views exemplified by I. Jarvie and P. Winch. Rawls writes that, "These persons are rational: They know their own interests more or less accurately; they are capable of tracing out the likely consequences of adopting one practice rather than another; they are capable of adhering to a course of action once they have/

23. J. Agassi, "Can Religion Go Beyond Reason?" Zygon, Vol.4., No.2., 1969, p.133.

have decided upon it; they can resist present temptations and the enticements of immediate gain...."²⁴ What Jarvie takes as the crucial factor in this kind of view of a rational person is expressed as follows: "We all accept that rational action is action directed to an end. Objectively speaking, however, we can say that some actions are more likely to realize their end than are others. Thus we might say that, given the knowledge and belief of the action, he acts the more rationally the better suited, from an objective point of view, are his means to the realization of his aims."²⁵ He puts his own position even more directly in a parenthesis: "For my part I accept the idea of goal-directedness as the (my emphasis) criteria of rationality".²⁶

Jarvie's view begins to slide over into P. Winch's when in discussing magic with Agassi, they state, "By definition, a rational action is one based on - against other factors - the action's goals or aims, his present knowledge and beliefs."²⁷ For what is meant by talking of the crucial part of goal-direction in relation to rationality needs to be made more explicit by reference to the process of determining whether or not an action is goal-directed and why this is important. As Lukes suggests, "the fundamental meaning of rationality is essentially is essentially linked to the phenomenon of systematic, explicit reasoning"²⁸ and/

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24. J. Rawls, "Justice as Fairness". Philosophical Review, LXVII, 1958 p.170.
 25. I. Jarvie, "Explaining Cargo Cults", B. Wilson (ed.) Rationality, p.59
 26. Jarvie, ibid, p.p.51-2; S. Lukes, "Some Problems of Rationality", B. Wilson(ed.) p.208; P. Alexander, "Rational Behaviour and Psychoanalytic Explanation", p.p.330-1.
 27. Jarvie and Agassi, "The Problem of the Rationality of Magic", B. Wilson (ed.) Rationality, p.179
 28. Lukes ibid, p.197 footnote.

and this is exactly the theme which Peter Winch takes up in linking the aim of an action or belief with the context of that action. "The forms in which rationality expresses itself in the culture of a human society cannot be elucidated simply in terms of the logical coherence of the rules according to which activities are carried out in that society. For, as we have seen, there comes a point where we are not even in a position to determine what is and what is not coherent in such a context of rules, without raising questions about the point which following those rules has in the society".²⁹

From these two sociological positions we see two further emphases in modern theory of rationality: that of goal directedness in behaviour and that of context-dependent explanation. These two criteria are subject to confusion because both are on the same sort of sliding scale which has been shown in the discussion of the two senses of "irrational". If confronted with behaviour which is directed to no goal at all - even in the most extended sense of "goal" and therefore one is unable to derive any explanation whether within a small context or in the broadest terms, one is dealing with action in relation to sense one of "rational" /"irrational", where the withdrawal of rights and privileges of humans is concerned. But when confronted with behaviour which follows peculiar directions and is explicable only by reference to irregular and peculiar beliefs, one is still entitled to question the "rationality" of such actions and those who indulge in it. But if they offer explanation and argument or try to, this is not confrontation by insane people, but rather/

29. P. Winch, "Understanding a Primitive Society", p.p.93-4; Lukes, ibid, p.p. 200-6, Both in B. Wilson (ed.) Rationality.

rather with the problem of coping with sense two of "rational", and that method is still to be fully delineated.

I have shown the relevance of our distinction of the two senses of "rational" with reference to the modern views of "rationality" as they refer particularly to persons, and it has been seen that in each case the distinction clarifies at what level the writer is operating, and therefore, how to understand the implications of the work. The relation of "rational" to belief is now examined with the awareness that there is not an absolute gap between these aspects of personal behaviour and beliefs. One also needs to be aware of the need for clarity in writing and the way in which the shift from the ascription of "rational" to people from "belief" has been made.

When there is the application of the epithet "rational" to a person it usually relates to their behaviour and actions. When this is the case it is because the action or behaviour is obviously appropriate, or, to express it slightly differently, it is goal-directed. By this is meant that any action or piece of behaviour can be seen to fit into a pattern which is discernible and which has some ultimate aim which is acceptable in the sense that the point of such a goal and action towards it may be appreciated, if not necessarily endorsed for oneself. A person is "rational" then if he acts in a "rational" or appropriate, or goal-directed fashion. But a person is also "rational" if his beliefs are "rational" ones. The application of "rational" to particular beliefs seems to rest on whether or not the belief satisfies a standard of reasonableness, whether it is based on good evidence, whether it is widely held, based on common sense, on facts, or on scientific grounds.

Both/

Both these general areas of belief and action are, of course, closely related to persons and what they do, but they are also bound together in relation to rationality by the fact that both require justification if they are to be called "rational". When an action or belief is called "rational", then it is possible to give an account of, on the one hand, the goal to which the action is directed and how this action will achieve that goal, and on the other hand, the reasons for a belief, its basis, the evidence for, and the difference it makes when believed. These procedures are relevant to sense two of "rational" in particular and it is within a particular context that most justification will take place by reference to other features of the situation. Thus behaviour and action are linked together by the epithet "rational", by their reference to justification to show wither the goal-directed nature of the action, or the evidence and ground for a belief.

This justification at level two, relates to what is generally accepted and therefore, the necessity of making a case for any departure from such a norm. This analysis of justification will recur in the examination of the various limits of rationality.³⁰ But it may also be noted that in the same way as "rational" may be applied to beliefs, actions, and persons according to the justification offered, so "irrational" may be applied by the failure to offer adequate justification. There will be flexibility as to what constitutes "adequacy", but this will depend on the context. This will only slide into sense one of "irrational", when there is the total disregarding of all justification by/

30. See Chapter Four, Section Two, "The Situational Limits".

by the failure to discern the necessity for such justification, and the eschewing of goals, aims, evidence, and all that is involved in justification.

In light of the relevance of the distinction between the senses of "rational" and "irrational" with reference to rationality in relation to persons and beliefs, there is one further aspect of personal quality to be considered in the ascription of "rationality". When Bennett's view of man's separation from animals was earlier outlined, the stress was on the linguistic aspects,³¹ but there is also an evaluative flavour to much writing concerning rationality in moral philosophy, which is again linked to the separation of man from animal. Man is called a rational animal in contradistinction from animals qua animals, who are not rational. In light of modern discoveries of the linguistic capacities of dolphins and such like, the emphasis on man's rationality is seen not so much in terms of linguistics or even reasoning, but in terms of other human qualities. This is true more especially when one considers the rationality of computers, and machines in general. On the basis of reasoning capacity these are often far superior to man in the exercising of such inductive, or deductive powers regardless of whether or not they require to be first programmed. But what is still a very good reason for the separation of man from computers, as well as man from animals, is man's love of justice, and his moral belief that disputes ought to be settled by argument rather than force. This is an evaluative judgement, and bespeaks a whole range of moral qualities which relate to man's humanity, such as sympathy, kindness, fair play, honesty/

31. See above p.p. 47ff.

honesty and all the truly human traits. This is coming near to the suggestion that rationality is somehow related to moral principles, and Warnock makes this very point. "If one asks of whom the law, of say France applies, one good way, I suppose of understanding the question would be to take it as asking who is liable under French law, or who can properly be required to comply with its provisions; similarly in asking to whom moral principles apply, the question may be who is liable to be morally 'judged' (in this case, of course, either by himself or others), or who can properly be required in some sense to comply with moral principles. The unsurprising answer to this question that was briefly suggested earlier was: rational beings".³² He suggests that it is correct to talk of rational beings rather than merely "people" or "human", to separate out the non-biological elements involved. The actual definition of rationality which Warnock seems to have in mind relates very closely to the sort of picture of rationality which has been drawn especially in relation to sense one of "rational". He defines what it is to be a rational being as follows, "... that one is able to achieve some understanding of the situations in which one may be placed, to envisage alternative courses of action in those situations, to grasp and weigh considerations for or against these alternatives, and to act accordingly".³³

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32. G. Warnock, The Object of Morality, p.143; A. Farrer, "A Starting-Point for the Philosophical Examination of Theological Belief", B. Mitchell (ed.) Faith and Logic; H. Feigl, "Validation and Vindication: An Analysis of the Nature and the Limits of Ethical Arguments", Sellars and Hospers (eds.) Readings in Ethical Theory.
33. Warnock, ibid, p.144

accordingly".³³ This is very near to the sense one of "rational" already outlined, and it shows again that when there is talk of applying "rational" to people, there is the need to separate the two levels of rationality, the one where there is no grasping of the situation whatever, and the other where there is a grasp, but it is peculiar and defended in an odd way. Warnock's point relates to the fact that talk of rationality in relation to persons and beliefs is tied to humanitarian ideas and moral qualities, as well as powers of reasoning. One might add to Warnock's account that justification is very much to the point here and again the relation of rationality to justification of action and beliefs in terms of the situation and aim - sense two of "rational" - may be seen.

Is it possible, however, to delineate any more clearly what this moral element expected of rational persons is? There are some general features which may be included in such an account, such as responsibility, respect, and love. When a young person comes of age, there is talk of him reaching an age of maturity and responsibility. In court, the debate often centres around whether or not responsibility was impaired. What is meant by responsibility seems to be in these senses the capacity to make a rational decision both in the sense that one is able to make up one's own mind and that there are no external restrictions upon that freedom. It means that anyone else of reasonable intelligence put in the same situation would act more or less in the same way. Respect seems/

33. Warnock, ibid., p.144

seems likewise to have some role to play, because when there is respect for a person part of this is the recognition that people have the right to make up their own minds, the capacity to do so, and the freedom to choose moral values of their own, even if they differ from one's own. There is a limiting case, where the moral values are so repugnant that they must be fought against, but this is just the point where the withdrawal of the epithet "rational" comes in. A normal person shows the right kind of respect as well as the ability to discern where respect is no longer due, and other action is necessary. These features of responsibility and respect are, it seems closely bound up with rationality, and show that morality and rationality both come together, when persons are described and their nature investigated.³⁴

There is a link between rationality and morality but it may be asked what the point of such a link is. Perhaps Hare suggests the sort of key that is looked for. "Sometimes instead of 'rational' we have other expressions, such as 'a morally developed or morally educated person' or 'a competent and impartial judge'."³⁵ It is in this sense that morality may be approached as a set of commands which all and every reasonable man accepts if he has all the necessary information. In other words, morality is entirely separate from all personal predilection, and is what would be accepted by any impartial spectator, who had the normal human capacities of intelligence and sympathy, and who was presented/

34. R.S. Downie, Roles and Values, p.p.56,149; See above Chapter Two, "The Value of the Alternative Theory".

35. R. Hare, Language of Morals, p.42.

presented with all the facts. The link then between morality and rationality and the common notion of "persons", is that of impartiality. This in turn may be linked with idea of justification in that if there is to be the abandonment of impartiality and in its place someone or something is to have a special place, then that exception must be justified, argued for, and its ground and evidence shown. These then are the two key ideas which may be seen from persons and beliefs in relation to rationality: specific moral qualities in rationality, and the notion of impartiality. Any departure from these standards require justification and argument by reference to the context, or by reference to the overall description of what a man is, appropriate to senses two and one respectively.

This distinctive moral flavour has been associated with traditional rationalism and its impact on society. Rationalism has stood for all that opposes irrationality, ignorance, prejudice, and inhumanity. It has been instrumental in the development of civilisation in recent centuries and this may be seen from the role that the values stated have played in intellectual, moral, and social advances and changes. The point is best stated by Lecky, as he heralds the triumph of rationalism. "Certainly, whatever opinion may be held concerning the general tendencies of the last three centuries, it is impossible to deny the extraordinary diffusion of a truthful spirit as manifested both in the increased intolerance of what is false and in the increased suspicion of what is false and in the increased suspicion of what is doubtful. This has been one of the general results of advancing civilisation to which all intellectual influences have converged, but the improvement may be said to/

to date more especially from the writings of the great secular philosophers of the seventeenth century. These philosophers destroyed the old modes of thought, not by the force of direct polemical discussion, but by introducing a method of inquiry about a standard of excellence incompatible with them. They taught men to esteem credulity discreditable, to wage an unsparing war against their prejudices, to distrust the verdicts of the part, and to analyse with cautious scrutiny the foundation of their belief. They taught them, above all, to cultivate that love of truth for its own sake which is perhaps the highest attribute of humanity; which alone can emancipate the mind from the countless influences that enthrall it, and guide the steps through the labyrinth of human systems; which shrinks from the sacrifice of no cherished doctrine, and of no ancient rite; and which, recognising in itself the reflex of the Deity, finds itself its own reward."³⁶

It seems that modern thought in ethics in particular lays some stress on the importance of the rational element in morality and particularly in relation to impartiality. One again may relate this along a sliding-scale between senses one and two of "rational" and "irrational". If there is a person who is incapable of the particular moral attributes mentioned, e.g. respect, responsibility, and love, then this person deserves to have withdrawn from him the right to be treated as a fully rational person, but that does not imply that he is morally irrelevant and can be treated in any way whatsoever. Likewise, the man/

36. W. Lecky, The History of Rationalism, Vol. II, p.p.401-2,375;
M. Polanyi, "On the Modern Mind", Encounter, May, 1965, Vol.XXI V,
No. 5, p.13.

man who is unable ever to be impartial in the sense that he is unable to separate at all the subjective features from the objective and fails to grasp the need to justify any differences in treatment of similar cases, because he fails to see that there is any difference; this same man must be understood in sense one of "rational" and "irrational". But when one turns to sense two of these terms, the reference is rather to particular cases of a breakdown in a specific instance of what are normally morally accepted and relevant factors, e.g. respect, responsibility, and love, but this is no total setting aside of these factors, nor is it done without some regard for the need of impartial judgement and that of attempting to justify, or at least, recognising the need for justification for such action and belief. It is rather the realm of basic moral and religious disagreement that sense two refers to in particular contexts.

This has been an examination of the relation of the sense of "rational" and "irrational" to the basic relation of rationality to persons and beliefs as found in modern literature on this theme. A wide variety and scope of author has been drawn on but this is not to take the place of original thought, but rather to show the relevance of much of modern discussion of rationality to the distinction being made and at the same time to bring unity to that discussion by showing how these differing accounts may be drawn together in light of the distinction between two senses of "rationality". But now the need is to concentrate on a further aspect of rationality and the philosophy of rationalism.

"Rationalism/

"Rationalism is that system of philosophical belief which asserts that human reason unaided is competent to attain objective truth".³⁷

It must be inquired as to what is the role of the synonym "reason" in relation to views of rationality.

37. "Rationalism", Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1962, p.991

4. "Reason" and "Reasons".

As consideration is turned to the role of "reason" in relation to rationality, it is necessary to be aware that remarkable claims have been made for it. Two examples are offered of the pretensions which the rationalist has claimed for the power of "reason". Lecky, in his "History of Rationalism", describes the spirit of Rationalism as that, "by which I understand, not any class of definite doctrines or criticisms, but rather a certain cast of thought, or bias of reasoning, which has during the last three centuries gained a marked ascendancy in Europe." The effect of this is remarkable: "...it leads men on all occasions to subordinate dogmatic theology to the dictates of reason and of conscience, and, as a necessary consequence, greatly to restrict its influence upon life. It predisposes men, in history to attribute all kinds of phenomena to natural rather than miraculous causes; in theology, to esteem succeeding systems the expressions of the wants and aspirations of that religious sentiment which is planted in all men; and, in ethics, to regard as duties only those which conscience reveals to be such".¹

The second example of the role of "reason" comes from a consideration of Descartes. "The man of mature understanding should, he held, face the problems of the world and of life for himself, unprejudiced by the various and conflicting solutions of those problems which have been handed down to him from past generations. His own reason is adequate for truth and must seek it alone, without help from unreason".²

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1. Lecky, The History of Rationalism, Vol.2, p.xix.
 2. W.R. Sorley, "Tradition", The Herbert Spencer Lecture, 1926, p.5.

The word "reason" is ambiguous. It may refer either to a capacity or faculty on the part of man, i.e. the capacity to "reason", or it may refer to the grounds of action, behaviour, or belief. In the first sense it refers to an intellectual power of thought or some sort of normative mental faculty which guides or ought to guide the other human faculties. This is the power to discern truths about logical relations and is closely related to the cluster of concepts involved in argument, inference, deduction, and thought, in essence, any form of linguistic or logical rules and procedures. In contrast, a "reason" is a fact or circumstance or some statement of these, which can be presented as a means of justification, proof, disproof, explanation, response, motive, and other related ideas. These two concepts are not, of course, unrelated, and the key to their relation lies in their normative role in connection with action. Edgley says, "It is in the idea that the fact that p is a reason for or against doing something (in a broad sense of 'do'), and in the idea that the fact that p is somebody's reason for doing something, that we have both the notion of the faculty of reason and the notion of those faculties directed by it, the faculties designated by the categories of verbal nouns ranged over by the variable 'doing something', namely belief, action, and passion".³ And again on the same page, he states that "A reason is a fact that bears normatively on what it is a reason for and can explain someone's 'doing' what it is a reason for 'doing'."⁴

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3. R. Edgley, Reason in Theory and Practice, p.p.153-4,17-19,37-9; G. Warnock, "reason", Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Vol.7,p.84; "Reason", The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary.
4. Edgley, ibid, p.154

In general, then both the concepts of "reason" are linked by their relation to the notion of action, behaviour, or belief. In sense one of "rational", I have outlined the strong sense in which one cannot depart from the results without becoming less than human. This holds good for the strong sense of "reason", whether this be with reference to the faculty or to the ground and application of the faculty in a particular instance. Again Edgley makes the point "It might be thought that if reason favours something it is still an open question whether that thing is to be favoured or preferred; but this would be to misunderstand the idea of reason".⁵ He dismisses such misunderstanding as due to a "psychological" view of reason. He then shows the close dependence of this strong sense of "rational" and "reason" on the basic logical procedures and laws for to appraise an inference as valid is to accept it, and to appraise it as invalid is to reject it. To judge a belief as one for which there is a conclusive reason is to accept it, and to judge it as one against which there is conclusive reason is to reject it.

Edgley's point is that "reason" as a faculty, when exercised, and "reason" as a ground for decision, belief, and action, is not an arbitrary procedure or ground, but a normative, definitive one. This is true with reference to sense one of "rational" and, in parallel fashion, with sense one of "reason". But the problem in what is suggested is the problem of deciding whether "reason" favours something or not, whether/

5. Edgley, ibid., p.54-5

whether in appraising an inference, it is or it is not valid, and what does and what does not constitute a "conclusive reason". "Reason" as a faculty and "reason" as a ground, motive, or explanation, still have a function to play in these cases, but that function is not so rigid as in sense one, for the material content of the situation is different. In a particular setting and with reference to a particular argument, two opposing sides may both be using their "reason", and in their reasoning processes propounding "reasons" for their belief, action, or behaviour, and yet they may disagree. It is not the case that they have conclusive evidence ("reasons") one way or the other, but rather that they cannot agree as to what constitutes "conclusiveness", and what counts as the correct use of their "reason", i.e. their reasoning faculty. To clarify this point consideration may be given to just such a disagreement as outlined by John Hick. In presenting his view of eschatological verification, he describes "two men travelling along a road. One man believes the road leads to a celestial city, the other that it leads nowhere. Neither is able to see beyond the next corner at any time. They can and will agree about the nature of the road as they travel it, but will disagree about the ultimate destination of it. Their disagreement is enough to justify different attitudes and policies here and now, though not enough to justify differences about the immediate facts. At the end one will turn out to have been right and the other wrong."⁶

Setting/

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6. T. Penelhum, Religion and Rationality, p.137; J. Hick, Faith and Knowledge, p.p.150-162; "Theology and Verification", Theology Today 19, No. 1, 1960, p.p.12-31; Philosophy of Religion, p.p.94-106.

Ignoring the question of the validity of eschatological verification, the situation has been outlined of two men who would offer "reasons", both claiming to have used their "reason", but with contrary results and action. Sense one of "reason" would refer to the fact that they would agree as to the nature of the road e.g. that it was flat, made of granite and asphalt, and was grass-edged, and this they would agree that all but a mad man would accept. But the disagreement as to the ultimate destination of the road is rather in the sphere of what has been outlined to be sense two of "reason". Both offer alternative descriptions of the road as it develops around the corner, both are completely convinced of the reasonableness of their description, and that the other will be proved wrong when they finally arrive at the end of the road. In this particular case there seems to be no conclusive evidence of "reason" to uphold the one view rather than the other, but that there is still dissension would be shown by the continuance of different life-styles in keeping with one's ultimate views.

One necessary clarification in the concept of a "reason" is to separate clearly the occasions when we use "reason" in the sense of cause. It is sometimes said correctly, "The reason why I fainted was that insufficient blood was getting to my brain". But this could not without oddity be rephrased to suggest, "My reason for fainting was that insufficient blood was getting to my brain". In the case of fainting and similar reflex actions, there is not a sequence of discovering the physiological facts involved and then following the appropriate action. This causal notion of "reason" may be compared with/

with the statements, "The reason why I went to Easter Road on Saturday was that I wanted to see Hibernian play", and, "My reason for going to Easter Road on Saturday was that I wanted to see Hibernian play". There is obviously some important relation between "reason" and my wants and dislikes and any action based on these.⁷ Intention seems an integral part of the concept of "reason". Bennett makes the same point in "Rationality". "The idea of 'reasons' for action is inappropriate when we have to do with simple or rigid patterns of stimulus and response; but where the patterns are both complex and modifiable it is possible, while admitting that the patterns are only patterns of stimulus and response, to speak of them also in terms of actions and reasons for actions".⁸

Both senses of "reason" either as the faculty or the result of the use of the faculty and both senses one and two of these are linked with the notion of explanation. One gives reasons when one seeks to explain or one is asked to explain one's action or behaviour. One uses one's "reason" when one is asked why one behaved or acted in a particular fashion. The difference between senses one and two of these terms in relation to explanation must refer to the nature of the explanation demanded and offered. If one offers an explanation which is binding on all and any man then this is in the area of sense one of "reason", but if there is obviously reliance upon a particular setting and disagreement, with both sides offering "reasons" of their own, then/

7. P. Alexander, "Rational Behaviour and Psychoanalytic Explanation", p.334.

8. J. Bennett, Rationality, p.44.

then the explanation level is related to sense two. However, explanation is not in and of itself the key to rational behaviour.

Alexander argues:- "In ordinary circumstances 1. we may explain a piece of behaviour by showing that it was done for a reason or with a reason in mind and showing what that reason was; 2. to explain a piece of behaviour is not necessarily to show that it was rational; 3. to show that somebody's behaviour was rational it is necessary to show (a) that the agent had reasons and (b) that the reasons were sufficient reasons."⁹ Alexander argues that this rules out psychoanalytic explanation as a ground of expressing rational behaviour, not in the sense that they are not explanations, but that they differ essentially from the everyday explanations of rational behaviour. The idea which is involved here relates back to the connection of "reason" with "wanting". When one talks about doing something for a reason it is implied that the person involved must be able to find out that reason or be able to recognise it when it is suggested to him as having influenced his behaviour. If it is to be his reason, then he must be able to recognise it when it is suggested to him, and at the same time recognise that other suggested reasons may be good reasons although these were not his actual reasons.

In other words, any reason at all which can be thought up or presented is not sufficient to be accounted as a person's actual reason, unless that person is able to recognise it as his own and claim responsibility for it and its effects. Such a reason makes a difference/

9. Alexander, ibid. p.336

difference between two courses of actions or beliefs for reasons tend to favour one side or course rather than another, and, returning to the notion of "reason" as a faculty, it must be noted that what reason favours is to be accepted unless there are some very strong moral grounds which can affect that conclusion, or unless there is strong justification for such deliberate ignoring. "Reason" as a faculty and "reasons" are related to what is favoured or not, what is wanted and what is disliked. This is especially true in the field of morals. Warnock presents an argument for his view that moral reasons are reasons in the very strong sense. "...A man who will suffer if he acts in a certain way has a reason for not so acting, there is a reason for him not to do so. If, we may say, one points out to him that he will suffer if he so acts, he may indeed rationally reply 'Yes, but ...' (and introduce some other reason), but he cannot rationally say 'I don't see that that has anything to do with it'"¹⁰ This kind of response would be incomprehensible. Suffering and the desire to avoid it, that is also to say wanting and its opposites, are relevant to conduct with reference to the giving of explanations.

The importance of "reason" and "reasons" in relation to the two senses of "rational" hinges, therefore, upon the notion of explanation and its relation to action, wanting, or wishing. But there is more to "reason" than this, as may be seen from a closer examination of the appraisal of reasons as good or bad. In earlier discussion of the goal-directed nature of behaviour and action, the aim in mind was stressed.

If/

10. G. Warnock, The Object of Morality, p.p.163-4; Edgley, ibid., p.p.54,162-3.

If this is linked with the attack on psychoanalytic explanations of behaviour on the grounds of inappropriateness, it will be seen that it is not sufficient to talk of "reason" without qualification.¹¹

In the ascription of rationality to behaviour or action, there must be evidence of sufficient reason for that behaviour or action. By sufficient reason is meant a reason actually relevant to the situation in mind, and one which would be sufficient to prompt anyone into action of the same kind, all things being equal. In other words, this is again the demand for appropriateness. This appropriateness or the lack of it is the very ground of rejection of psychoanalytic explanation, for it is not possible for the patient to grasp that such explanation offers a "reason" adequate to his behaviour. Such explanation is not appropriate to the action done.

The case for the stress on sufficient reason is not *prima facie*. One might rather suggest that a person behaved in a rational manner if his behaviour had a reason. But if one held that the reason was a bad one, one would not call the action "rational" (in sense two at least). It is possible to do something for a reason without it being the reasonable thing to do. I may say that "s" was my reason for doing something, while confessing that "s" is not a reason or a good reason for doing what was done in this particular situation. The sort of thing in mind here is where, for example, a child on his first day on the farm sees the farmer open a packet of seeds and plant them, telling the child that he will have a lot more once they grow.

The/

11. See above p.p. 274 ff

The child is then given a bag of eggs to take to the farmer's wife, hearing complaints at the fact that there are not many eggs. The helpful child immediately rushes off, plants the eggs and announces that there will soon be lots more eggs. On being shown the hen-house and the method of egg-arrival, the child admits that he did plant the eggs because he thought that this would increase the number of eggs, but, of course, he now sees that this was impossible. If having a reason is not adequate, then perhaps it might be offered instead that the reason involved was a good reason. However, any reason for doing something cannot be ~~and~~ together a bad one and a good reason for doing something may not necessarily be sufficient, for instance, in the situation where there are several good reasons for and several more against doing the same thing. To be a sufficient reason, there must be a reason, or a group of reasons, which can stand after the process of comparing the various reasons for and against an action. That is to say that "a piece of behaviour was rational if it was done for reasons which constitute a sufficient reason".¹²

To be a sufficient reason for behaviour involves that what I do will achieve or help in the achievement of what I want and so that the behaviour is appropriate to the intention or to what is wanted, and is unlikely to lead to undesirable consequences which might outweigh the consequences of the original intention. To give a "reason" and to use one's "reason" in this way is linked to explanation in terms of goal-directed and appropriate action and behaviour. What is therefore, required/

12. Alexander, ibid. p.p.329-332.

required is to clarify the relation of the different senses of "rational" to the different goals and therefore appropriate actions and behaviour involved at both levels.

The importance of intention and "wanting" in relation to "reasons" was also mentioned. This was to avoid categorising reflexes and accidents in the same way as reasons. These would rather fall into the category of "non-rational", i.e. behaviour of which it makes no sense to say that it was or was not done for a reason. This realm of intention and its relation to "reason" has led some philosophers to separate out the realm of reason from another realm which has been characterised in different ways as feeling, imagination, faith, heart. This has led, on the one side, to the kind of stress found in Pascal, that the reasons of the heart, as opposed to the head, are equally viable and certain. On the other side, it has led to an empiricist attack on the rationalistic view of morals.¹³

This is important for it suggests that it is not the case that human beings are rational, either on a priori grounds or on general empirical ones, and thus what is required is an empirical investigation into what will carry conviction to people, and this may not necessarily be argument, whether good or bad. The attack on rationalism is most clearly seen in the following passage. "So if many or most moralities do require rationality of men, and men are not, or not very, rational, then these moralities are mistaken. In a recent broadcast talk, a geneticist said, 'If we want a race of angels, we shall need a new supply of genes; for the present supply contains the material neither for/

13. A. Ralls, "Rational Morality for Empirical Man", Philosophy, 1969, p.205.

for the wings, nor for the requisite moral perfections'." ¹⁴ The importance of this attack is that it has whatever success it appears to have as a result of the confusion of two senses of "rational". What the writer is referring to is the failure to live up to "rationality" in sense one, when all that is required is to live up to the level of "rationality" in sense two. What is crucial is that the picture he draws of the difficulty of morality is exactly correct, but this need not lead to scepticism, but rather to the realisation that such difficulty is logically necessary, if there is to be the idea of either success or failure in morals. To have reasons means that there must be good and bad reasons, and good and bad use of "reason", so that evaluation is essential, and that evaluation is linked with explanation based on the appropriateness and goal-directed nature of the "reasons" and "reasoning" involved.

14. A. Ralls, ibid. p.208; J.F. Crow, "Evolution, Heredity, and Eugenics", B.B.C.3., 10th May, 1968.

5. Senses of "Rationality" and "Intelligibility".

In this chapter so far two basic senses of "rationality" and "Rational" have been delineated and with these, two parallel senses of "irrationality" and "irrational". Then these distinctions were applied to the concepts of "persons", "beliefs", and "reason". Before concluding the analysis of these distinctions in relation to the various limits of rationality in both senses, these distinctions will be applied to the further idea of intelligibility which is closely bound up with, and often used interchangeably with, rationality.

The Riddell Lectures have often centred their thinking on the sphere of religion and philosophy and on the central notion of intelligibility. C.C.J. Webb writes about "the activity of scientific investigation, which ever presupposes what it can never prove, namely the ultimate rationality of the universe which it sets itself to explore"¹ and O.C. Quick picks up the same theme when discussing "Philosophy and the Cross": "A man may spend all his powers in searching into the origins of the human race or of life or into the constitution of matter, and have no preconceived idea whatever of what he will discover. Yet through it all he must believe, and cling to his faith, that in some sense man and life and matter are very wonderful and excellent things, so that to seek after the knowledge of them is in itself, apart from the merely practical utility of its results, a fitting and a fruitful task for human energy. He must also believe that the order of the universe/

1. C.C.J. Webb, "Religion and the Thought of Today", Riddell Memorial Lecture, 1929.

universe is such that the truth is not merely worth discovering, but also discoverable".² What both writers are referring to is the intelligibility of the universe. In other words, the universe is rational in the sense that it is intelligible; that we can make sense of it; and that the sense it is possible to make is translatable into systematic presentation to others and on its basis we are able to do things which otherwise we could not, as well as avoiding things which we could not otherwise appreciate.

This intelligibility of the universe of nature is not an arbitrary feature of things, but a necessary one, and necessary in the sense of necessary for thought. Its necessity rests on the fact that without it, it would be impossible to reduce phenomena to intelligibility,³ and thus there would be no science at all. "There is already embedded in nature an inherent rationality which it is the task of science to bring to light and express. Apart from it there could be no science at all. Thus the mathematical equations and even the new geometries we construct are quite meaningless unless they are applicable to nature, but if they are applicable to nature, they are elaborated expressions of an objective rationality lying in nature itself".⁴ Intelligibility is necessary for the activity of science, and also for the language of science. "Our normal scientific language presupposes an inherent rationality in nature, so that it makes use of basic forms that refer to states of affairs and patterns of events in the external world, but the/

2. O.C. Quick, "Philosophy and the Cross", Riddell Memorial Lecture, 1931.
 3. T.p.264.
 4. S.p.42.

the contingent and factual elements in these forms impede strict theoretic demonstration".⁵ It is true that subjective elements creep in, but in Torrance's view, these may be dealt with by being more objective i.e. controlled by the nature of the object.

This intelligibility of which Quick, Webb, and Torrance are speaking is a necessary feature of the universe, but it has further peculiarities in that it cannot be questioned. "We are up against one of those ultimate boundaries in thought such as we reach when we ask a question as to the rationality of the universe: not only do we have to assume that rationality in order to answer the question but we have to assume it in order to ask the question in the first place. We cannot meaningfully ask a question that calls in question that which it needs in order to be the question that is being asked. We cannot step outside the relationship to the rationality of the universe in which we find ourselves without stepping outside of rationality altogether. Before the question as to the relation between our knowing and ultimate rationality we cannot but stand in awe and acknowledgement, and can ask our questions rightly only within the actuality of that relationship".⁶ If we try to do the impossible, we are involved in a contradictory and nonsensical movement of thought, and in order to avoid this we rather "...ask questions only within the circle of the knowing relationship in order to test the nature and possibility of the rational structures within it."⁷ This clash with the boundary of thought is not a figment or creation of the scientist's/

5. T.p.224.

6. RR.p.p.53-4.

7. RR.p.p.54-5

scientist's imagination or mind, but rather part of the nature of things. "What the scientist does in any field is to seek to achieve an orderly understanding of events in which he can grasp them as a connected and intelligible whole and so be able to penetrate into their inner rationality. He does not invent that rationality but discovers it, even though one must act with imagination and insight in detecting and developing the right clues and act creatively in constructing forms of thought and knowledge through which he can discern the basic rationality and let his thinking fall under its direction as he offers even a descriptive account of the events."⁸

Earlier Torrance's further analysis of this intelligibility was outlined.⁹ He divides such intelligibility into two areas: number and word. "If we may speak of the rationality embedded in nature as number, we may speak of the rationality embedded in history as logos, for in history we are concerned with giving a different kind of account (λογον διδοναι) of things from that we give of natural processes, and it is therefore a different kind of story that we have to tell. Hence while in natural science we have to direct our interrogative methods to the realities being investigated (commensurable events) with a view to bringing their inner logic to view in mathematical forms, in virtue of which it is made to disclose and explain itself to us, in historical science we direct our interrogative methods to the subject-matter of our research (word-events) with a view to bringing out/

8. T.p.328; See above Chapter Three p.p. 135

9. See above chapter three, p.p. 150ff.

out its latent intentionality, in virtue of which it is made to disclose and explain itself to us so that we in the present may grasp it in an intelligible and coherent way even though it is past.¹⁰ It is crucial in dealing with all questions of intelligibility, therefore, to separate number and word rationality, or else we shall impose an artificial uniformity on the varied world of experience leading to serious "category-mistakes" in the mould of Ryle.¹¹

Intelligibility then for Torrance and for the scientific school he seeks to portray rests on the attempts to reduce to consistent and rational expression the ways in which knowledge is related to the grounds on which it is based, such that the scientist is convinced that he has come to grips with the inherent rationality of things.

Popper, in a critique of Kuhn's view of science, outlines the position being stated. "Kuhn suggests that the rationality of science presupposes the acceptance of a common framework. He suggests that rationality depends upon something like common language and a common set of assumptions. He suggests that rational discussion, and rational criticism, is only possible if we have agreed on fundamentals."¹² It is against this basic background of agreed fundamentals that there is the need to interpret intelligibility. In some sense rationality and the rules of inference implied by it are fundamental and universal; yet there are scientific changes and the progression of views of what intelligibility relates to and of what is and what is not rational. It is necessary, therefore, to give some account of what intelligibility means in relation to these facts. One must disagree with Quick.

"It/

10. T.p.321; See above Chapter Three, p.p. 165

11. T.p.251; G. Ryle, Concept of Mind.

12. K. Popper, "Normal Science and its Dangers", Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge, Lakatos and Musgrave (eds.) p.56

"It ought, I think, to be a platitude to say that if, we use words in their proper sense, every metaphysician must be a rationalist. For every metaphysician, even if he call himself a pluralist, must seek in one way or another to interpret the universe as manifesting intelligible order, that is to say, as rational. Rationality means order, irrationality means chaos. And in a rational universe the ultimate principle of order must be single".¹³ Every metaphysician is in some sense a rationalist, but there is not only one sort of rationalist and the principle of order need not be single nor merely one principle.

The problem with the account of intelligibility so far considered is that it moves between the two senses of "rationality" already outlined. Sometimes, and perhaps most often, the writers are dealing with sense one of "rationality", or as it may be stated, sense one of "intelligibility". By this is meant that they are concerned with what is acceptable on a universal level. That is, they refer to what can and is understood by any reasonable man in full possession of his faculties, presented with the material in an appropriate and fair fashion. This is the basic level of logic, of truth and falsity, of the principle of argument, and of facts in the sense of those things which are required by all for life and accepted without question, because there is no genuine way of framing such questions without ending up in nonsense or madness.

What/

13. Quick. "Philosophy and the Cross", Ridgell Memorial Lecture 1931

What these writers fail to do in general, is clearly enough to distinguish this proper sense of "intelligibility" from another sense, sense two, at which level there is room for questions, doubt, discussion and disagreement without the threat of the padded cell or the charge of gibberish. "Intelligible" in sense two refers to that which is acceptable within a particular context rather than universally. It is that which is understandable against a particular background. It can be grasped in a particular context and as a result of particular internal relations. Without such a differentiation between the two senses of "intelligibility" it is difficult to allow for the genuine changes in world-views, scientific theories, and metaphysical, moral and religious positions which do occur. On the basis of this distinction, the concern must be to put these changes in the appropriate category and to do this requires a thoroughgoing account of the limits of rationality.

This section has been examining two senses of "rationality" and showing that this distinction is appropriate to two senses of "irrationality", to the way we talk of persons and beliefs, to the notion of reason and that of reasons, as well as to the idea of intelligibility. There was a separation of the contextual from the universal, the general from the highly specific. I have been trying to make out a case for rational discussion to take place. In contrast to Bartley and Torrance, there is room for the critic and scope for discussion between radically opposing views, and the next section will seek to clarify what is involved in change, justification, attack, and defence/

defence of a particular view. On Bartley's account there was no way in which the critic could successfully attack Bartley's own view, and if the critic tried to attack Torrance's view then he was met with the response that he was guilty of subjectivity and the failure to be faithful to the nature of the object. The way that these writers have presented their case leads to the impossibility of criticism and the immunity of their positions from all attack. This has been corrected by drawing out the context of argument and discussion, and looking at rationality particularly as it relates to linguistic ability, and in sense two, the capacity to deal with beliefs which are contrary to one's own and to engage in argument.

Sense one of rationality is partly the willingness and ability to resort to argument when it is appropriate, and to see the importance of logic and reasoning. It means that one is prepared to offer some sort of standard of judgement, to give reasons where these are required to examine seriously criticism, and to attempt to deal with it by justification. All this can only be possible if it is recognised that there is room for argument and not everything has been already decided and predetermined. This is, of course, part of the value of what is truly human, the abhorrence of violence as a means of settling argument and disagreement, but in its place the seeking of justice in dispute. The aim in the account of rationality is not to make argument easy, but rather to give it a genuine basis and to make it possible. It may seem unnecessary for argument does take place, and it would be foolish/

foolish to deny that. But there may be doubt whether or not it is genuine argument. By genuine argument is meant argument which leads or may lead to a change in position, because it takes place in a situation where there is room for change and development. If one were to analyse the sort of argument in the Hare-Foot disagreement and the Murdoch-Hampshire dispute it would be seen that it becomes vain repetition where there is no progress because the argument is set up in the wrong sort of way. This is the importance of the two senses of rationality, for they allow the framework to be drawn within which argument can take place which may have a genuine effect and make a real difference. It is now necessary to turn to filling out that framework, by exploring the limits of rationality in four particular areas which are met in actual argument and discussion. These are the natural, situational, social, and psychological limits of rationality.

Section Two - The Limits of Rationality.

Having considered the distinctions of "rationality", "irrationality" and "intelligibility", and their relation to persons, beliefs and reason, it is necessary now to place these distinctions in a context of the limits of rationality. This basic distinction that has been made aims to show the style and programme for genuine argument and debate to take place, because at the outset it stresses the need for the drawing up of standards for the argument and characterises what is required of both participants in the discussion. It is part of the corrective against the failure of Torrance and Bartley to allow room for the critic to attack or even question their views. It is only part, however, for another of the complaints against them was that their accounts were overbrief and this was especially true of their lack of concentration on the limits of rationality as these are found in the actual practice of argument. It is necessary therefore to give some account of these limits of rationality not only to make up for the deficiencies in Bartley and Torrance's accounts, but for a better understanding of what rationality is and why it is important. Thus the presentation of the limits of rationality is very closely related to the basic distinction in the senses of rationality which has been drawn, for both these steps are required in assisting the development of argument which has a proper basis and is conducted in an appropriate fashion. This will then help to meet the third criticism levelled against Bartley and Torrance, that of internal unacceptability even on their own account. It is hoped that the description/

description of rationality based on the two senses and the application of that to various cognates, and the description of the limits of rationality will provide a picture of rationality which is more adequate to the complexity and actuality of its role in argument and discussion.

There will be examination of four areas of limits. Under the heading of the natural limits of rationality there will be an account of the way in which irrational features of the world and of persons set limits to rationality. It will be seen how a doctrine of irrationalism attempts to set limits on rationality. There will be examination of the necessity for logic, yet the limit of its success because of subjective factors, and the linking of this with the limited capacities of human beings in the living out of rational thought. Finally in this section an account will be given of the variety of levels of approach which there are in any subject and the limit that this sets upon rationality.

Having considered the natural limits of rationality attention will turn to the situational limits. There will be examination of the notions of belief, criticism, argument, persuasion, explanation, justification, and finally change. These are all interrelated by virtue of their connection in the actual practice of argument and discussion and so may be bound together in the examination of how, in fact, rationality is limited when argument and discussion is taking place.

Finally the thesis turns to the social and psychological limits. In the social limits the importance of social factors on the presuppositions/

presuppositions and fundamental attitudes which we have will be seen and how change tends to come about even at such an absolute level. Then the thesis looks at the psychological restrictions on such change and the factors which set limits to the effectiveness of rationality in actual argument and discussion by our resistance to fundamental change. In all these accounts there will be drawing on both the material from Bartley and Torrance as well as more general reading on the theme of rationality. The presentation of the particular points under the headings of natural, situational, social, and psychological limits of rationality, is the basic novelty here, for it is in this way that the relevance of the notion of rationality for the actual practice of argument and discussion will be better seen.

Throughout the thesis the three basic criticisms have been developed in harness with particular accounts of rationality, giving a picture of what has been done and what needs still to be done for satisfaction. Already I have offered something of the basis of my view of the use of rationality in argument, but now this view will be expanded so that an account of rationality, which is adequate in itself, adequate to the complexity of the subject-matter which deals with the necessary limits of rationality, and which not only allows the critic a role but helps define that role, will be presented. This is no arbitrary selection of material but one based directly on the account and criticisms of these accounts, both positive and negative, of Bartley and Torrance, as well as the more general themes raised by the wide variety/

variety of writers mentioned. The unity of the thesis stems from the notion of "limit" in relation to rationality, which has too often been merely noted and then ignored. From the variety of writing it is possible to see very general points, but these tend to lack specificity. Thus the original stress in this section is the drawing together of these many and various strands under the general heading of "limit" of rationality, but more than that, for it is also a division of the material into specific headings. These four headings, natural, situational, social and psychological allow a natural and thoroughgoing account of rationality and its limits to be given not haphazardly but methodically, moving from one point to the next. Of course, I draw on other authors, but am seeking to blend them together with my own account so that some order is brought into what appears a vague and ill-defined field of study.

1. The Natural Limits.

Under the heading of the natural limits of rationality there will be examination of the limit on rationality of irrational features of the world particularly in the form of the existence of evil and then of the doctrine of irrationalism as it sets itself up over and against logic and reasoning. Then the necessity of logic will be seen yet its limited nature due to the interference of subjective aspects of man. There will be a description of some of the ways in which rationality is limited due to the limited nature of certain human capacities, and finally in this section, attention will be drawn to the limit set on rationality by the necessity for different levels of approach for an adequate understanding of the subject and the role of rationality in such understanding.

It was earlier argued that there are in existence what may be described as evil features and this evil counts against the possibility of a total rational picture or explanation of all that there is.¹ Torrance expressed it thus: "Somehow evil posits itself and cannot be rationalised Evil is fundamentally discontinuity".² Brunner takes/

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1. See above Chapter 3, "The Value of the Approach".
 2. F.P. p.240. In theological terms the most common stress on irrational features derives from the concept of sin. H.R. Mackintosh states "Sin in the last resort is radically unintelligible; it is incapable of being interpreted in terms of rational purpose; it is irreducible to factors which in a moral sense can be made transparent and self-accrediting. As we contemplate the sin we have done, it confronts us as a thoroughly irrational entity, impervious to light - inexplicable to the mind, and to the conscience inexcusable". The Christian Experience of Forgiveness. (1961 ~~Ed~~) Brunner also makes the point. "Sin is something which we cannot explain something which will not fit into any reasonable scheme at all. For it is the primal fact of non-reason". The Mediator, 1934.

takes the same point a stage further analysing the effect of such an admission of evil in the world, "If the admission of the irrational character of existence excludes any idea of a system - since a system presupposes, if not rationality, at least the possibility of being made rational, the ultimate possibility that through thought the irrational may be overcome - so, only far more, does the admission of the existence of evil as the primary irrational element in life exclude any idea of system at all. If we admit that evil exists, we must once for all renounce all hope of conceiving life on systematic lines".³

If it is the case that there be some such ground of discontinuity which belittles any attempt at total rational explanation, there may still be room for some view of rationality.

It does seem to be a fact that there is a certain irreducible minimum of irrationality, but the stress must be on the "minimum" aspect of such irrationality. What is important here is that the degree of irrationality lies between the danger of total irrationality or chance which would lead to the complete abandonment of the possibility of science and any possible grasp of the world and our role in it. There is not, on the other hand, total rationality which would allow everything to be/

3. Brunner, The Mediator p.123. It is interesting to note alternative means of seeking to express the same kind of point. In the Encyclopaedia of Philosophy article on "Cohen" we read, "By no amount of reasoning", he wrote, "can we altogether eliminate all contingency from our world" (Reason and Nature p.142) The universe is ultimately what it is, and contingency cannot be eliminated. And by contingency Cohen meant that the world contains an irrational element in the sense that "all form is the form of something which cannot be reduced to form alone". (Studies in Philosophy and Science pll.) Quick writes "Chance is a symbol which stands not merely for an unknown cause, but for one which is strictly unknowable. To understand, to explain or account for the behaviour of anything in any way at all, is to see or describe it as not fortuitous". (Philosophy and the Cross, p.24) Regardless of the particular form by which the point is expressed, what remains obvious is that there is something which is irreducible to system.

be understood and explained. Rather there is a tension between what can be understood and what cannot be understood, what is reducible to rational explanation and what is irreducible.⁴

From the time of Aristotle there has been enthusiastic support for many of the ideas of rationalism, which has led to a spirit of optimism and a belief in the power of reason to overcome all the difficulties which mankind faces.⁵ Bonhoeffer however, offers a corrective against the unbridled optimism of rationalism which fits in with the point concerning the way in which certain irrational features of the world count against an absolute and total account of rationality, which leaves no remainder. "The rationalist imagines that a small dose of reason will be enough to put the world right. In his short-sightedness he wants to do justice to all sides, but in the melee of conflicting forces he gets trampled upon without having achieved the slightest effect. Disappointed by the irrationality of the world, he realises at last his futility, retires from the fray, and weakly surrenders to the winning side".⁶ Need it be the case, however, that the rationalist must retire from the fray and leave the field to the apparent irrationality of the world?

It is not necessary to be so pessimistic as some writers appear to be. What is required is rather a closer analysis of the limitations of rationality and with that the limits of irrationality. Some features/

4. See above, p.p. 269

5. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* X, 7: W. Barrett, Irrational Man, p.31
See above p.p. 333ff

6. D. Bonhoeffer, Letters and Papers from Prison, p.135; see above p.p. 181

features of the world and of man are known in an absolute and universal sense and may confidently be systematised and acted on, in accordance with them. But equally, there are many areas of degree of doubt and fuzziness both of the way things are and our perception of this, which must make one extremely cautious as to the delineation of the nature of what there is and our manipulation both of it and our expression of it. These are really the two senses of "rationality", the one the realm of the universal, the other of the particular. The scientist, like the philosopher must recognise the limits of science and knowledge, and there is a need for constant self-correction and the recognition on the part of the scientist that he is dealing with the ambiguous and the ambivalent. He thus rejects any claim to express absolute truth. The very ambiguity and ambivalence of so much in the different areas of knowledge and science expresses a practical limit upon rationality as it seeks to reduce to system and order what man is confronted by in the world. This can be done, but not totally or finally.

While it seems to be the case that in terms of the human situation things are liable to go badly, yet not completely so. It is possible to do a whole variety of things which will help in a situation and will be a great deal better than if one did nothing at all. There seems to be in the nature of things a tension between what is totally rational and what is totally irrational. Between these two extremes there are both rational and irrational features, and the expression of the nature of things whether in terms of understanding or characterisation must be such as to cope with the realities of the situation and express that reality/

reality adequately. The limit of irrationalism in nature and the world must be held in balance with the limits of rationalism. Things are neither totally explicable nor inexplicable, and to cope with these two senses of "rational" and "irrational" are needed. Sense one deals with what all men must accept and abide by or face the charge of madness and the withdrawal of basic human rights, and sense two deals with the realm of the particular and that which is open to debate and discussion with a view to coming to some conclusion on the evidence and argument offered against a view which one held.

It is however, not only irrational features in the world and nature which create problems for our understanding and the possibility of reducing things to a rational form, but irrational aspects of man himself. Malevolence, folly, confusion, racial hostility, fear and what can only be described as unreason- the unwillingness to accept what is true and right - are real enough but need to be interpreted correctly, because it is not enough to characterise as "irrational" illogicality in one particular instance, or confusion of thought, or even the tendency to arrive at unacceptable conclusions. Rather the clear separation of the two levels of "irrationality" is required. Sense one of "irrationality", is illogicality, confusion and the reaching of unacceptable conclusions all to such a degree, and of such seriousness that the very sanity of the person involved must be queried. Sense two on the other hand, must refer to particular situations where writers have been aware of the novelty and difficulty of their presentation, yet have continued to offer a case and not sought to abandon argument, but perhaps rather to present different kinds of evidence and reasons, which/

which, when placed in a fuller context, may be seen to make a great deal of sense. This is the level of the particular and highly specific.

It has already been seen that there has been an attempt on the part of some writers to form a definite doctrine of irrationalism which casts doubt on the capacity of reason to do all that rationalists claim for it. The problem with any such doctrine, if it is taken seriously, is that it has certain unacceptable features and leads to unacceptable conclusions. The limits set on irrationalism have been drawn to some extent by Lukes and I shall use his list of limits, yet argue that he has failed to draw a crucial distinction between two senses of "irrational" which is important to allow new kinds of criticism to come to the fore and to permit discussion and argument at even the most basic levels of what we hold to be true. In "Some Problems about Rationality"⁷ Lukes offers among other things a critique against irrationalism on the grounds that it fails to recognise what is to count as a reason, illogicality, falsity, nonsense, inability to universalize, deficiency in the genesis and method of holding a belief. All these are valid enough, but cover two senses. Sense one of "irrationality" not only fails to recognise a particular reason, but the very necessity for reason at all, or reasons. There is an attempt to eschew all forms of reasoning and every kind of reason. The illogicality, falsity, and nonsense involved are to such an extent and degree that there is no hope of understanding for there is nothing to be understood. It is perversity in thought for perversity's sake./

7. S. Lukes, "Some Problems about Rationality", B. Wilson (ed.) Rationality, p.p. 207 ff.

sake. The inability to universalize is both a failure to see that this has any relevance for holding a belief and also an inability to go through the mechanics of such universalization. The deficiency of genesis and method of holding are not unique to one particular instance, in sense one of "irrationality", but rather are regular occurrences, the rule rather than the exception, and with this is the lack of awareness that there is anything at all wrong with what is going on.

In contrast, if sense two of "irrational" is taken and these headings again examined it is found that the failure to recognise a reason rests on definite grounds related to a particular reason. It is the refusal to accept this as a reason in one particular case, because of definite reasons. So too the illogicality, falsity, nonsense and inability to universalize are related to a definite situation. It is in one particular context that what is said seems to be illogical, false, and nonsensical. It is in this definite instance that there is the refusal to universalize because this is a case where one does not universalize. Thus would the irrationalist in sense two argue. And the deficiency in genesis and method of holding a belief would be both something of which the person involved was aware and seeking to rectify by presenting different kinds of evidence and standards of relevance, and also an exceptional thing relevant to a very definite set of circumstances and a limited context. On this kind of account there is room for two kinds of irrationalist, and the most important one being related to sense two of "irrationalism". This is the person who in a particular case seems to fly against all standards of reason, logic, sense and meaning, but he recognises this and attempts to offer grounds for it, as well as this being an exceptional situation/

situation, and not a general rule. This would be the pattern of the great scientific revolutions of Newton and Einstein, where what is new is so new that different standards of sense, logic and reason are required. This is not at all to reject logic, reason or sense but to seek to broaden these.

"Irrationalism" in sense one runs into even more severe problems than have so far been suggested. Such a rejection of sense, logic, and reason would leave us defenceless before the most morally outrageous appeals to emotion. It would be to reject all concern with truth and argument and in their place to accept contradiction and imposters.⁸

Bartley makes the point in two places, without himself recognising that his own work falls into the same trap as he accuses the irrationalist, but of course for very different reasons. He writes "One gains the right to be irrational at the expense of losing the right to criticise. One gains immunity for one's own commitment by making any criticism of commitments impossible";⁹ and, "One gains the right to be irrational oneself at the expense of losing the right to criticise anyone else for acting absurdly. One gains immunity from criticism for one's own commitment by making any criticism of alternative commitments trivially easy. One quickly reaches what R.H. Popkin, in a study of Kierkegaard, aptly described as 'an anarchy of private individual faiths that cannot be discussed or communicated'."¹⁰

8. A. MacIntyre, "Myth", Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Vol.5; P. Nidditch, "The Intellectual Virtues", p.14; H. Paton, The Modern Predicament, p.58 F. Ferre, Language, Logic and God, p.131

9. R.C.p.103.

10. W. Bartley, Morality and Religion, p.47; R.C.p.p.90-3, see above Chapter Two p.p.

In adopting sense one of "irrationality" as a philosophical doctrine a person abandons argument. Both what is true and what is false are no longer separated or defined. The person becomes like the neurotic Tillich describes. "The inability of the neurotic to have a full encounter with reality makes his doubts as well as his certitudes unrealistic. He puts both in the wrong place. He doubts what is practically above doubt and he is certain where doubt is adequate. Above all, he does not admit the question of meaning in its universal and radical sense".¹¹ What is wrong with "irrationalism" in sense one is the same as is wrong with the neurotic - the total and complete failure to realise that there are certain basic laws of logic which it is essential to grasp and to obey.

When one considers the natural limits of rationality by investigating the limits of irrationalism both as these are found in irrational features of the world and man and as an attempt to state a philosophical doctrine, the need has been seen to separate the two senses of "rationality" and "irrationality" outlined. The first sense of "irrationalism" deals with the world of nonsense and universal madness, where debate and argument are not just difficult but meaningless. Over and against this there is sense two which arises from and deals with the fact that there are still some genuine questions, problems and disagreements, and there is still room for debate and discussion about what is rationally acceptable, but this is always and only within a particular context which itself requires to be clarified.

It/

11. P. Tillich, The Courage to Be p.p.76-7; PIAlexander "Rational Behaviour and Psychoanalytic Explanation". p.335; Q.p.p.326-7.

It has been shown that part of the criticism against a philosophical doctrine of irrationalism rested upon the necessity of a basic logic, or to express the same point, the basic necessity of logic as responsible for leading us into difficulties when we try to understand apparently contradictory doctrines. Bartley has a short and powerful answer against this. "Now logic has a way of avenging herself on those who treat her lightly. If we abandon logic, we lose the power of argument: for argument consists, in essence, in showing that two claims are incompatible. And if we abandon logic we also diminish enormously our powers of description: for to say what some thing is, to describe it, is at the same time to say a great deal about what it is not. And if we allow contradictions to be introduced, we permit all descriptions at once. Thus one defensive move - the scuttling of logic - forces us step by step down the hierarchy of linguistic functions. We lose the power to argue, we lose the power to describe; we are left with the powers to express and signal".¹² Logic is necessary, but there is the need for a further distinction. It is equally important for my purpose not only to examine the level of the false and the incomprehensible which logic reveals to us, but likewise to examine the ridiculous and inapposite, as these correspond to the two senses of "rationality" and "irrationality" which have been made. M. Hollis, in a discussion of the limits of irrationality, makes the/

12. Bartley, Morality and Religion, p.33; Q.p.p.277-8,319-20; Hodges, "Languages, Standpoints and Attitudes". p.62.

the same sort of point. He states that, "We cannot understand the irrational and to suppose that we can is to run into a vicious circle; but we can understand the rational in more than one way."¹³ To examine the variety of ways of understanding is crucial for genuine argument and the development of beliefs and positions. It is necessary to consider the need for logic in these circumstances and the limits of such logic. Two of the usual tests of logic are those of consistency and comprehensiveness, yet even these may run into difficulties.¹⁴ Consistency is not sufficient as a criterion, for any standpoint or attitude must be self-consistent if it is to offer an alternative to any belief or attitude already accepted. Such consistency does not make the choice between rival candidates any easier. This puts the two senses of "rationality" in relation to logic in their proper perspective. There is that logic which is necessary for something to be a candidate at all for anyone's consideration. This is sense one and its limits are those of what is and must be universally acceptable. Sense two is that area of decision and discussion between standpoints and attitudes which are rival candidates. Their rivalry relates to a particular context and rests on debatable premisses for which evidence can and must be given. When there is talk of logic as a check it is necessary to clarify the difference between the universally true and false of sense one, and the particularly ridiculous and inapposite within sense two. This delineates part of the natural limit of logic, though at the same time stressing the necessity of such logic.

Attention/

13. M. Hollis, B. Wilson (ed.) Rationality, p.220.

14. Q.p.273; R.Hare, Freedom and Reason, p.p.79,135,157; Downie, Roles and Values, p.12; Hodges, ibid, p.62.

Attention is now concentrated on some of the limitations of logic in practice. The general level is dealt with first and then attention turned to a particular problem expressed in a theological context, but which has implications for not only morals and metaphysics, but for all sciences. Logic cannot solve a dispute between two rival sets of principles for it offers only an account of how the mechanics of disputes are to be conducted and does not provide any principle of interpretation by which a final decision can be made between two internally coherent and consistent views. Rather it becomes in this connection and type of situation a matter of choice and the will to think in a particular way and accept particular stresses and points rather than others. But by saying that it reduces to a choice does not decrease the importance of rational thought and argument, for with such a choice must be a full characterisation of the basis, grounds and effect of that choice. Game theory has led to the derivation of many such problems, which reveal the limitations of logic in a practical setting. The example given shows that there is an absence of one most rational thing to do. In other terms, logic and rationality cannot conclude what is the best course of action in this situation and something else is required. Two prisoners are held in separate cells by the sheriff. They have committed a serious crime but the sheriff lacks proof. Therefore he tells each prisoner in turn: "If neither confesses, you will both be convicted of a misdemeanour and receive very light sentences. If both confess, you will receive very heavy sentences/

sentences, and if one confesses and the other does not, the one who confesses will be freed and the other will receive the heaviest possible sentence". Logic alone cannot solve the problem of what to do in a situation like this.

Hare suggests that it is not just in the realm of facts or principles that logic is limited by its inability to offer a means of decision. It is language itself which creates problems for the logician. "A logician cannot do justice to the infinite subtlety of language; all he can do is to point out some of the main features of our use of a word, and thereby put people on their guard against the main dangers. A full understanding of the logic of value-terms can only be achieved by continual and sensitive attention to the way we use them."¹⁵ Part of the difficulty in this kind of sensitivity and appreciation of the subtlety of language is with those who use language. People are often dishonest even in the intellectual realm. In religion in particular the basic meaning of words is often stretched beyond all recognition emptying the concept involved of all meaning and reality. People are often ruled by their emotions rather than by what they can rationally recognise as a binding course of action. One may conduct a person down the primrose path of a logical argument and at the end present them with the logical conclusion of what they have said which seems irrefutable, only to have a raspberry-reaction. Likewise it is possible to be rational and to have impeccable logic and yet to be a very/

15. R. Hare, Language of Morals, p.126

very unpleasant person. The Nazi can be consistently logical and ruthlessly exterminate all Jews on his own premisses, which inevitably leads to his frightening conclusions. Logic can be used for both good and harm, and it is possible to argue consistently for the most morally outrageous conclusions. Against this logic is no safeguard, for logic has a limited role here as it applies to rationality.

Logic is limited by the wickedness of man and the limited nature of his sympathies, but logic is also limited by the sensitive nature of situations which sometimes confront men. In "The French Lieutenant's Woman", an example of this sensitivity is found which is different from logic and which logic cannot replace or compete with on equal terms, though this is only to stress the need for different techniques and not the replacement of one by the other. "Sarah had some sort of psychological equivalent of the experienced horse-dealer's skill - the ability to know almost at the first glance the good horse from the bad one; or as if, jumping a century, she was born with a computer in her heart. I say her heart, since the values she computed belong more there than in the mind. She could sense the pretensions of a hollow argument, a false scholarship, a biased logic when she came across them; but she also saw through people in subtler ways. Without being able to say how, any more than a computer can explain its own processes, she saw them as they were and not as they tried to seem. It would not be enough to say that she was a fine moral judge of people. Her comprehension was broader than that...."¹⁶ From examples like this it can be seen that/

16. J. Fowles, The French Lieutenant's Woman, p.57.

that when it comes to dealing with people and with language much of what is accepted as true and used in practice is nothing final and absolute, but conjectural and open to improvement. Much is never totally understood, for many things appear opaque and irreducible into clear logical forms and formulae. All these things are true in the sense that it is impossible to know everything, yet this is not the same as to say that we know nothing nor that logic is useless. Rather it is necessary to separate the two senses of logic in relation to the senses of rationality, and realise the appropriate limitations of each logic; that of sense one to deal with everything, and that of sense two to come to final and universal conclusions. Neither of these is possible, and the existence of two senses bespeaks the efficacy of such limitations.

It is in the context of the limitations of logic that the difficulty of changing a person's mind is realised, and such difficulty is an empirical limit set on logic. Freud was quick to realise this and express it. "Since men are so little accessible to reasonable arguments and are so entirely governed by their instinctual wishes, why should one set out to deprive them of an instinctual satisfaction and replace it by reasonable arguments? It is true that men are like this; but have you asked yourself whether they must be like this, whether their innermost nature necessitates it?"¹⁷ The colour-blind person can know something of what others mean when they talk of the green grass and the blue sky, but this is far from knowing what green and blue are really like/

17. S. Freud, The Future of An Illusion, p.77; S.p.199; J. Wisdom, Philosophy and Psychoanalysis p. 258

like. The person who has never lost a loved one may have some idea of what bereavement is about, but cannot really understand why it is such a devastating thing to so many. To appreciate the point and force of an argument requires more than logic and much of our humanity seems to act against logic and reason. The same sort of point from the opposite side can be seen, if one tries to imagine rational beings who could always reason impeccably and not only that, but act immediately upon what they had decided without it ever occurring to them that there was an alternative. In such cases exhortation, persuasion, praise, condemnation, and blame would be inappropriate. There would be no scope for moral judgment if these people were impassive, invulnerable, and totally self-sufficient.¹⁸ But human beings are none of these things, but rather subject to feeling, vulnerable, and dependent on others, and likewise do not always and only do what is the result of a logical argument. This is back to the tension between total rationality and total irrationality, total explanation of everything and total inability to express any thing. There are limits of logic both in the areas to which it may be applied and in those who apply it. Logic in sense one of "rationality" is limited by the nature of the human situation and language, while in sense two it is seen that the limits of logic lie within man's incapacity to convince universally or to execute fully what one accepts in a particular context. The argument now turns to a particular problem expressed as an example in theological terms: subjectivity.

Torrance's/

18. G. Warnock, The Object of Morality, p.14

Torrance's account of objectivity has already been outlined "Reason is the capacity to behave consciously in terms of what is not ourselves. We can express this briefly by saying that reason is 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".¹⁹ To be attached to the object meant that one was detached from all false preconceptions and while this was crucial for theology it was simply part of the one way of human knowledge.²⁰ In the attempt to be true to this way of knowing, we confront the problem of subjectivity, in which man imposes his own patterns on nature and what there is, so that he is unable to distinguish reality from his own ideas and thinks that he himself is responsible for all meaning and understanding.²¹ This problem needs a radical solution according to Torrance and that is a conversion.²²

Some of the problems of Torrance's account of objectivity and subjectivity have already been analysed, yet some sort of account of his point must be taken. In the situation of learning, knowing, and doing, humans are active participants who are making a contribution such that if a person were not active in observing and interpreting there would be no learning or knowledge, yet this subjective necessity must be balanced by objectivity.²³

By/

19. T.p.p.11-13; MM.p.232; F.P.p.245; Chapter Three p.p. 130

20. MM.p.231-2; T.p.p.36,112; S.p.p.82,91-2;197; Chapter Three p.p.128

21. T.p.p.xvi-vii,32; S.p.198.

22. F.P.245; T.p.275.

23. Weyl, The Philosophy of Mathematics and Natural Science p.116; Hodges ibid, p.52.

By objectivity is meant an objective judgement which is not affected by idiosyncratic factors such as special interest, hopes and fears of a person involved, but a judgement which any reasonable and unbiased person would make in similar circumstances. (This is another stress on impartiality.) It is again necessary to refer to the two senses of "rationality", for this is again the situation of tension where complete objectivity is impossible, and yet total subjectivity is fatal. These are situations in which people can and do bring universally valid features and standards to bear and this is limited by the necessary presence of subjective factors, which can be recognised and allowed for, and there is the weaker sense of objectivity which is paralleled by sense two of "rationality". When someone accuses another of subjectivity and lack of objectivity this must be put in its proper relation to the opposite sense of rationality.

The natural limits of rationality have now been considered in relation to irrationalism and logic, and now attention turns to the general limits of different levels of dealing with rationality and the limits of human capacities. Augustine when asked to define time complained that he knew perfectly well what time was until he was asked to define it. He was not the only one to know more than he could say. Thomas Brown has a verse to express the same point, "I do not love you, Dr. Fell,"

"I do not love you, Dr. Fell,

But why I cannot tell;

But/

But this I know full well,
I do not love you, Dr. Fell."²⁴

This inability to express all that is known has been formalised by Polanyi into a distinction between tacit and explicit knowing, but this is an essential feature of knowledge. If one considers the notion of a "sinner" as it is used commonly in theological circles and discussion, one is confronted with someone who is not totally bad. A sinner could not be someone who always and only sinned or else there could be no sense in which there would be sin. Sin is a departure from a standard, a falling short which includes within its sense the notion of not falling short. In other words, the sinner can be neither totally bad nor totally good, neither a saint nor a total degenerate. To be a sinner implies that one is at some point a saint or a potential one, and at other times a devil, but neither all the time. This is the sort of tension expressed already in this chapter with irrationality and logic. To be rational is not to be rational on all and every occasion with no possibility of being less than rational, nor is irrationality to be always and only irrational. This is of course sense two of "rationality", which is the particular and not the universal level of the features of rationality. The person who argues rationally in a particular context, is like the sinner, liable to fall from grace. In sense one of "rational", there is no room for such falling from grace, for to do so is to be reckoned mad or insane.

The/

24. T. Brown, Martial Epigrams, i.32; See below, p.p. 41

The sinner who is finally irredeemable is no longer a sinner, but a lost soul. There are in rationality particular human limits which must be borne in mind in the ascription of rational grounds and argument. These are the limits of knowledge, what we do not know; the limits of appreciation, what implications we fail to realise and the subtleties we fail to appreciate; the limit of will, expressed by the Apostle Paul as the doing of evil which he wishes to avoid and the failure to do the good which he wished to do; and the limit of values, in failing to extend moral values either far enough or consistently enough.²⁵

The limitations of human capacities in the area of rationality arise from the fact that people are human agents who are subject to weakness of will, subjective involvement, emotional overtones, and wickedness. People are also unable to offer a totally accurate prediction of the future and especially of the future of human knowledge and how it will develop. The description of situations and of reality is necessarily selective and influenced by our own projections. "Human beings in general are not just naturally disposed always to do what it would be best that they should do, even if they see, or are perfectly in a position to see, what that is. Even if they are not positively neurotic or otherwise maladjusted, people are naturally somewhat prone to be moved by short-run rather than long-run considerations, and often by the pursuit of more blatant, intense, and obtrusive satisfactions rather than those cooler ones that on balance would really be better".²⁶

We/

25. P. Nidditch, ibid., p.10; RVR.P.4; Q.p.35; Downie, Roles and Values, p.p.28-9; S. Weil, Gravity and Grace, p.87.

26. G. Warnock, The Object of Morality p.21; Downie Roles and Values p.p.27-8.

We are all limited in our rationality by our prejudices, attractions, fears and suspicions, and the complaint that even in philosophy of religion some philosophers do not apply the same high analytic standards that they presumably employ when engaged in symbolic logic or in the analysis of science rings true when it is remembered that some of the things which may determine conclusions may come from the desire to be different, to be thought intellectually superior, a quirk of taste, the influence of others, and the attraction of the unreachable and the unacceptable.²⁷

Human beings are limited both in their capacities and in the execution of their capacities. Kazantzakis describes one possible view of our situation in the form of a parable. "Once upon a time there was a little village, lost in the desert. All its inhabitants were blind. A great King passed by followed by his army. He was riding an enormous elephant. The blind people heard of it. They had heard a great deal about elephants and were moved by a great desire to touch this fabulous animal, to get an idea of what it was. About ten of them, let's say the notables, set out. They begged the King for permission to touch the elephant - 'I give you permission, touch it!' said the King. One of them touched its trunk, another its foot, another its flanks, one was raised up so that he might feel its ear, another was seated on its back and given a ride. The blind men went back to their village enchanted. All the other blind people crowded round them,/"

27. W. Bartley, Morality and Religion, p.18; Lecky, The Rise and Influence of Rationalism, p.p.xiv-xv; Hodges, ibid, p.65

them, asking them greedily what sort of thing this fantastic beast, the elephant was. The first said: 'It is a big pipe that raises itself mightily, curls, and woe to you if it catches you!' Another said: 'It is a hairy pillar!' Another; 'It is a wall, like a fortress, and it too is hairy.' Another, the one who had felt the ear: 'It's not a wall at all; it's a carpet of thick wool coarsely worked, which moves when you touch it.' And the last cried: 'What's that nonsense you're talking? It's an enormous walking mountain!'"²⁸ It does appear that as far as human capacities are concerned to some extent people are blind, and that what is to be known, like the elephant, is far greater than can be perceived or expressed. But this is only to describe the condition with reference to sense two of "rationality". As far as sense one is concerned it may be said that the person who consistently tries to be reasonable about evil deeds, the robber who thought it wrong, who knew that the old lady he robbed had no money or valuables and that he was very fond of her, is not so much in the wrong by what he did as by the fact that he does not know, value, appreciate or will appropriately. This leads to the point where it is necessary to break off ascribing rationality to a person in the case of madness or in the case of animals. This is not so much the failure to follow through implications and the occasional falling short of a standard, but the continual failure to appreciate the basic rudiments of knowledge, value and behaviour. What is debatable is the breaking off/

28. N. Kazantzakis, Christ Recrucified, p.180

off point where the failure to be rational in sense two becomes the failure to be rational in sense one, and this can be expressed only in light of particular contexts and backgrounds, where the universally acceptable is regularly and easily rejected without the realisation of the need for argument and replacement.

The natural limits of rationality have been looked at in relation to irrationalism as it is found in nature and in man as well as a philosophical doctrine, to logic with its necessity yet limitations, to human capacities and weaknesses, but finally the account turns to consider the limits set on rationality due to a variety in levels of thinking and understanding. By this is meant putting the two senses of "rationality" against the background of the variety of levels we are confronted with in knowledge and the systemisation of it. One example of the problem of variety of levels is presented by Torrance. He states that, "It is impossible to reduce to thought how thought is related to being, else all we are left with is mere thought; it is likewise impossible to state in statements how statements are related to being nevertheless, in authentic knowledge being shows through,"²⁹ and "As it is impossible to state in statements the relation of statements to being, so it is impossible to logicalize the relation of different logical levels to actual existence: all that linguistic and logical forms can do is to indicate where they come to an end, to show their boundary by breaking off the process of formalization in order that actual existence may be allowed to thrust itself upon our thought."³⁰ What is meant by talking of different levels of understanding may/

29. S.p.175.

30. T.p.p.272-3.

may be seen in two practical examples. James suggests that, "A Beethoven string-quartet is truly, as someone has said, a scraping of horses' tails on Cat's bowels, and may be exhaustively described in such terms; but the application of this description in no way precludes the simultaneous applicability of an entirely different description".³¹

The point about different levels may also be seen in the difference between the way we know the countryside by reference to a map and our knowledge of it gained by the familiarity which comes from walking about it regularly. The one is critical, articulated and can be set down according to strict rules, while the other is acritical, preverbal, and instinctive in something of the same way that reliance on our senses is instinctive.

Problems arise when there is the failure to take seriously the distinctions of level. Often traditional forms of logic are too narrow and restricted to deal with every new discovery of features of reality. Traditional logic tends to oversimplify and therefore to distort. In general the failure to be aware of different levels leads to an impasse. For example, if the Hare-Foot controversy is recalled and the impasse of that situation and debate, it can be seen that there is a case to be made for separating the two accounts to deal with different levels. Hare is relevant to the level of the form of any and every moral argument, and his point is that what is involved in a moral argument is universalizability. Foot and her supporters, on the other hand, are at a totally/

31. W. James, The Will to Believe, p.76.

totally different level, which is the content of moral judgement rather than the form, as in Hare's case. Their point is that in fact moral judgements always have something to do with what is good for one and what is harmful to one. The problem with their argument is that these two levels are not clearly separated. The account which Rawls gives which has already been drawn upon is also relevant here, for he wishes to separate the level of justifying a particular case by reference to an accepted standard from the justification of a practice as a whole, which requires different levels of argument. The danger is that one particular level will be held to be the standard to which all else must attain, and this is the sort of thing that the sceptic is guilty of when he tries to make all knowledge conform to a single simple pattern in every case.

The solution to the problem of levels is to learn to think on different levels and on each level to be consistent without mixing up the levels. Aristotle had the basic idea and it has been taken up by Polanyi that there are different levels of living beings - the vegetative, that of muscular action, that of patterns of behaviour, that of intelligence, and that of responsible choice.³² Gödel and Quine have made the same sort of point though with reference to different things, the realm of logic, epistemology, and reference. The operation of a higher level cannot be totally accounted for by the laws which are relevant to a lower level, and the querying of all reference does not make sense without something relative to which such reference can be sought/

32. S.p.p.24-5,75,16-17; T.p.p.184-5; M. Polanyi, Encounter, May 1965,p15.

sought and understood.³³

Theologians often claim that part of the misunderstanding of the subject-matter of theology results from the failure to realise that theologian operates with a different interpretative framework and with distinctive conceptual forms which are appropriate to its own subject matter.³⁴ This does not necessarily entail a full-blown Barthian system, but rather, given the natural limits of rationality in relation to the different levels of what there is and what we know, we may act accordingly. We accept the limit of each level as we come to it. One moves to another level which is appropriate to the matter in hand and seeks to develop language and concepts which are themselves appropriate.³⁵ This is especially important within sense two of "rationality" where the disputants must always be seeking new ways of expressing what they disagree about and how to solve that disagreement. This means too that we must look for an appropriate degree of proof. In other words, at the level of sense two, there must be no demand or expectation of having evidence in accordance with sense one of "rational", rather Aristotle's advice is recalled to look only for the degree of exactitude and clarity appropriate to the question at hand.³⁶

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33. Polanyi, Encounter, May 1965, p.15; Quine, Ontological Relativity and Other Essays, p.p.53,54-5.
 34. T.p.p.285,326; F.P.p.244; D. Emmet, The Nature of Metaphysical Thinking, p.75.
 35. S.p.p.19,198; S. Weil, Gravity and Grace, p.p.87-8
 36. T. Penelhum, Religion and Rationality, p.148

In seeking to examine the natural limits of rationality, an account has been given of the limit on rationality which results from irrational features of the world and of man. The limits on rationality from the doctrine of irrationalism and the criticism of it have been seen. There has been examination of the way that logic while necessary is limited by subjectivity, emotion, and wickedness, and then consideration of the way that human capacities and different levels of understanding form a set of limits on rationality which must be worked out at two levels. It has been seen throughout these limits that the basic distinction of two senses of "rationality" is relevant and important and this distinction must be made in all discussion and argument in relation to the limits discussed. But further these limits must be applied to each different argument and discussion situation as they arise and the effect of the limits of rationality seen in practice rather than in theoretical terms. This outline of natural limits, like all sections on limits, is designed to show not only that argument is possible, but to offer some means of conducting that argument, and it is my contention that given the understanding of the limits of rationality in natural terms, such discussion will be clearer from the realisation, that irrational features must be dealt with yet that same irrationality is limited, that logic is necessary, but is itself limited, that human beings have varying capacities and weaknesses which must be taken account of, and that there are different levels of understanding to be discerned, not the least of which includes the separation of two basic senses of rationality. But not only that, for by examining the natural limits of rationality a clearer idea of rationality itself is evident especially as it is used in argument and discussion.

2. The Situational Limits.

The account turns now from the consideration of the natural limits of rationality to an examination of some of the situational limits. Again this is part of the threefold answer to the threefold attack on Bartley and Torrance. An attempt is being made to provide a corrective to the failure of Torrance and Bartley to examine the limits in rationality and especially the situational ones. This is also to try to make room for the critic to have a genuine basis from which he may offer criticism. This is done by looking at the actual situations of belief, criticism, argument, persuasion, explanation, justification, and change where it is possible to discern some features of limitation which are relevant in terms of rationality in specific situations. Finally, the intention is to put flesh and blood on the basic distinction of the two senses of "rationality" and thus to offer at the same time an account of rationality which is more adequate than those earlier criticised. It will be shown not only that argument is possible on the basis of an adequate account of the nature of rationality, but also how such argument may develop and the sort of issues which are important for this. I shall also be drawing on certain points which have already been argued for in earlier chapters and bringing these together in relation both to the situational limits of rationality and the two basic senses of "rationality" outlined. The examination is of belief, then criticism, argument, persuasion, explanation, justification and finally change in order to discover some of the situational limits of rationality.

Beliefs or a particular belief must make a difference to the person who accepts it. It may be the case that certain beliefs are related to particular affections and values, and take the form of some sort of ultimate/

ultimate commitment, yet there is always this relation to a difference in having the belief as opposed to not having it. The man who believes in God will not only look at death in a different light because of his belief, but it will affect his attitude to many things in the here and now as well as the hereafter. Belief results in action in the same sort of way that the acceptance of a rule of morality brings the responsibility of obeying it given the opportunity. Hare emphasises the close relation of belief and action when he states that, "if believing something is a kind of thinking, we can find out what a man believes by studying his actions; and likewise, if holding a moral principle, or desiring something, or having a certain purpose, are in a wide sense kinds of thinking, we can find out about a man's principles or purposes or desires by studying his actions".¹

However it is still the case that beliefs may not rest upon the sort of grounds that one would like them to, and it may not be possible to give the sort of evidence that one ought for them. Though this may be offset by the realisation that there seems to be some sort of scaling of beliefs from those which are open to refutation by direct evidence against them to those which seem to hold a privileged place in our thinking and are held immune from much criticism because they are especially important. Part of such a scale may depend on the nature of what is believed, and the way that it is believed. Belief is often the sort of thing that comes and goes according to what is felt at some particular time and what has been happening to adjust the circumstances of belief. The sort of point which is in mind has been drawn by Penelhum in/

1. R. Hare. "Religion and Morals", B. Mitchell(ed.) Faith and Logic: F.P.p.135:T.p.p.3-4: Wisdom, Philosophy and Psychoanalysis, p.150; Warnock, The Object of Morality, p.138; J. Baillie, The Sense of the Presence of God. p.p.256-7.

in his discussion of the rationality of religious belief. He suggests that, "It makes rough sense; it has a discernable verification structure; it does not defeat itself by internal contradiction or need not do so; it can absorb and need not flout scientific knowledge; and it is able not only to point to myriad evidences of its alleged truth but to absorb counterevidence by means of its inclusion of eschatological expectations and to explain the very fact of unbelief in terms of men's alleged rebellion against the God it proclaims. This, then, makes belief an open option for a rational being to choose".² If it is this kind of rough sense which a man claims and offers, then it is important not to make a strong claim for knowledge, but rather to be content to describe what is claimed as known in the language of belief. The danger in situations of argument is that on the one side the critic makes too strong a demand on the defender of a view failing to realize that not all understanding is at one level. But it is just as likely that the defender in his eagerness to have his view accepted overstates his case and makes claims for it that are not justified. Thus it is important in a particular situation to decide in terms of belief or knowledge in the sense of the standard being worked with. It is possible, of course, only to believe what is thought to be true. It would certainly be paradoxical for a man to say that something is good but that he does not approve of it, or that he approves of something but that it is not good, but the paradox here would be equal to someone saying that something is true but that he does not believe it, or that he believes something but, of course, it is not true. It is hoped that what is believed is true, but/

2. Penelhum, Religion and Rationality, p.210; R. Bambrough, Reason, Truth and God p.91.

but care must be exercised in the knowledge and truth claims made for a particular belief in light of the evidence actually at hand and nothing beyond that.

In the realm of belief it must be recalled that it is not knowledge in sense one of "rationality" ~~and~~ that is being dealt with, though a person does make particular truth claims. But the extent and nature of these truth-claims are limited in that it is not proof in any universal and final sense which is being claimed. Brunner makes the same sort of point. "In the sphere of faith... there is no security; here there are no sensible or mental points of support; here there is no calming of the mind; nor any self-assurance; faith is a venture; it means hanging on a thread, not standing on solid ground; it is an attitude of complete dependence, and indeed, of dependence upon Another, and it is therefore the abiding mystery within the revelation. This does not mean that faith is uncertainty, but that it always has uncertainty on its left hand."³ Though Brunner has exaggerated the degree of doubt involved in faith, for there are many kinds of reasons which may be given for the decision to believe rather than not to, he has some validity in that a belief is something that, at the time of holding cannot be fully justified. This is of vital concern both to the believer as he seeks to persuade the unbeliever and therefore runs the risk of failing to realise the limitations of belief as opposed to knowledge, and to the unbeliever who when faced with something he does not understand must avoid/

3. Brunner, The Mediator, p.p.334,301,302; Penelhum, Religion and Rationality, p.217; W. James, The Will to Believe, p.90.

avoid demanding of it more than it claims, e.g., he must not ask for final irrefutable proof, when only a firmly accepted hypothesis is offered. Faith means belief in something concerning which doubt is still theoretically or practically possible. The point is again that faith and belief, like the idea of "sinner" and rationality and irrationality, rests on a kind of tension between what is claimed and what cannot be claimed. The believer must know something yet he cannot continue to call it belief if he knows everything about it, hence the tension. This tension is part of the actual situational limit of rationality as it relates to belief.

These then are some of the limitations of rationality in relation to belief. They are the tenuous nature of belief in its genesis, in the evidence held and offered for it, and in its conversion into action. Sense one of "rationality" is only concerned with belief as it relates to what all men must believe universally, while most of what has been examined is really in terms of sense two, where there is still room for disagreement and argument. When confronted with a statement of belief, it is necessary first of all to inquire which level of rationality is concerned and to approach the standards and limits of such beliefs accordingly. Then one must go on to see, in the very definite situation, the kinds of limits there are on rationality as it applies to both levels of the senses of rationality as they relate to belief. While it is possible for the unbeliever to disregard totally belief, this does not exempt the believer from dealing with the problems of unbelief. So it is necessary to consider how one ought to react to criticism of belief. Pascal seemed to believe that the/

the best way to deal with such criticism was to keep the right sort of company, as belief appeared to be highly contagious.⁴ However,, the rational examination of criticism may have more to offer than a retreat to group psychology and sociology.

The question facing the believer is how to deal with the problem of criticism. This notion has already been analysed and some of its limits seen. It was argued that criticism ought to be based on neutrality allowing for both positive and negative criticism, that one ought to be acquainted with the object of criticism to criticise, that the occasion of criticism was when something went wrong either due to failure or error. It was also decided that criticism to be genuine was intended to bring about change, improvement, or elimination of error, though it was possible to criticise with a view to clarification and explanation. Criticism must have appropriate backing, in terms of evidence or authority. It presupposed understanding and intelligence and the capacity to adapt in light of criticism as well as the opportunity to respond to criticism, by argument. It was seen how important it was that the person criticised, when it was a person, might be able to appreciate the criticism, and that this might be mitigated by circumstances. In general it was shown that criticism could be more or less appropriate, varied with circumstances, one's relation to the person, object, and one's view of the object criticised. Criticism might be theoretical, practical, psychological, moral, or religious, and that within these fields there were varying forms and standards/

4. Penelhum, Religion and Rationality, p.214.

standards of criticism. It was also seen that not everything might be open to criticism.⁵

All of these points provide a basic technique for the detail of how to approach and deal with criticism in various situations, but it must rest on a prior settling of the question of what level of criticism is being dealt with. In terms of sense one of "rationality" it can be seen that the question of criticism cannot easily arise without some extraordinary evidence, while in relation to sense two, it is seen that both in expressing and dealing with criticism there is a good deal of room for manoeuvre. This means that in religious, moral and metaphysical terms there is no need for an immediate retreat to commitment, but rather the need for close analysis of the object of criticism, and the nature and scope of that criticism. Part of such an inquiry must involve asking questions, and it is necessary therefore to move from criticism in general to the asking of genuine questions.

Where there are questions, there is room for argument even if that argument is solely whether or not there is a question to be asked. Where there is such a question there is room for reasoning processes, and there must be at least something that can be said which is relevant to the dispute. But questions which are asked in the midst of such disagreement must be real questions in the sense that the answer is not already known to them. Even for there to be recognition that there/

5. Downie, "The Right To Criticise", p.p.116-7; Acton, The Philosophy of Punishment, p.35; Watkins, "C.C.R.: A Refutation", p.61, see above Chapter Two p.p. 87

there is a question at stake means that there is some ground between the two sides over what is to count as a question and to some extent what will therefore tend to count as an answer to it. This is important in argument, for on Terrance and Bartley's accounts there was no room for the critic to take up any position, but this is not the case on the view of rationality I am propounding. It is against the agreed background of sense one of "rationality" that two disputing parties may go on to discuss the kinds of standards which they will accept in particular cases, which are at the level of sense two of "rationality". It is necessary therefore to ensure that the questions at issue are real questions which can be answered and to describe what is going to count as having answered the question. Real questions must have some sort of effect in that they are the sort of questions which will be followed up. If an answer is given, that answer will make a difference, and we shall be affected by what is given in response to what is asked. In other words, one must move away from purely academic disputes which have no real effect because they are not questions which matter to the asker or to anyone else. No one will act upon these sorts of queries, and the person asked, sensing this, refuses to answer, for he does not wish to play pointless games. What is being argued for is genuine questioning, which is no game, but rather a genuine desire to learn, to change, to arrive at fuller and more true conclusions and beliefs. One of the situational limits of rationality must relate to an appreciation of what sort of question is/

is being asked, its seriousness, and its genuineness. With this will be some understanding of what is required to answer it and what will satisfy the query.⁶

What is required for a better understanding of the situational limits of rationality is the development of genuine questions which fulfil the sorts of standards being described. Questions which have answers still to be learned, and which are appropriate to what is under consideration. It is essential to develop appropriate questions, appropriate both to the proper level of rationality involved, appropriate to the particular context and subject under review, and appropriate to the evidence and sources available on which to make response. At level one of rationality it is difficult to imagine the formulating of genuine new questions, but at level two it is necessary to concentrate on deciding whether or not this particular question is appropriate and genuine according to its particular context and situation.⁷

There has been examination of belief, its criticism, and the asking of questions in relation to this criticism and the isolation of certain limits which it is necessary to be aware of in the actual situation of argument and discussion where rationality is involved, and that is of course in every such situation. But now attention is turned to the consideration of the situational limits of argument in general. In any argument it is first of all important to understand what the argument is about, to discover in what respects one disagrees and the common ground necessary on the basis of which disagreement can take place. One of the situational limits of being able to describe the/

6. T.p.1,123-4,130; S.p.p.53-4; Bambrough, Reason, Truth and God, p.p.46-7,49,104.

7. G. Warnock, The Object of Morality, p.p.121-2; T.p.p.94,124,120-1, 229; S.p.53; M.M.p.123; J. MacMurray, The Self as Agent, p.21; Coulson, "Christianity in the Age of Science", p.27.

the measure of disagreement is that it is possible for two people to agree on all the facts and still differ on the conclusion, for example, whether they should say "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God". The disagreement here is not so much a factual one as rather a conflict in attitudes and hence in outlook and action.⁸ It may not be possible in such disputes to offer a crucial experiment to decide between such disagreement, but this need not be to say that there is no correct and no wrong answer. The same sort of situation arises in legal proceedings and it is interesting to consider the kinds of argument offered over such notions as the exercising of reasonable care, and the legal standing of a bill as a document. In such cases the reasons offered are like the legs of a chair, rather than consecutive links in a chain. They have a cumulative effect, and must be taken as a whole or lose their cogency. Similar sorts of judgements take place when a doctor decides what is wrong from a patient's symptoms, and when a detective spots the criminal from the available clues.⁹ These processes of argument are not the reaching of arbitrary decisions. Rather the need to look at the situation as a whole is seen and especially as regards the particular context, and to determine within that context what the standards of sense, meaning, and so of argument in general are to be. The situation and its particular features limit the kind and degree of argument which may be used, at this level two of "rationality".

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8. F. Ferre, Language, Logic, and God, p.186; Wisdom, Philosophy and Psychoanalysis, p.250; Bambrough, Reason, Truth and God, p.64; MacIntyre, B Wilson (ed.) Rationality, p.62.
 9. Wisdom, ibid, p.156-8; Bambrough, ibid, p.64.

When we are involved in an argument, however, it is necessary to recognise what would count for and against each of the views which are in debate. In situations of disagreement, there must be at least one person wrong, and where it can be known that someone is wrong there should be the possibility of discovering who is correct.¹⁰ Right and wrong in argument relate to truth and falsity in logical terms. As Bartley notes, "The practice of critical argument and logic are bound together. We can reject logic, but to do so is to reject the practice of argument. What we cannot do is to go on arguing critically after we have rejected the idea that true premises must, in a valid argument, lead to true conclusions".¹¹ Bartley not only makes the point of the interconnection of logic and argument but in defining what is to count as criticism, outlines three kinds of argument. These are: "1. arguments purporting to reveal some internal inconsistency in the position under attack; 2. arguments for the falsity of the position; and 3. arguments to the effect that the position is unsatisfactory from a methodological point of view".¹² However, one needs too to be aware of the whole family of logical relations and not to limit argument by too narrow a conception of logic. It has been stated that there are at least two basic senses of logic which relate to the two basic senses of "rationality". Thus in argument each side requires to clarify which level it is dealing with - sense one or two, and then to explicate the standards of that level which will, of course, be limited by the particular situation and subject-matter.

Argument/

10. Bambrough, Reason, Truth, and God, p.p.53-4,78,101.

11. R.C.p.171; Q.p.318.

12. Watkins, "C.C.R.: A Refutation", p.59.

Argument deals not just with the form or content of criticism, but also with the person argued against and there is the necessity to come to grips with the personal aspects of attitude in argument, and not just the mechanics of debate. It is necessary to understand why a person is attracted to his particular viewpoint, and this may involve us in a deeply personal exploration, which may involve a frank and emotionally disturbing discussion. Whatever the difficulty in this, it is still true that argument does have an effect. There are those who feel that this can be overstressed and that arguments play but a minor role. "Definite arguments are the symptoms and pretexts, but seldom the causes, of the change. Their chief merit is to accelerate the inevitable crisis. They derive their force and efficacy from their conformity with the mental habits of those to whom they are addressed. Reasoning which in one age would make no impression whatever, in the next is received with enthusiastic applause."¹³ Certainly argument is not everything in such a situation, but if it is futile to argue with a person with different presuppositions into one's own position rationally, then if a decision has to be reached, one can only resort to irrational persuasion or force. It is just this fear of the resort to force which frightens and ought to frighten all those who attempt to belittle argument. Argument may be limited, and it is certainly necessary to examine arguments with reference to their particular background, but nevertheless argument is far better than force, if human values of life and freedom are to count for anything. Thus argument is limited in connection with rationality by the particular situation/

13. Lecky, The Rise and Influence of Rationalism, p.vii; R.C.p.220, R. Franklin, "Can Philosophers Reach the Truth?", p.24.

situation where it occurs. There is the need and the difficulty of deciding the area of agreement and disagreement, the problem of different attitudes to the same facts, the nature of certain cumulative types of argument which need to be related to particular situations and standards within those situations, and the problem of the way that personal factors may limit rationality in situations; yet despite all these there is still the necessity for argument rather than force, and arguers must clarify what they are about and at which level of rationality they are functioning, as well as the standards relative to the particular context they are concerned with, so that discussion may go on, and force be rejected as a means of persuasion.

Argument has been examined, but now this is taken a step further to the notion of persuasion. Concentration will be on one particular example of this, though the points made are equally applicable to persuasion in moral and metaphysical discussion. Torrance states the problem of theological persuasion as the inability to communicate God to men directly and therefore the need to refer other minds to something beyond ourselves.¹⁴ The difficulty in such a situation is that there are two different frames of reference involved. It is essential somehow to bring others to see and hear the reality we refer to in the same way as we see and hear it. To do this one needs to furnish others with an interpretative framework to guide their recognition of the reality referred to. However it is necessary to be aware of a possible/

14. T.p.p.x,xi,-xii.

possible dichotomy in such persuasion. "We may persuade people by convicting their minds and bringing them to assent to what we say, or we may persuade them by moving their feelings and evoking from them the response we desire. In both cases persuasion induces a belief and leads to a commitment, but in the former the controlling factor is rational judgement rather than an emotive reaction."¹⁵ If we manipulate feelings without proper regard to the role of the intellect then persuasion is not related to rationality but to psychological manipulation.

The danger is of winning the argument but losing the person. We may succeed in destroying the other person's arguments, but so hurt his feelings that after the argument is apparently over he will be trying to find new arguments, which will salvage his pride. We need in persuasion and argument a degree of sympathy which can penetrate behind observable behaviour and put ourselves in another's situation, though this may not be easy to do. People are affected by what they ought not to be and not affected by what they ought, and when we are confronted by such we do argue and seek to persuade, because of our confidence in the power of reason, nevertheless such confidence may only be valid from our particular viewpoint.¹⁶ Persuasion must be aware of the personal aspects in argument, yet be true to rational grounds and presentation.

There/

15. S.p.p.195,198-9,201-3; T.p.p.165-6; M.M.p.p.28ff.

16. M. Quoist, The Christian Response, p.102, J. Lucas, "The Soul", B. Mitchell (ed.) Faith and Logic, p.142; Wisdom, Philosophy and Psychoanalysis, p.p.160-2.

There has been examination of argument and persuasion and something of the limits of both these forms in practice has been seen, but this must be put against the background of the two senses of "rationality" stressed. There are two particular levels of argument, one appropriate to what is logically accepted by all and every man, and the other referring to what makes rational sense within a particular context and is logical, given certain premisses, which may themselves be debatable. So in persuasion, this means that it does not make sense to persuade someone of what he must accept, unless there is some total breakdown of personality. The sort of thing in mind here is seen in the difference between a general, a businessman, and a judge looking at their problems over and against a neurotic's examination of his own. "But the general, the businessman and the judge may consider their problems very patiently and still be very different from the neurotic. The neurotic may discuss his problems - he may indeed - but he never means business; the discussion is not a means to action, to something other than itself; on the contrary, after a while we get the impression that in spite of his evident unhappiness and desire to come from hesitation to decision he also desires the discussion never to end and dreads its ending."¹⁷ The neurotic's failure is symptomatic of his inability to accept what must be accepted, and that is of course, level one of "rationality". In contrast, level two is the area of persuasion outlined, where there is the attempt to bring the other to "intuition", or to express sympathetically something new. This does not/

17. Wisdom, Philosophy and Psychoanalysis, p.p.172, 178-9.

not therefore degenerate into decisionism, but rather requires arguments and persuasive techniques to be clearly related to the particular context and presuppositions involved in that context, and not offered or rejected as "rational" in sense one rather than in sense two.

Having looked at questions, argument and persuasion, consideration turns now to the actual situational limitations of rationality as they relate to explanation. Torrance's complaint against modern epistemology rested on the faulty disjunction of explanation from understanding, each becoming distorted.¹⁸ Explanation may be in response to a particular demand, query, or attack. It may be an attempt to convince, e.g., evangelism, or it may be rather an attempt at greater understanding for oneself, in other words, an appropriation on one's own behalf. It was earlier outlined that there are degrees and kinds of explanation and this was especially true of the difference between saying everything and saying something. There is more than one kind of explanation. "We may legitimately and usefully explain a large-scale and complex argument or book or musical or artistic composition by an internal process of relating parts to each other, and to the whole, without necessarily or at every point making reference to other arguments or books or compositions."¹⁹ Explanation as it relates to sense one must be the bringing out of the implications already there, and these implications are those accepted by all reasonable men. Most commonly, however, we explain with reference to/

18. S.p.104-5; See chapter Three p.p. 140

19. Hanson, Patterns of Discovery, p.54; Bambrough, Reason, Truth and God, p.96.

to sense two of "rationality" where we cannot say everything, but rather, something, and that something is in terms of the particular context. I earlier drew on Rawl's distinction between justifying a procedure as a whole, and justifying something by reference to that procedure.²⁰ The same holds for explanation. In explaining at level one of "rationality", we appeal to what all can and do accept, while explanation at level two is with reference to a particular procedure, set of procedures, or presuppositions, which need to be described and accepted before the explanation is counted by the other as sufficient.

There is also a limit on the demand for evidence. While it is perfectly reasonable to ask for evidence for theological statements, it is not reasonable to demand that such evidence should conform to canons based on natural science or social science. But once one has entered into a particular viewpoint, then there is a verification structure, hence the importance of being able to describe to the outsider the standards and framework of what is involved in a particular setting. Sense two of "rationality" relates to this sort of evidence which is meaningful within a particular context, while sense one relates to that evidence which all and every reasonable man must accept. At this level to talk of a reason and evidence is to deal with the universal aspect, that which counts as a reason in one case must count as a reason in every similar case unless there are special reasons for ignoring it.

William/

20. See above, p.p. 69ff

William James has suggested a different kind of limit which applies to evidence for rationality. When we are confronted by what is rational evidence on James' account we shall be aware of this fact because of certain subjective marks. He asks, "What, then, are the marks? A strong feeling of ease, peace, rest is one of them. The transition from a state of puzzle and perplexity to rational comprehension is full of lively relief and pleasure".²¹ This sense of "peace" may not be so tenuous as it first appears, for it may arise as a cure to a particular feeling of unease. It may happen when the unbeliever comes to share the believer's way of looking at things after the secular explanations of particular phenomena have ceased to satisfy him and, in their place, religious accounts seem more satisfactory. If there is a genuine communication of evidence it will be at level two of "rationality". It is the accepting of proof in the sense that one comes to feel the same as. One appreciates and values as the other does. We would in this case need to be sure that it was possible to have this experience. Can we see and hear as the saint, hero, artist, or critic sees and hears and to what extent? Can we indeed share the experience of another? The believer says, "Taste and see that the Lord is good." But it must be noted that the offering of such proof may be limited by recalling that if there is scope here for proof, there is equal scope for disproof.

There are in practice, indeed, changes of belief on the basis of evidence. "If Christian faith is ever completely lost, it must be either

21. James, The Will to Believe, p.63.

either because certain events are now encountered whose contrary witness is so overpowering as altogether to undermine our reliance upon these paradigmatic events, or else because the divine significance of the paradigmatic events themselves now evaporates from our mind, whether as a result of further consideration of them or from negligently ceasing to think of them at all. Either way it may be said that a man loses his faith only if he now sees things differently from how he had formerly seen them; and, save that it is a different kind of seeing which is here in question, it is in this way also that the physical scientist comes to reject beliefs which he had formerly entertained.²² Thus disproof may arise from either coming upon an internal inconsistency or on realization of completely new evidence so overpowering as to refute earlier beliefs.

In the area of the situational limits of rationality in respect to evidence the stress has been on the variety of explanation, the demand for appropriateness, and the verification structure involved in adopting and living in a particular setting. This was related to the two levels of "rationality". Now attention turns to justification. I have already outlined this concept and draw on that account. It was shown that justification related not just to the giving of reasons, but the giving of good reasons. Justification is in general terms backward looking, except when in reference to future plans. It rests on agreement as to what is to be justified in light of a particular breakdown. One must take care to analyse such breakdowns to clarify the/

22. J. Baillie, The Sense of The Presence of God, p.p.72,75.

the nature of the justification asked for. If someone queries an action of mine by asking why I did it, there are a variety of possible sense involved. This may be a simple request for information as to the causal, psychological, or physiological functions at work. It may rather be a request for orientation to combat the feeling of lostness expressed by, "Why on earth did you do that"? Or it may be a request in anger. "What the hell do you think you are up to?". To justify requires that there is agreement as to what is to be justified and also agreement as to what is to count as having succeeded in justifying or having failed. Justification is appropriate in response to queries or criticism only if there are genuine alternatives open to the person in the particular situation. In other words, one way to deal with the demand for justification is by stating that there was no alternative. All justification must come to an end somewhere, but it is essential to beware of drawing that finishing line too soon.²³ Rather, with Hare, one would say, "If pressed to justify a decision completely, we have to give a complete specification of the way of life of which it is a part. This complete specification it is impossible in practice to give; the nearest attempts are those given by the great religions, especially those which can point to historical persons who carried out the way of life in practice. If the inquirer still goes on asking 'But why should I live like that?' then there is no further answer to give him, because we have already ex hypothesi said everything that could/

23. P. Winch, The Idea of a Social Science, p.39; Flew, "The Justification of Punishment", Acton (ed.) The Philosophy of Punishment, p.88; R.C.p.139

could be included in this further answer."²⁴ Justification varies according to circumstances, the object, and the person concerned. There seem to be two general levels of justification, one by verification and the other by results and action.

Against this general background of the nature and limits of justification in rationality, it is necessary to return to the two levels of "rationality". These are parallel to the two levels of justification of a whole system and justification of a particular action by reference to a standard. One justifies in sense one by reference to what is universally acceptable. The point may be seen from the difference between the philosopher (in this case standing for the reasonable man) and the psychotic and neurotic. "there is a big difference between the philosopher and both the psychotic and the obsessional neurotic. It lies in the flow of justificatory talk, of rationalization, which the philosopher produces when asked why he takes the extraordinary line he does. It is true that both the psychotic and neurotic listen to reason and defend themselves. The philosopher defends himself more elaborately....When we call justifying talk 'rationalization' we hint that we are not impressed by it and do not expect others to be. But we are impressed by the philosopher's talk, it has a universal effect, reluctantly we are impressed by it."²⁵

The occasions when one is called upon to justify a practice in such an universal fashion are rare exceptions, especially in contrast to the activity of justification in sense two of "rationality". Such justification/

24. Hare, The Language of Morals, p.69.

25. Wisdom, Philosophy and Psychoanalysis, p.174-5, Flew, ibid, p.88.

justification is only possible in context, with a certain shared outlook on life or at least on standards. Ultimately the justification of a particular action or belief only makes sense when the whole system is presented, and accepted or rejected. Thus the task of the apologist must be to draw the objector's attention to the various features of the system, and the objector must be aware in his attack and demand for justification of the overlapping connections of support within a doctrinal field.

Having said all this it is still true that there are changes in belief and action. One of the things which must undermine most the extreme rationalist view is that some scientific doctrines are now in a category of respected as once reasonable, but are now superseded. Changes do occur in social terms as well as individual ones. But such change for the individual does not occur in a vacuum. For the religious person to become an unbeliever, something must happen suggests Agassi, "To be drawn to our present discussion, the religious person must be dissatisfied, disappointed, frustrated. He may, then, look to reason for consolation. And, taking a small dose of reason to support his religion, he may indeed, all too easily destroy his religion. But this alone will not do. He has to be doubly frustrated: Reason destroys his religion and fails to replace it".²⁶

In this section of the situational limits of rationality an attempt has been made to show that some account can be given of the limits of rationality, that there is room for the critic, and that there is an account of rationality adequate to the complexity of the subject-matter.

I/

26. Agassi, Zygon, p.134; Hodges, "Languages, Standpoints and Attitudes", p.33; De Bono, The Use of Lateral Thinking, pp.26-7.

I have been outlining the situational limits of rationality against the background of the two basic senses of rationality described and with this showing not only that genuine argument and discussion can take place, but offering some sort of pointer to the issues which ought to be dealt with if such discussion is to be fruitful. To this end the limits on belief, criticism, argument, persuasion, justification and change were seen. Specific points of how rationality is limited in definite situations, stressing the importance of the clarification of both the situation and the standards involved when discussion on a rational basis is taking place, were also made.

3. The Social Limits.

In this section as in the others on the limits of rationality the aim is to do three things. Firstly it is to draw attention to certain limits which were overlooked in Bartley and Torrance's accounts, then to show that there is an account of rationality which allows the critic a position from where to launch an attack, and finally to offer a more adequate account of rationality based on the limits in actual practice. When looking at the actual situation it is seen that not only has the critic room to stand, but the nature of the argument and discussion which is being carried on and ought to be is also obvious. This is linked with the two senses of rationality and these are aligned to the social emphases and features which serve as limits on rationality in practice. Every system of thought would appear to relate in some way to a community, and without such a community the benefit and validity of any thought or belief would be severely restricted.

Torrance stresses the social nature of thought: "Our thinking presupposes the structure of our active inter-personal relations and takes place within them. Even the activity of natural science is inextricably involved in the structure of society, and would be impossible without a community of empirical subjects in which mutual questioning and criticism and communication provide the necessary conditions for verification and progress in knowledge."¹ This necessary sociability in knowledge and thought is marked in language and in institutions, and it is important to note that it is through language/

1. T.p.163; Polanyi, The Logic of Liberty, p.75; Ferre, Language, Logic and God, p.94.

language that thought is bound up with the institutions, patterns and traditions of the communities we live in. Torrance comments, "Because our thought develops only through language and language exists only in society, we have to clarify the relation of our concepts in their objective context to the language of the society in which we live and speak, and of course to any language which we are using as the medium of our thought, communication or interpretation."² In other words, when one approaches a system of beliefs it is essential to be careful to put it in its proper context and to realize the centrality of language and common institutions in such a context. There are two levels in this context, and two levels of language and institution, which need to be clarified. The first is the level of what has been dubbed sense one of "rationality", part of which is the realisation that the ability to make generalisations depends on the possession of concepts. This is the sort of principle and logic which is basic to all men. Collingwood calls this level, absolute presuppositions. An absolute presupposition is the yardstick by which experience is judged. When one tries to challenge an absolute presupposition there is a violent reaction, stemming from the inability to express even the possibility of its being wrong. These presuppositions are part of the general attitudes and cultural, social, religious and educational equipment of mankind. Collingwood does admit that there is the possibility that these may change and develop.³ My own view is that such/

2. S. pp. 18-19.

3. Collingwood, Essay on Metaphysics, pp. 42-3, 48, 60, 193-5; Penelhum, Religion and Rationality, p. 129.

such change is possible only for level two presuppositions and not at level one as there are two separate levels of rationality at work, which if confused, will lead to even greater confusion. It is necessary as human beings to have particular means of conceptual categorization. Such principles of categorization and logic cannot and need not be proved for if you take a given logic to be true then its principles are undeniable without contradiction and so are necessary. There can be no proof of the truth of such logic as it would always beg the question. There is no alternative and no way of expressing an alternative to such basic universal features of rationality. This is part of the definition of reality and of what is seen, and it is impossible to conceive of how reality could be anything else or what a different kind of seeing might be.⁴ This universal level of sense one of "rationality" is binding on all men and on each individual. However there is another level of rationality which is equally social in nature, but limited in particular contexts.

In Antonia Fraser's picture of Mary, Queen of Scots, there is offered a most telling description of what it is to be within a particular context at level two of "rationality". Talking of Mary, Fraser says, "As a born Catholic, who had known no other creed, her faith was to her like her everyday bread, something which she took for granted, and yet which was essential to her, and without which she could not imagine her existence."⁵

4. C.Lewis, Mind and the World Order, pp.207-210; Horton, (ed) Wilson, Rationality, p.154; Winch, The Idea of a Social Science; Ferre, Language, Logic and God, p.221.

5. A.Fraser, Mary, Queen of Scots, p.145.

This is a problem for us all for in a particular context, we exist in a frame of reference which is rather like living within a system of coordinates, which gives meaning to everything. To enter into this frame of reference is usually to be educated and exposed to supportive literature, leading to the sharing of criteria, even to the extent that to argue or reason rests on sharing common assumptions. Though we may not be affected by every point of a system, nevertheless the system as a whole does affect us. Our language and interpretative concepts are derived from the system. Our concepts and forms of description can only have meaning if they are in relation to a particular background and community.⁶

Judgments are never simplistic, nor made in isolation. They are framed in a whole context of beliefs from which criteria of significance, relevance and meaning all are derived. Authority too is derived from such systems, particularly with reference to the kinds of questions which may and may not be asked, and the kinds of answers which might satisfy.⁷ Not only, however, are there positive features within a particular context which set social limits to rationality, but there are particular negative features also. In discussion of scientific revolutions Kuhn makes the point that a particular viewpoint not only specifies what entities a universe contains but also those which it does not.⁸ As all organisation is based on the system of belief, it becomes well nigh impossible to express any opposite or to alter the structure radically.

Once/

6. J. Baillie, The Sense of the Presence of God, p.132; Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, p.46; RvR, p.7; Mitchell, "The Grace of God", p.151; Hodges, "Languages, Standpoints and Attitudes", p.72; Hampshire, "Feeling and Expression", p.19.

7. Mitchell (ed), Faith and Logic, p.169; Hodges, ibid, pp.21-3; Hanson, Patterns of Discovery, p.26; RvR, p.18; Farrer, "Revelation", p.33.

8. Kuhn, ibid, p.7; De Bono, The Use of Lateral Thinking, p.31.

Once within a system and adopting its paradigms, one needs no longer to seek to justify the enterprise, for such justification becomes circular.⁹ This is not to say that such belief within a system is irrational. Rather it is "rational" in sense two, which means that it is not irrational and that its rationality consists in its relation to the rest of the system, and only within the system, because its nature and man's nature cannot give to it the universally accepted quality which level one "rationality" refers to. All this leads to the awareness that to understand a standpoint one has to learn the appropriate language, and this may involve entering into the standpoint, which it is not easy to do. This is to emphasise something of the immensity of change of beliefs and the nature of criticism. To criticise justly needs not only awareness of what the other believes within its context but also the realisation that one's own beliefs are held in a context too. Both need to be spelled out before genuine and fruitful communication can begin.

That there is a problem between diverging views is almost universally agreed. Wisdom offers certain classic examples of such divergence. The two people who look at a garden to discover the gardener.¹⁰ Another two looking at a picture or natural scene and disagreeing.¹¹ Science offers many examples: pre- versus post-Copernicus, Newtonian versus Einsteinian, Kepler versus Brahe, the physicist after university and the same physicist as a child.¹² The problem of being in one particular view seems to be that people live in their frames of reference, so that change/

9. Kuhn, *ibid.*, pp.19-20.

10. Wisdom, *Philosophy and Psychoanalysis*, p.154-5; Brunner, *The Mediator*, p.217, note.

11. Wisdom, *ibid.*, pp.158-9.

12. Wisdom, *ibid.*, pp.142-3; Hanson, *Patterns of Discovery*, pp.5,15.

change has a tremendous social and personal effect, that one way of seeing things tends to exclude other ways, that the system of belief is internally watertight, and that it defines different views as nonsense, or can offer explanation for all that another system propounds.¹³

Having said all this as to the social limits and difficulties of rational disagreement and discussion, it must still be denied that nothing can be said. It is essential to explain why we offer our allegiance to a particular set of beliefs. Perhaps most of all it is necessary to remember that "A critical discussion and a comparison of the various frameworks is always possible. It is just a dogma - a dangerous dogma - that the different frameworks are like mutually untranslatable languages. The fact is that even totally different languages (like English and Hopi, or Chinese) are not untranslatable.."¹⁴

In discussion of the divergences, it is necessary to be aware of overstating the case. One lesson from European thought is that while theories come and go, the world of common sense seems to be little changed. People are to a large extent likeminded because they share common needs and ways of satisfying them, common concepts, and intelligence. It is also the case that because of concepts and language our notion of reality is one and the same, at least in description of what belongs to it.¹⁵ This level is that of the rational man in the sense of the impartial person who has accepted what is universally agreed. But divergence at level two is equally real, and it must be examined how we may and can change ourselves and our views within the social limitations expressed.

Change/

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13. M.M.pp.28-9; Sutcliffe, Eagle of the Ninth, pp.80-1; Lucas, "The Soul", p.140; Penelhum, Religion and Rationality, pp.106-8.
 14. Popper, "Normal Science and its Dangers", pp.56-7.
 15. Winch, The Idea of a Social Science, p.15; Wilson, (ed) Rationality, p.141; Lewis, Mind and the World Order, pp.20-1, 91, 113.

Change only comes with difficulty because man functions against a background of expectation and it is only some breach in expectation or failure of existing rules that leads to a search for new ones. Such a search is preceded by a sense of inadequacy on the part of beliefs or institutions to meet the problems faced. This requires new data and new interpretations based on realising the nature and extent of the conflict of ideas. In other words, it is necessary to see alternatives to what is believed before it can be discarded.¹⁶ That is the situation where one is forced into change by circumstances, but need not be so negative in approach. It is possible to adopt an openness to other views, which refuses to be bound by the rigidity of what is believed, but rather explores genuine alternatives to seek to understand them. This is often associated with attempts at the rearrangement of material in insightful ways.¹⁷ To execute such insight is part of an imaginative approach to others and their views, wherein a person attempts to enter imaginatively into a situation, to think as if it were real and as if it were believed. No matter how difficult this may be, it is certainly an useful corrective to moral and religious rigidity. Equally positive, though less startling than imagination and insight, is the steady development and evolution of ideas and beliefs. This does happen, though it has also its dangers which are paralleled by the danger of the mere acquiescing in a particular belief, rather than thinking it through in all its implications for oneself. This is part of what it means to be rational: to think something for oneself, or at least to be able to do so and to be given the opportunity to/

16. Lewis, ibid, p.269; Kuhn, ibid, pp.65,68,91; De Bono, Lateral Thinking, p9.
 17. T.p.122; Hare, Freedom and Reason, p.197; De Bono, Lateral Thinking, p9.

to do so, rather than have blind acquiescence.

When change does occur it is often described in dramatic terms. Kuhn likens it to a scientist putting on inverting lenses.¹⁸ Popper confesses that "I admit that an intellectual revolution often looks like a religious conversion. A new insight may strike us like a flash of lightning. But this does not mean that we cannot evaluate, critically and rationally, our former views, in the light of new ones."¹⁹ Certainly there are suggestions of things like, "blinding flashes" and "gestalt switches".²⁰ Such changes result in revision of one's way of thinking, so that one requires to be educated and to learn and develop a new language. This is not a simple matter, for such changes are not merely social changes, but perhaps most of all, matters of personal decision and action. Morality and religion are genuine when they are the subject of individual choice and upholding. To make this sort of choice means a change, which is the most radical a person can undergo, for it entails abandoning firmly established habits and standards for thought and action.²¹

In other words, there is a kind of conversion where our minds are changed and we begin to learn afresh, as in a religious conversion. The point is that such changes as outlined must affect the whole person and his life. Essentially this means that any picture of knowledge and discovery as disinterested and academic alone is faulty. The paradigm is rather that of involvement, what Polanyi calls "dwelling-in".²² A change must have its effect and be shown in what is said and done, and this /

18. Kuhn, *ibid*, p.124.

19. Popper, "Normal Science and its Dangers", p.57.

20. Bragg, "Science, The Adventure of Living", p.31; Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, p.149.

21. Butterfield, The Origins of Modern Science, pp.1-2; Wisdom, Philosophy and Psychoanalysis, pp.263-4; Collingwood, Essay on Metaphysics, p.48, note; T. pp.91, footnote, 293.

22. Bruner, The Mediator, p.248; Polanyi, The Tacit Dimension, p.18.

this means assimilation into a new society. To learn what this truly means, Polanyi suggests that we become apprentices to the best available master. "You cannot criticize religion or science from the outside, nor do you become an insider by merely endorsing a doctrine; commitment is an existential affair; one learns the meaning of a commitment by practising it." ²³

These are all the sorts of things which would be looked for in a level two change of belief. This is to outline the social limits on rationality in light of the two sense of "rationality". It was shown that internal problems and imaginative procedures, dramatic or gradual changes in belief, outlook and action, and inculcation into new social outlooks and practices all have a part to play in the situation where rational discussion is taking place and two sides are in dispute. These features help settle the particular standards and emphases which are relevant to successful communication and discussion. It must be stressed that while it has been argued that there are social limits of rationality, this is in no way to supplant rationality and it is to deny that there is only conditioning. Rationality means that man can change his mind and his environment and ways have been suggested in which this does and can happen, so that one may be aware of exactly what is required to bring about such a change. It was seen that there is room for the critic and this freedom for criticism stems from a clear separation of the appropriate senses of "rationality" and the clear delineation of various social limits in actual practice.

23. Agassi, Zygon, p.162; Wilson (ed), Rationality, p.xviii.

4. The Psychological Limits.

I have been analysing the various limits of rationality to improve upon the accounts of Bartley and Terrance both in content and effects. I have presented the natural, situational, and social limits and finally turn to the psychological. Again these will be interpreted from actual situations and in light of the basic distinction of two senses of "rationality".

One of the major problems in the change of beliefs is inbuilt conservatism and a psychological resistance to change. Obedience and the desire to conform are deeply engrained in society and there are many who conform to rules simply because they are rules rather than because of what they do and why they do it. Much of what is accepted in this unthinking manner may be described as a birthright into which one enters. "It is formed in him by what he sees and hears; the actions he has been taught to do and the language he uses are part of it; it forms the mental atmosphere which he has breathed long before he began to reflect. For this reason he is not the unwilling captive of tradition, for in following it he expresses his own nature".¹ A particular tradition has usually a particular body of truth as well as a group of persons, or institutions, which acts as the guardian of the truth. This takes the form of authority which is recognised as the controlling and guiding force in all matters pertaining to the truth. This has been described as, "Humanity is an inherited deposit taken on trust", but this is not to say that it is necessarily a bad thing, for without such tradition and its support there/

1. Sorley, "Tradition", pp.10,9; Downie, Roles and Values, p.37; "Conservatism" Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Vol.2.p.197.

there would be no human society.² For those within the tradition, there are particular psychological pressures and limits against change. These are that one has the feeling that one has no option, no alternative, and that what one believes is inescapable. "A man with conviction is a hard man to change. Tell him you disagree and he turns away. Show him facts and figures and he questions your sources. Appeal to logic and he fails to see your point."³ But this refusal, to be fully effective, is usually backed up by strong social support. A prime example of this was seen in the behaviour of the sect after disproof in "When Prophecy Fails".⁴ Here were individuals who believed with their whole hearts and had taken steps to commit themselves irrevocably on the basis of their belief. Yet they were presented with unequivocal and undeniable evidence that their belief was totally wrong. Nevertheless they emerged not only unshaken, but even more convinced of the truth of their beliefs than before as could be seen from increased conversion attempts.

When change does come, it must be remembered that knowledge starts from given situations with established usages. In this situation the old clashes with the new, though there is always the effect of the one on the other. There is no breach of continuity between the old and the new, for it is often from the old that the new takes its shape, even if this is only in a negative sense. Thus the continuity of tradition and of the person involved is ensured. Part of what this means is that one generation/

2. Sorley, "Tradition", p.p.6-7,8-9; Farrer, "Revelation", p.87.

3. Warnock, The Object of Morality, p.98; When Prophecy Fails, p.3.

4. When Prophecy Fails, p.p.229,3; see above p.p.291ff.

generation may learn from another, though it is also true that each generation has to question for itself what is given to it as tradition. This means that our beliefs and actions, though derived from tradition, are still brought into relation with experience and changing conditions. The rational man is the one who accepts things for himself, not on trust or out of blind habit, not in obedience to custom.

This kind of traumatic change often is especially marked in the religious realm. A person who has accepted while a child a theological outlook in an uncritical manner may find that the doctrine about the nature of the world is too simple and narrow to be true. Widening experience and growing knowledge mean the death of such religious belief. Part of this growth of maturity in the rational person is the knowledge that it is possible to learn from mistakes. This does not take place without a struggle both against the commitment of the past and the understanding of what is new. Perhaps this is why it is often the very young or the comparative newcomer who makes the most impact in changing views.⁵ Yet the rational man who does attempt to overcome the psychological limits of rationality must also be aware of his own limitations. He cannot isolate himself from what there is in terms of societal norms nor wipe the slates totally clean, but he can strip himself of all opinions which have simply been handed down from others, or for which he has insufficient evidence, and he can decide to accept nothing as true except what is absolutely clear to his own understanding, making doubt seem ridiculous. This is no Cartesian programme/

5. S.p.203; Polanyi, Personal Knowledge, p.151; De Bono, The Use of Lateral Thinking p.p.71-2; Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions p.p.89-90.

programme for doubt, but rather the fulfilling of what we are as rational persons. There is again the tension between being totally psychologically conditioned and having the capacity to make genuine choices which even involves certain features of our so-called conditioning.

In the examination of the psychological limits of changes in belief and knowledge, one must be aware also that people are not pure, bodiless intellects, but rather people who feel desire and will. This means that there is always the possibility of a struggle between reason and the affections, will and desires.⁶ It is not easy to change our habits of mind or modify the structure of our thinking, for we ourselves live and work in these frames of thought and if they change we will have to be changed with them. Our situation is rather like this:- "There are doubtless some things which 'in the bottom of my heart' I know full well to be true, but whose truth I have never fully acknowledged 'with the top of my mind' ...There are some things we so much want to be true that we stifle our doubts concerning them, and other things the acknowledgement of which would make such unwelcome demands on us, or entail so inconvenient a readjustment both of our professed outlooks and of our habitual conduct, that we succeed in suppressing or 'repressing' what would otherwise be a fully assured conviction of their truth."⁷ In other words, our subjective preferences make rationality difficult though not impossible, and this same point may be derived from examination of our language, which as Hare puts it, "shares our weakness, and gives just where/

6. Lecky, The Rise and Influence of Rationalism, p.p.xv-xvi; Downie, Roles and Values, p.131.

7. J. Baillie, The Sense of the Presence of God, p.6.

where we do".⁸ Again there is this tension between a language which cannot be fully logicalised or reduced to mathematical form, but which is neither so fluid and informal that there is no continuity, meaning or understanding. This is level two of "rationality" where people are unable to behave and reason as they ought, and it is just this inability which shows that this is level two and not level one, where it is possible and necessary to behave and reason by universally accepted standards. This is rather like Bartley's crisis of integrity; whether or not we can live up to our purposes, claims and identity.⁹ It is essential to guard here against changing the subject from logic and conceptual clarification to psychology where the concepts are vague and ill-defined, making the drawing of distinctions a hazardous business. We are not reduced to psychology or to silence before we need be. Rather there is the opportunity for greater clarity and closer analysis of the situations of discussion and argument and the particularly relevant psychological issues and forces. Before we retreat behind the platitude that people are just different, it is necessary to analyse the situation, nature and reason for such differences and their expression.

Looking at the psychological limits of rationality as a whole, the forces of tradition and change have been seen, the nature of such change and some of the steps in it, as well as the volitional and personal problems of such changes. With reference to levels one and two of "rationality" it may be seen that in general these factors are more appropriate to level two of "rationality" where there is disagreement and such/

8. Hare, Freedom and Reason, p.73.

9. Q.p.46; RvR. p.p.8-9; Chapter Two, p.p.27

such disagreement is resolved by reference to the particular context, rather than of level one where there is no disagreement and development by disagreement for there is universally necessary acceptance of what is true. It may be true that there are particular psychological features which are common to both levels of rationality and these must be examined and isolated. But the emphasis has been on level two and the psychological limits actually involved in argument and discussion at that level between competing views.

These last four sections have been an examination of some of the actual limits of rationality in practice by reference to the practical situations of argument and discussion bearing in mind the basic distinction made in part one of this chapter. I have tried to show the style and programme of genuine argument by the examination of standards and the relation of the two senses of "rationality" to the natural, situational, social and psychological limits of rationality. I have tried to correct the overlooking of these limits in the accounts of Torrance and Bartley and also to provide an account of rationality which is more adequate than those offered by them. I have tried to show that it is possible for there to be argument, discussion and disagreement between even very basic presuppositions, and not merely to make out a case for such a possibility, but seeking to suggest the lines, content and style of such discussion. Under the heading of natural limits the importance of irrational features, irrationalism as a doctrine, the necessity/

necessity and limits of logic, and the limits of human capacities and the need to draw different levels of distinction were seen. Under the heading of situational limits, the way that different situations affect belief, criticism, persuasion, argument, justification, explanation and change were shown. In social limits the role of internal problems, imaginative procedures, dramatic and gradual changes in outlook and social inculcation in new ideas and practices were examined. Then attention turned to psychological limits and the problems of conservatism, indwelling of beliefs, personal factors in change and the nature and scope of radical changes were seen.

Throughout I have sought to integrate these factors with the two senses of "rationality" and again stress that in discussion and argument the role of rationality is twofold. It first of all requires the decision of which level of rationality is being dealt with to ensure that genuine argument can take place, then it requires the examination of the practical outworking of this separation of levels in the actual argument or discussion by reference to the natural, social, situational and psychological limits of rationality in the particular case in mind. Of course, not all and every limit will be relevant in all and every case, and so there is the necessity for the development of expertise in the application of such techniques and the exercising of them. Thus I hope to have met my own criticism of Torrance and Bartley. The account deals with the limits of rationality as they are found in practice. It is more adequate to the complexity of rationality in its many settings, and it leaves not only room for the critic, but assists the development of lines of communication between different sets of presuppositions, beliefs and outlooks.

Section Three - Conclusion

The thesis began with a concern with the lack of success of actual argument as it is practised in philosophy today. This aporia in argument was linked with two accounts of rationality which were faulty. I then turned to detailed consideration of the two accounts of rationality which offered examples of metaphysical and theological outlooks which were willing to grasp the nettle of the subject of rationality. These positions were outlined as presented by their upholders and three kinds of criticisms offered against them. The first was that in setting out to describe the nature of rationality they had omitted to examine the important aspect of the limits of rationality in actual discussion and argument. It was also argued that if one ignored this deficiency and allowed the view of rationality to be taken on its own terms, that these accounts fell into internal difficulties which undermined their validity as descriptions of the nature of rationality. These accounts were inadequate to the complexity of rationality. The third bone of contention rested on one effect of both accounts, though in different ways. This was the denial of any point from which the critic might attack the view in question. In other words, there was no way to call these views in question, to discuss them, to argue against them and to offer alternatives. This seemed to be just the sort of problem which was an unfortunate characteristic of much moral, metaphysical and religious controversy, today. Having offered criticism in detail against these views at all these levels, yet dealing with them in the way they were presented rather than forcing them into my own procrustean bed of criticism, I argued that we are able to learn from these men both positively and negatively, from what they dealt with and how they did so, as well as from what they omitted and the unfortunate effects resulting from/

from their views.

It then behoved me to make good my criticism by offering an alternative account of rationality. This had to meet the three criticisms made. My account had to deal with the limits of rationality in practice, to be more aware of the complexity of the subject matter and avoid oversimplification for the sake of ease rather than adequacy, and finally to leave room for the critic and offer scope for discussion and argument. I tried to achieve this by two steps. The first was the separation of two senses of "rationality" which has been overlooked and obviates much of the breakdown between different positions by clarifying at which level reasoning is being conducted and the particular standards which are relevant at these different levels. The basic distinction was made and applied to the synonyms of rationality. It was applied to irrationality, persons and beliefs, reason and reasons, and intelligibility. Having argued for and shown the content of this distinction, it was applied to rationality at the different levels of the limits of rationality. This was an attempt to give a more adequate account of rationality, which was appropriate to its complexity and aware of the role of limits in rationality. This examination showed both that there was room for discussion and argument and how such argument might be conducted. I therefore looked at the natural, situational, social and psychological limits, seeing the important features in each of these settings and isolating areas of difficulty for the rational person in debate and discussion. Thus I tried to give ground for the critic to stand on, to clarify the nature of the critical process, and to offer a more adequate account of rationality by learning from the mistakes of Torrance and Bartley and correcting their omissions, as well as using many issues which had been correctly spotlighted.

This/

This thesis is no easy solution, but rather a restatement of the complexity of genuine argument, and a request for and an attempt to provide a closer analysis of what is involved in such argument, so that man may be what he claims to be: a rational animal. The nature of rationality lies in the capacity to communicate and understand about all that matters most in the fields of religion, morality and metaphysics. Many apparent and real breakdowns may be resolved if different theorists exercised the kind of programme argued for, and the eventual aim must be to show the kind of difference such a programme makes with reference to particular problems in the areas of religion, morals and metaphysics.

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