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A Critical Analysis of the Religious Epistemology of Ian T. Ramsey

by

Jeffrey Astley

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Durham
Department of Theology
1978
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DECLARATION

None of the material in this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree in the University of Durham or in any other University.

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A Critical Analysis of the Religious Epistemology of Ian T. Ramsey
by J. Astley

A B S T R A C T

The thesis offers an exposition of the religious epistemology of Ian Ramsey (1915-1972) and its development, together with a critical assessment of Ramsey's work indicating its strengths and weaknesses as a contribution to the contemporary debate concerning the problem of religious knowledge.

The first chapter includes a study of unpublished material from Ramsey's early "Cambridge period", which reveals his espousal of a "form of Idealism" and the influence of Bradley, Ward and Whitehead.

The second, and longest, chapter of the thesis traces Ramsey's development from this position to a "disclosure-based" epistemology and analyses this later philosophy in detail. It includes some reflections on intuitionism in epistemology in general, and religious epistemology in particular. Ramsey's concepts of the discernment and disclosure are related to these reflections. A classification of disclosures is attempted and some of the problems raised by Ramsey's spectrum of examples of disclosure-situations discussed. The objective and subjective elements of the disclosure are studied in detail.

The third chapter considers Ramsey's work on religious language; in particular his views on "models" and "qualifiers" and his discussion of the evocative, representative and formal functions of religious discourse. Some attention is also paid to Ramsey's inconclusive suggestions about the nature of metaphysics.

Chapter four takes up the issue of the justification of religious belief, comparing Ramsey's views here to his comments on the nature of justification in scientific, personal and metaphysical language. The formal criteria of justification are surveyed, together with Ramsey's material criterion of "empirical fit". Some final suggestions indicate possible developments of Ramsey's position on justification.

Two excursuses relate Ramsey's views to (i) the debate on the role of models in science and religion, and (ii) the Thomistio doctrine of analogical predication.
NOTE

Ramsey's writings are referred to by abbreviations not enclosed in brackets. The works of other authors are cited by the author's surname followed where necessary by an abbreviation in brackets indicating the particular work referred to. In both cases this is followed either by a page number (which is not preceded by the letter "p") or by a chapter or section reference (which is preceded by the usual abbreviation).
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1. Object of Thesis

This thesis has a dual purpose. I intend to provide here an exposition of Ian Ramsey's religious epistemology and the way in which it developed. I hope to offer in addition a critical assessment of Ramsey's thought, indicating its strengths and weaknesses as a contribution to the general debate concerning the problem of religious knowledge.

2. Biographical Notes

Ian Thomas Ramsey was born at Kearsley, Bolton, on 31st January, 1915. He received his secondary education at Farnworth Grammar School and went up to Christ's College, Cambridge in 1933.

As a scholar at Christ's, Ramsey began to read for the Mathematical Tripos with the intention of becoming a mathematical physicist. However, after a serious bout of tuberculosis in 1934 he returned to Cambridge in October 1935 determined to offer himself for ordination in the Church of England. He gained a first in part I of the Mathematical Tripos in 1936 and then read for part II A of the Moral Sciences Tripos, gaining another first in 1938.

Ramsey's papers indicate that between 1936 and 1939 he attended lectures given by Broad, Wisdom, Kaismann and (especially) his supervisor A.C. Ewing.
In 1938 he was awarded the Burney Prize for a dissertation entitled "The Concept of the Supernatural". As Burney Student he read for the philosophical section (section V) of part II of the Theological Tripos, gaining another first, this time with distinction, in 1939. Ramsey attended lectures at the Divinity School given by Dodd, Williams, Boys Smith and Farmer. It is worth noting one particular set of lectures which Ramsey heard in 1939: a series on the philosophy of James Ward given by Ramsey's supervisor in theology, J.S. Boys Smith.

Ramsey's correspondence during his time at Cambridge shows that he was considering transferring to Oxford for his theological studies; but Oxford did not offer anything like a Burney Studentship and Ramsey needed financial help. He did, however, move to Ripon Hall, Oxford in 1939, to prepare for ordination. David Edwards quotes C.H. Dodd to the effect that one reason for the move was that Ramsey hoped "that by working himself in the new philosophy" propounded by anti-metaphysical philosophers, "he would be able to construct a new apologetic for Christianity taking account of all they were saying, employing their methods but showing their presuppositions up as arbitrary" (D. Edwards 23).

At any rate Ramsey remained near Oxford after his ordination, serving as assistant curate of Headington Quarry from 1940-43.

In 1943 Ramsey returned to Cambridge as Chaplain of Christ's College, where Charles Raven was still Master. Ramsey held the post of Chaplain for six years. From
1944 he served as a fellow of the College and Director of Studies in Theology and Moral Sciences; from 1949 he was a tutor. It was also in 1944 that he became a University Lecturer in Divinity and was appointed Canon Theologian of Leicester Cathedral (the latter post continuing until 1966). Ramsey delivered the Stanton Lectures in the Philosophy of Religion at Cambridge between 1947 and 1950. He was Hulsean Preacher in 1950 and Select Preacher before the University in 1944 and 1949 (and again in 1956).

In 1951 Ramsey was appointed Hollooth Professor of the Philosophy of the Christian Religion at Oxford; from that date he was a fellow of Oriel College. He soon began to be invited to give courses of lectures in other universities and theological seminaries, and most of his published work had its origin in these occasions. While at Oxford Ramsey was further drawn into working for various bodies within the Anglican Church. He served on the Archbishops' Commission on Divine Healing from 1953 to 1957, on the group which produced the report on "The Family in Contemporary Society" in 1958, and on the Church Assembly Board for Social Responsibility from 1958 onwards. He was also, from 1964, Director of the Lambeth Diploma in Theology.

In 1966 Ian Ramsey was consecrated as the ninetieth Bishop of Durham. He wrote at the time that he would "welcome very much the opportunities for a wider usefulness"; and, although he gave up a number of commitments on moving to Auckland Castle, his work load did increase considerably. In addition to his Diocesan duties (cf. Bishop and FL) he took seriously his rôle in the House of Lords and also served as Chairman of the Archbishops' Commission on Christian
Doctrine, the Institute of Religion and Medicine, the Central Religious Advisory Council (to the B.B.C. and I.B.A.) and several other bodies. He was also Chairman of the Commission set up jointly in 1967 by the Church of England Board of Education and the National Society to inquire into religious education in schools. Their report, The Fourth R (National Society & S.P.C.K.: London), appeared in 1970.

All this took its toll of a man who was still very much in demand as a teacher and who continued to produce important work in the philosophy of religion. It is not surprising, therefore, that Bishop Ramsey - who was also overweight - suffered a severe heart attack on Easter Eve 1972. He died on 6th October of that year after another attack which occurred during his "first journey to London alone on 'business as usual' " since the earlier attack (D. Edwards 96). He was fifty seven.

3. Ian Ramsey's Writings

(A) Published Work

All Ramsey's published writings are on a small scale; consisting of reviews, sermons, articles, pamphlets and books of lectures. McClatchey's bibliography (HDA 67-75) lists approximately 150 publications of this nature, and even so it is not complete. Donald Evans has written of Ramsey's publications:

Ramsey's philosophy is scattered among many brief occasional pieces, in each of which some old Ramsey ideas are sketched and some new Ramsey ideas are introduced. Ramsey often remedies obscurities and defects in one book or article by dealing with them in another. (Evans (IMTG) 126)
For this reason it is important to survey the whole corpus of Ramsey's published writings. Many of the appraisals and critiques given in contemporary textbooks on philosophy of religion concern themselves with only a few of his books (often only one: *Religious Language*) and are therefore most misleading. I have found, further, that much of value for the assessment of Ramsey's total position is to be gleaned from some of his most "popular" pieces or is hidden away in obscure publications. A number of these, therefore, appear in the bibliography (e.g. OCR, RFT).

A word is perhaps appropriate here about Ramsey's style. Evans has written of Ramsey's "stimulating brilliance and lively wit" (Evans ([IRTG] 126), and the books that began their lives as lectures are certainly full of striking metaphors and illustrations. But this attractive style has certain drawbacks. Keith Ward has articulated one of them:

Largely because of his amusing use of such examples as fishing, penny-dropping and ice-breaking, dinner-jacket-splitting and light dawning, Ramsey's account is in danger of trivialising religious awareness, even though this is far from his intention.

(K. Ward ([CG] 69)

Another difficulty with Ramsey's style is perhaps even more acute. An extensive use of metaphor can lead to a loss of clarity. It is sometimes difficult to pin Ramsey down to a precise position, for it is not clear how seriously he intends us to take his various analogies. This thesis will attempt to clarify some of these ambiguities and to produce a more systematic view of Ramsey's position.
(B) **Unpublished Work**

The Archdeacon Sharp library of Durham Cathedral houses Ian Ramsey's unpublished papers, in four large cupboards. I have examined all the material there that seemed relevant to this study and list the main items below, in chronological order. There are in addition a large number of "lecture-handouts" for students, letters to scholars, transcripts of broadcast material, and other occasional pieces which will be cited in the course of this thesis.

### Main unpublished works

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>U-Durney</td>
<td>&quot;The Concept of the Supernatural&quot;, (Burney Prize Essay), 1938.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U-EP</td>
<td>&quot;Experience and Personality&quot;, (typescript for a book), c.1945</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>U-TLIE</td>
<td>&quot;Theology and Language: Some Illustrative Examples&quot;, (paper), c.1953.</td>
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The first four items listed above provide the major sources for Ramsey's thought during his time at Cambridge as student and teacher, and are therefore of considerable interest. The papers on "Theology and Language" and "Science, Metaphysics and Religion", together with other briefer pieces, supplement the sparse published evidence for Ramsey's thinking in the early years of his tenancy of the Nolloth chair. U-PE is useful in providing further evidence for Ramsey's mature views on religious language.

U-FMG will be referred to several times in what follows. In his preface to Religious Language (1957) Ramsey promised "an independent and altogether more philosophical discussion of my starting point", to be published under the title Fact, Metaphysics and God. This was never published, but the present typescript seems to be a draft for that book although it does not in fact bear any title. Parts of the work appear in various of Ramsey's publications of the fifties and early sixties, but his later ideas and terminology are not to be found within its covers. It is invaluable as a source for a number of topics in Ramsey's thought, although it cannot be taken to represent his final views in these areas.

4. The "Cambridge Period"

The unpublished material dating from the nineteen-forties and late nineteen-thirties presents a rather different picture of Ramsey's thought from that portrayed in his later work. In this section I intend to outline Ramsey's main ideas about philosophy and the
philosophy of religion during his "Cambridge period" (up to the summer of 1951). The main body of the thesis will then deal with Ramsey's more mature thought during his time as Kellooth Professor at Oxford (1951-66) and as Bishop of Durham (1966-72). Clearly one would expect a further evolution of Ramsey's ideas and their expression over those last 21 years of his life, and such is in fact the case. But there is sufficient of a sea-change between the work of Ramsey's Cambridge period and his later writing for us to deal with the two separately.

(A) Experience

Candidates for the Burney Prize at Cambridge were required to indicate the extent to which they had availed themselves "of the work of others". Ramsey's introduction to his 1938 essay lists the names of Lotze, Whitehead, Hegel, Bradley and Berkeley as the major influences on his thought at that time. It is not surprising, therefore, to find him espousing a form of Idealism. However it is Idealism only "in the sense that 'physical objects are reducible to spatial abstracta from experiential unities'". Minds are given a similar status: "both, indeed, are logical constructions, together constituting experiential unities" (U-Burney 85). In this early, and understandably immature dissertation Ramsey attempts to construct his philosophy around the notion of a basic experiential unity as "the fundamentally concrete datum" (ibid, 54), an example being "(I am) seeing a sixpence". It is possible, Ramsey contends, to abstract from such a unity an embodied Self and its Environment; but Ramsey stresses that such concepts are
abstractions, as "mind" and "body" are at a further level of abstraction (53-59, 79-80). Yet even the experiential unity itself is less concrete than, i.e. is an abstraction from, the truly ultimate concrete datum: the volitional unity (131).

Ramsey reminds his readers that to concentrate on the more abstract at the expense of the more concrete is to commit what A.W. Whitehead had castigated as the fallacy of "misplaced concreteness" (54). By himself beginning with the most concrete datum Ramsey proceeds in his essay to construct a rather tortuous argument to prove the existence of a "non-human set" of experiential unities "of which the spatial abstracta constitute the external world" (86). This Berkeley-like argument is then extended to show the necessity of God's volitional unity (130-140).

The details of these arguments are by no means always clear, but what the whole essay does reveal is Ramsey's commitment to the philosophical maxim that "Experience is Reality". On his return to Cambridge in 1943 this major emphasis reappears in his teaching and writing. Ramsey attempted in a number of unpublished works to develop and expand the thesis of his Burney essay. Three typescripts dating from around 1945/6 (i.e. U-EP, U-OCP, U-CI) represent the most complete of these attempts, one of them at least (U-3P) being intended for publication. In these works Ramsey still regards himself as presenting "a form of Idealism" (U-EP; U-OCP). This is further delineated as "an epistemological idealism in the sense that all sense-data (and therefore their limits), are logically related correlates from organic experiential unities..." (U-OCP).
Neither minds nor physical objects are ultimate existents, for "the most fundamental sense of 'existence' is that in which an organic experiential unity exists" (U-EP 71-72). Minds, physical objects and sense-data only "exist" in the sense that they are abstractions from such experiential unities. Ramsey cannot therefore support any claim about "the existence of physical objects in a realist sense" (U-EP 74; cf. ibid. 35-36, OCP 13).

The Ramsey of the nineteen-forties has been described as being "saturated in Whitehead"¹⁴, and Whitehead's influence reveals itself in Ramsey's concept of experience. In a review published in the Church Quarterly Review for 1959 (Vol. 160, p400), Ramsey was to describe Whitehead as "a giant indeed .... a master of both critical and speculative philosophy". Ramsey was fond of quoting Whitehead's more memorable dicta in his later works (e.g. CD 66, FI 58). But it is in the work of Ramsey's Cambridge period that Whitehead's influence is most explicit.

This influence shows itself first of all in Ramsey's continuing concern to avoid the fallacy of "misplaced concreteness" ("concretion") or "illegitimate abstraction", and to espouse the "epistemological principle of attaching to no existent a degree of concretion greater than it deserves" (U-OCP 13). To commit the fallacy of misplaced concreteness is to "re-ify abstractions" (ibid. 9), and "most of the trouble with philosophy in the past has been that it has tried to attribute to all abstractions the degree of concretion belonging only to that experience owned by a self-in-relation-to-an-environment..." (U-EP 28: cf. ibid. 2). It is not clear how far Ramsey is being true to
Whitehead's own treatment of this "error of mistaking the abstract for the concrete" (Whitehead (SL) 68; cf. (FR) 10); but, as we shall have occasion to note again, Ramsey is fairly free in the way that he draws on other people's ideas and adapts them to his own use. At any rate, the "appeal to the concrete" in Ramsey's thought is basically an appeal to the concrete nature of actual experience.

Ramsey claims that philosophy must start from a consideration of our basic awareness: an awareness which is subject-object in structure. This is the "Experiential Unity" of "non-reflective" or "immediate" experience (U-EP 25-27). It must be a unity "otherwise there is a gulf between Knower and Known which no amount of ingenuity will bridge" (U-OCP 3); but a fundamental duality is also essential to all experience, otherwise "we should not be aware of a shilling,... of a parabola" (ibid.). Further: "If we seek a one-word description of experience which emphasises both its unity and the duality, I do not think we shall do better than describe it as an Encounter" (U-CT 8). "Encounter" suggests a dual activity, while at the same time not altogether concealing the unity essential to the situation" (U-OCP 4).

Both Bradley and Whitehead had stressed the unity of experience and had spoken of a fundamental feeling-experience. This for Bradley was an "immediate feeling" in which "there is no distinction between my awareness and that of which it is aware" (Bradley (FTR) 159; cf ibid. 194). Whitehead admitted his own "general adherence" to Bradley's doctrine of feeling (Whitehead (AI) 231), but rejected
Bradley's view that such an experience was without a subject-object structure. Against such a position Whitehead argued that "the subject-object structure is the fundamental structure of experience" (ibid. 176). Thus:

The conventionalized abstractions prevalent in epistemological theory are very far from the concrete facts of experience. The word "feeling" has the merit of preserving this double significance of subjective form and of the apprehension of an object.

(ibid. 233; cf. (PR) 54-55, 256-257)

On this point Ramsey follows Whitehead rather than Bradley; but it is to a third English philosopher, James Ward, that he turns for further guidance, calling his own view "a possible development" from Ward's (U-CI 8). Ward's rebuttal of associationist psychology carried with it a stress on the fundamental nature of the conative aspect of experience, with "the active subject selecting and attending to presentational data in view of an end or purpose" (Copleston (HP 8-I) 278). Ward argues, "all experience is process... felt interchange. Broadly speaking, every objective change of perception entails a subjective change; and every subjective change an objective change" (J. Ward (NA II) 130). He continues:

It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the objects of experience are not primarily objects of knowledge, but objects of conation, i.e. of appetite and aversion. For though an object must be cognised before it can be liked or disliked, still it is to interesting objects that the subject mainly attends... (ibid. 131; cf. 133-134)

Ramsey also concludes that "the most concrete, the metaphysically most ultimate experience" is conational - an active "striving", relationship with the Universe (U-CI 9). Experience, then, is essentially an activity
(U-OCP 4), with an active subject in union with an active object - an "encounter" indeed! Bradley's "immediate experience", Ramsey suggests, is purely conative and not cognitive at all; for cognition is possible only when an experience has undergone "abstractive differentiation" (U-CI 9). Such experience, which - with Bradley - Ramsey identifies as Reality 17, is therefore indescribable, and in that sense "unknowable" (U-CI 10; cf. U-EP 26-28).

However, Ramsey argues, "Reality has two aspects - metaphysical and spatio-temporal"; and "The only clues we have to the nature of metaphysical reality are the spatio-temporal abstractive of reflective experience..." (U-OCP 5). All cognitive experience, then, is conational (involving "attention"), being itself a differentiation, or abstraction, from the basic undifferentiated conative experience (U-EP 49-50).

Hence Ramsey utilises Ward's stress on conation in order to reconcile Bradley and Ward in their debate over the basic unity/duality of experience. Ward had criticized Bradley for emphasising the unity of experience at the expense of its duality, i.e. for postulating a felt unity prior to the duality of object and subject (Bradley (ETR) 175-176). On Ward's analysis "the duality of subject and object is primordial; presentations are from the first given as objects..." (C. Dawes Hicks (JW) 286; cf. J. Ward (NA II) 112). Bradley, however, had defined feeling as an awareness which was "non-relational" (Bradley (ETR) 174). Against this Ward argued that
awareness could not be non-relational, for "Is it not
cognition, and does it not involve some measure of
attention to a 'change'...?" (J. Ward (BE) 15; cf. ibid. 26):

Interpreting experience as a duality in unity
we should say that the correlation of subject
and object in experience exists always;
but Bradley's view seems to be that only when
immediate experience is, in fact, transcended,
does this correlation, in fact, arise. (Ibid. 26)18.

Ramsey comments:

Bradley and Ward indeed seem to have parted
simply because Bradley would not realise that
his Sentient Experience was a unity which
could nevertheless be and should be analysed,
and Ward, for his part, refused to believe
that Bradley's Sentient Experience was
other than Reflective Experience. It may
well be that the two agree in one as we
proceed, for we shall argue that Reality
is Experience, and a Unity, described and
understood however only in so far as it is
abstracted by reflection. (U-EP 7)

So the individual is conatively related to an Other
in a confrontation or encounter. According to Ramsey
this Other, the object of experience with which we are in
immediate conative contact, can ultimately be analysed into
God and other selves (U-CI 11). The arguments which lead
to this conclusion are presented as analyses of the nature
of the cognitive experience which forms a part of the
conative encounter (Ibid. 10).

The argument for other selves is as follows:
"Such and such events (indeed all events involving human
co-operation......) would be highly unlikely to happen as
they do if there were not associated with bodily -
abstractives19, comparable to our own,other personal
conational unities" (U-OCP 8). This is not an argument
from analogy, Ramsey insists, but an argument from
"inverse probability" (U-EP 70; cf. Ewing (FQP) 121).

Similarly, by means of an argument of "Berkleian form" but "quite different... epistemological presuppositions", Ramsey argues for the existence of God:

There is a regularity and order in the occurrence of the items in our cognitive experience. The regularities are those enumerated in the so-called causal laws of the sciences; the order is that in virtue of which we talk of "permanent" physical objects such as chairs, fires and trees...
Now this regularity and order cannot be attributed either to ourselves...or to any group or groups of other human beings. We can, therefore, argue,... the existence of a being least inadequately described as a non-human conative agent....

(U-CI 11; cf. U-EP 70, Sermon (2) 195)

Or, as Ramsey later put it in his Stanton lectures:

By three stages we justify the use of the word "God" in our metaphysical map.
(1) Sense-data, like all particulars, being abstractives, cannot exist in "isolation".
(2) Yet they cannot adequately be treated as abstractives from either our own, or any human, will or wills.
(3) These two points justify the use of a word "God" which will be associated with the "external world" to make our description of its independency of human beings "adequate" and "complete".

(U-HA: "The Quest for a Christian Philosophy, The Metaphysical Background", c.1948,p2)

In a brief section in "An Outline of a Christian Philosophy", Ramsey rejects the view that sense experience, moral experience and religious experience are three different and isolated kinds of experience (U-OCP 18). His contention is that "all experience, if adequately analysed and its abstractives correlated, would be at once sense-experience, value-experience and religious experience" (ibid. 19). "Religious experience", then, appears as a
partial description of an immediate encounter, of which "moral experience" and "value experience" are two other partial descriptions that place particular interest on different abstractive areas. Thus religious experience is not a distinctive, sui generis experience, but is continuous with other forms of experience and is always a possible element within all our concrete undifferentiated experience. Thus:

"Sense-experience" and "religious experience" are not two separate entities: the words describing the latter are merely a more adequate account of the other. The world is indeed "divine visual language" if we have eyes and heads to appreciate it. (U-EP 78; cf. ibid. 94)

It is clear that Ramsey was attempting in such analyses of experience to realise a hope which he expressed in a letter published in the *Times Literary Supplement* in 1943. He wrote there of a "two-fold hope many of us share (a) that religious experience will soon find an interpretation, a justification and defence from concepts reached in a constructive philosophy; (b) that such a philosophy will arise from a more critical analysis of perceptual situations than the Logical Positivists have given us".

In whatever way Ramsey attempted to analyse religious experience, he certainly believed it to be of fundamental importance. Five years before the letter just quoted, Ramsey the student had begun an essay on "The Historical Element in Religion" by defining religion (for the purpose of the essay) as religious experience (U-HE 1).
Much later, towards the end of his time at Cambridge, Ramsey was to conclude two University Sermons with passages stressing the importance of "worship", "wonder" and "awe" and the necessity of "discerning" God, his activity and his grace (Sermon (1) 438, Sermon (2) 195; cf. U-Sermon (BBC) 4-5). "Discernment" was not at this time a technical term for Ramsey, but we can perhaps trace here the inchoate origins of a rather different, and in the end more acceptable, religious epistemology. As yet, however, the concept of the "disclosure" had not been introduced.

I have concentrated on Ramsey's unpublished writings in this review of his early doctrine of experience because it is in them we can find its fullest and most systematic expression. I will conclude this section, however, by illustrating the way in which Ramsey's early epistemology was reflected in the only three articles which he published during his time at Cambridge. They all date from the late forties and early fifties.

Ramsey presented a paper at the Tenth International Congress of Philosophy in 1948 entitled "Man and Religion: Individual and Community". This sums up his general philosophical position at that time and applies it to the question "Should 'man' or 'community' be supreme?" (LRIC 308)²⁴. He first of all argues against Hume that "percepts" were not the ultimately concrete data of the universe, but were rather "highly abstractive" (308), and then proposed an "alternative
view", the one with which we are now familiar:

all experience is an Encounter..., involving a duality it is also a unity... experiences are always "owned", and they are always "of" something... The function of cognition is to endeavour to portray, in terms of its own spatio-temporal and abstractive data, the character of the fundamental Encounter in conation.(509).

Thus:

There is in our view, no "isolated individual". For there is, in a conational encounter, a Self and an Other.(ibid.)

And on the question of how/Other is to be described, Ramsey comments:

We can only describe "it" in terms of the "data" given in cognition. But that gives us good grounds for describing "it" in terms of other selves and God.(ibid.)

A similar position is outlined in the course of a longer article on Science and Religion, published in 1949 (SRCP). Again Ramsey stresses the unity of observer and observed in experience (296), a view which is"neither 'objective realism', nor ordinary idealism - whether absolute or subjective. Both subject and object are logically inseparable, and mutually necessary, constituents of experience" (297). Such experience is "an active encounter at a more concrete level than cognition... having some kinship with conation and will..." (ibid.; cf. Sermon (2) 194). In a more popular discussion of related topics, presented in a radio debate with C.A. Coulson early in 1951, the references to Ramsey's distinctively "Cambridge thinking" are at their scantiest. However even here he could be heard to confess, "I like immensely [the] whole idea of experience as an encounter",.
arguing that encounter is "something much more concrete than anything these abstract maps and models suggest" (SR 3). 25

(B) Language and Metaphysics

The feature of Ramsey's early work which immediately strikes anyone who knows his later writings is the lack of space devoted to the analysis of language. Out of the 137 pages of the typescript of "Experience and Personality", for example, less than a dozen are devoted to this topic. The early Ramsey wrote a great deal on the nature of experience and the implications of an analysis of experience for metaphysics and theology. But this is mostly done in terms of experiential and conational unities and their abstracta, with little explicit reference to language. However, the writings of the Cambridge period are explicitly metaphysical. Ramsey was attempting there to construct a metaphysic of experience which would be consistent with the major doctrines of orthodox Christianity; and to this end he drew on the thought of metaphysicians like Bradley, Whitehead, Ward and Berkeley. The method, style and conclusions of such a philosophy must have sounded rather dated, not so say obscure, to those who were more familiar with the work of Moore, Russell and Wittgenstein.

(i) Language

"Language", Ramsey wrote "is a sort of qualitatively homogeneous mechanism which expresses, in its words and syntax, the various patterns within the rest of reflective experience. If a crude analogy be pardoned: as we sit in the Cinemas of our minds, we co-ordinate noises with the rest of the pattern on the differentiated Screen" (U-F 8). Language thus "provides an ordered symbolic system corresponding to the progressive differentiations of Reflective Experience...."
a framework which ... regulates and expresses the orientation of abstractive elements in reflective experience" (ibid., 7).

Words and phrases, then, have a use in representing the levels of abstraction and we must remember that they do relate to different levels of abstraction (e.g. "signing a document" is a phrase relating to a part of a complex whole expressed as "promise keeping": UEP 8). It is simply a mistake, therefore, to claim that "to every word belongs 'something' " (ibid., 9).

Ramsey describes the above as an account of the ordering function" of words. But our use of words also has a second function: "it forms the limiting boundary of [reflective] experience in the Present and so regulates the pattern as it develops" (ibid. ). This "regulative function" is described by what Ramsey calls the "Limit Theory of Language": "Words being defined with regard to abstractive sets within the totality of reflective experience" (ibid., 11). This theory appears to be derived from Whitehead's Method of Extensive Abstraction, which was a device whereby certain spatial and temporal elements (e.g. "moment of time", "point", "straight line") were defined in terms of "abstractive sets" (e.g. of "durations", "circles", or "ovals"). An abstractive set is a set of events which possesses two properties:

(i) of any two members of the set one contains the other as a part (i.e. one "extends over" the other);

(ii) there is no member which is a common part of every member of the set (i.e. no event which is "extended over" by every member) (Whitehead (CM) 61,79-81; (PR) 349-352).
An abstractive set thus resembles a nest of Chinese Boxes, except that there is no smallest box in the centre. Thus, for example, "a point" is not an ideal entity at the centre or even an ideal limit of this route of approximation. It is defined as the whole convergent set. Similarly a straight line can be defined as the direction of a route of overlapping ellipses or oblong rectangles (Ennet (7) 292): "the element itself is the whole class of abstractive sets with the same convergent character" (Ennet (MP) 205).

In an extension of this technique to the language of common sense Ramsey defines the token word "dog" as:

that physical reality corresponding to the type limit (in the present) of that route of abstraction in reflective experience which is made up of the characteristics C1, C2, C3... [which are assumed] to be common to Fox terriers, Great Danes and all dogs. (U-EP 10)

Such characteristics would approximate to those listed in a dictionary under the definition of the word "dog". Metaphysical words, on the other hand, are "concerned with the organisation of the word limits attained by ordinary routes of abstraction within reflective experience". They are "not the mere limits of any recognizable routes", and therefore "the possibility of metaphysics is... the possibility of Experience which is not reducible entirely to the abstractivities of ordinary reflective experience" (ibid. 13).

We have, then, in Ramsey's early theory of language, a sophisticated but basically referential theory of meaning. Words are used to refer to extra-linguistic reality either at the concrete, or (more usually) at an abstract, level. There is only a hint here of other uses to which language
might be put. But the hint is present, for the regulative function of language outlined in Ramsey's Limit Theory leaves room for his later introduction of other functions for certain types of language.

Before we take the discussion of Ramsey's early metaphysics further, we should note some other characteristics of Ramsey's view of language, and in particular its relation to experience. In a student essay Ramsey had written:

I do not think we can too often realize that, between (1) the occurrence of an experience E, and (2) the occurrence of a symbolic description of E (e.g. a description of E in words), there is no necessary connexion in virtue of which the latter assumes a peculiar kind of "infallibility". Neither ought we to forget that, logically and psychologically, "E" is prior to the "description of E", however true it may be that epistemologically, for other people besides the "subject" of E, knowledge of the description of E is prior to knowledge of E. Many of the difficulties concerned with Revelation are, I would suggest, directly traceable to a neglect of one, or both, of the propositions just stated,...

Doctrine - in so far as it differs from philosophical theology - is an attempt to perform an initial "crystallizing out" of experiences. (U-Revelation 1 & 4)

Thus, although "language has a final reference to experience" (U-EF 23), Ramsey rejects the idea that language can infallibly capture and encapsulate experience. Thus, Ramsey had already in his earliest writings committed himself to the view that religious language, including doctrine, is an attempt somehow to "describe religious experience", and that it is only through such language that others can enter into our religious experience (and we ourselves can enter into the experience of the authors of Scripture). We thus find here some of the elements of Ramsey's later views about the relationship between experience and language in religion; including his stress on the tentative nature of theology and the assertion...
that religious language does not offer a straight description of the "Object" of religious experience.\(^{31}\)

(ii) *Metaphysics*

Interestingly enough the Ramsey of the nineteen -
forties already claimed to be presenting a metaphysics which was both "tentative" and "empirical":

*Tentative*, because it is an interpretative scheme offering a description of what is in fact beyond its grasp-it is an attempt to describe a unity in terms of its parts.

*Empirical*, because it begins with what, from a human point of view, are the most obvious abstractions of our everyday experience.\(^{32}\) (U-HA: The Quest for a Christian Philosophy, (A) The Metaphysical Background", c.1948; cf. U-OCP p8)

Despite the rationalist tone of much of Ramsey's work at this time, his metaphysical speculation can lay some claim to being "empirical", for it takes as its starting point that most concrete of data: Experience. "Experience" here is not to be restricted to sense experience, although Ramsey "would strongly deny that there is any experiential unity which has no spatial abstraction" (U-Burney 78). In an undergraduate essay for A.C. Ewing, Ramsey lamented the fact that logical positivists ignored "philosophical intuition" and "philosophical mysticism"(U-VP). Later he was to stress that such anti-metaphysical philosophers were not being true to experience as they found it: "against the empiricist we assert that the possibility and actuality of metaphysics lies in experience being more than the particulars of cognition aggregated together" (U-OCP 297; cf. Sermon (2) 194). The only sort of metaphysics that was
a viable possibility for Ramsey was one that could claim to be empirical. But it was "empirical" not in restricting itself to the data of the senses but in analysing the concrete experience (from which sense data are merely one type of abstraction) in all its fullness, attempting to discover what must be the case if experience - whatever its detailed content - is of this general form.

Thus the datum of metaphysics was experience considered as a unity more concrete than any "experienced particulars" (i.e. ourselves - as - actively - encountering - an - other). Its task was "to provide us with a verbal map by which we may understand, this unity in all its manifold differentiations". Its method was the constructive one of "providing the most comprehensive linkage between categories "discovered from a"broad survey of the map"34. (W-HA: The Quest for a Christian Philosophy, A)

Metaphysical Background, c.1948, p.1) Ramsey contended that such a metaphysical scheme was not merely verbal, but reflected some fundamental ontology. But he counselled caution in the way in which we postulate the existence of metaphysical entities; thus Kant's "regulative" ideas of Reason (of which God was one)......do refer to 'something' - but that something is not to be conceived of as a quasi-scientific object. The point is that all metaphysical words, in the totality of any given metaphysical system, constitute a preferred delineation of that total immediate Encounter which is 'metaphysical reality'. We may (in so far as we do not mind arguing 'analogically' from abstractions) suppose ontological 'things' corresponding to some of such
metaphysical words. But such a supposition is a 'leap in the dark' - an endeavour to describe, in cognitive terms, the Objective constituent of a situation originally conatively experienced. The price of such ontological liberty is eternal linguistic vigilance." (U-OCP 15-16)

The sense in which the adverb "analogically" is used here is made clear in Ramsey's earlier discussion of Dorothy Emmet's views on the topic of analogy (See Emmet (MLT) ch.VIII).

Ramsey suggests:

with our theory of the continuity between the immediate Encounter ("Pure" Act and "Pure" Being) and the spatio-temporal abstractives of reflective experience, we have an epistemic - ontological background more developed, and more suited than Thomism is, to an "analogical" use of language, while not necessarily in conflict with all the ontological conclusions which St Thomas would sponsor. With Miss Emmet, then, I would gladly agree that most metaphysical words are "analogical" - they are part of a preferred description of the immediate Encounter, to be interpreted "analogically" in terms of the spatio-temporal abstractives which constitute a manifold of sense-experience. Metaphysical thinking is "analogical thinking", but it need not necessarily imply the ontological background of St Thomas. (ibid. 15)

Ramsey's early metaphysics, despite being - in these ways - "empirical" and "tentative", was certainly ambitious. For it provided, as we have seen, a scheme which "demands the idea of a 'timeless self'.... and an idea of 'God' " (U-Ha: "The Philosophical Presuppositions of Religion and Science: Conflict and Synthesis", Cambridge period, p.5). The arguments integral to this scheme relating to the existence and nature of God were given above. I will conclude this section with some notes on Ramsey's early view of the Self: the Active Subject of the Conational Encounter (and of its abstractive element, cognitive experience).
(iii) The Self

For Ramsey the important question about the Self is whether it can be completely described in terms of spatio-temporal particulars. A Serial, or Bundle, Theory of the Self, as proposed by David Hume, would reply in the affirmative: thus making man "no more than a sequence of discrete and separate spatio-temporal 'percepts'" (URIC 308). But according to Ramsey there are major weaknesses in such a view:

Ask yourself the question: what do I mean by saying of a mental or bodily process or event that it is 'mine'? To that question I believe no adequate answer can be given in terms of a Serial Theory involving only spatio-temporal abstractions and their relations. (U-OCF 7)

Since, with the passage of time, more and more events come to have the (alleged apparent) characteristic of "being mine": how on earth have we any constancy about the self? (U-SP 67)

Such a theory seems very plausible so long as we assume all along that there is a Self, in a sense different from that given by the theory, which can examine and discuss it. (ibid. 68)

Hume had committed the fallacy of illegitimate abstraction "in supposing that his 'percepts' (in fact highly abstractive) were the constructional constituents (the ultimately concrete data) of the universe" (URIC 308). But what plausible alternative to Hume is possible? Ramsey rejected the traditional Pure Ego theories as "unintelligible" (U-LA "The Quest for a Christian Philosophy", (A) The Metaphysical Background, c.1948, p.1). He did so apparently because they used language about a Substantial Self which "would only be justifiable if it were an existent in the spatio-temporal system", whereas they actually postulated it as being "beyond such a Natural Order" (U-Burney 103; cf. ibid.112). Ramsey's own view, however, is presented
on some occasions as an "alternative expression" of a Pure Ego Theory (U-Burney 104)\textsuperscript{37}, and on others as a less "inadequate" version of the Serial Theory (U-OCF 7)\textsuperscript{38}. Ramsey describes the Self as a conational unity which is analysable into a "mind" and a "body" and a "timeless self" (or "Pure Ego"). Thus he recognizes three sets of abstractions from the original conational experience on its subjective side: (1) "Mental events defining as a limit a 'human mind' " (U-OCF 7); (2) "Physical - world events defining in part as a limit a 'human body' " (ibid.); and (3) "a non-spatio - temporal self" or "Timeless Self" (URIC 309). Ramsey accepts that the description "Pure Ego" may reasonably be applied to (3) - the "ultimate, 'subjective' abstractive constituent of that undifferentiated unity of Present Experience which is best described in volitional terms" (U-EP 59).

In the analysis outlined above (1) and (2) are spatio-temporal abstractions; (3) is the non - spatio - temporal abstractive. But all three are abstractions from the Self, the subjective constituent of the conational unity. They are not independently existing entities which somehow "build up" into a Self. And as (3) is an "abstractive within a conational unity" (U-OCF 7), Ramsey will not countenance any talk about a "timeless self acting" (cf. U-EP 57, 64; URIC 309). It is the concrete Self, not any of its abstractions, which can be said to "act".

Such a view, Ramsey claims, substantiates "the fundamental religious claim that man is not reducible to spatio-temporal terms" (URIC 310) and provides a plausible explanation of the problems of self identity and the "ownership"
of experiences. It further offers a new interpretation of free-will, which can now be analysed in terms of the metaphysical ultimacy of the concrete, active unity (needing for its full analysis a timeless self), rather than as a species of spatio-temporal indeterminism (cf. HIC 309; U-MP 55). Further the necessity of postulating a non-spatio-temporal "soul" as part of any adequate analysis of the self also indicates that no "subject can ever be adequately described in temporal terms, or be said to cease to exist" (U-HA "Elements of Philosophical Theology" II, 1940 s, p.2; cf. U-MP 110, U-OCP 28). The immortality of the self may thus be presumed.

Finally the existence of the spatial abstraction testifies to the fact that "our experience is of an embodied, and not a disembodied, self" (U-Burney 79); hence the "bifurcation of reality into Mind and Matter" (U-CL 6) must be rejected. "Ie cannot have the existence (or persistenco) of a Timeless Self without having the existence (or persistence) of the conational unity of which it is an abstractive"(U-OCP 29). Thus Ramsey admits that there is a large element of truth in the traditional doctrine of the resurrection of the body.

(c) The Justification of Religious Belief

The Logical Positivism flourishing in Vienna in the twenties and thirties was represented in a radical form in England by the first edition of A.J. Ayer's Language, Truth and Logic published in 1936 - while Ramsey was still an undergraduate. Ramsey had heard "positive statements of the Verification Hypothesis" at the lectures of Wisdom and Waismann (U-Burney, introduction), and he began his Burney essay with an account of Verificationism which both acknowledged
its merits and revealed its inadequacies. Ramsey recognized its value in that it put us "on our guard against high-sounding language which means precisely nothing" as well as suggesting clarification and precision as "a purpose" and "an ideal" in philosophy (U-Burney 21a). His fundamental objection to this philosophical school, however, was directed against its attempt to "mould Philosophy on Mathematics" and thus attain "a philosophy of certainty" (ibid. 14). Ramsey found Ayer's "simple-minded critique" of theology tendentious. Verificationists were without religious experience of their own and blandly assumed that everyone else was in the same position (20-21).

"In deciding, "as Ramsey put it later, "that all experience must conform to his linguistic rules, he is guilty of the empiricist error" (U-EP 4). Ramsey wished to reject both Logical Positivism and high a priori rationalism, embracing rather "a third alternative,... that of Whitehead" (U-Burney 21a).

As we have seen, Ramsey's Limit Theory of Language implied a "Limit Theory of Meaning" (U-EP 13) which seems to have allowed meaning to any words, however "metaphysical", that had some connection with the spatio-temporal abstractive differentiations of reflective experience. Metaphysical words served to "designate limits implied by the limits of ordinary sets of abstractives", thus organising them into a metaphysical scheme (U-EP 13). In the absence of particular examples, however, it is difficult to discuss further this theory of the meaning of metaphysical words. At any rate, Ramsey believed that it implied a "harmonisation" of the coherence and correspondence theories of truth:

In the first place, by making truth a correspondence not between so called facts and
words but between two sets of abstractions within reflective experience, viz: linguistic and non-linguistic, it is a correspondence theory but with a difference, for it makes the correspondence more intelligible. On the other hand, in effecting this correspondence there is clearly built up a coherent and comprehensive linguistic system which might well serve as an analysis - a "reflection" - of the other corresponding non-linguistic system of abstractives, and whose internal harmony would, in the case of a new proposition, afford a useful criterion of truth - depending on how harmonious the "fit" of the new proposition happened to be (U-EP 14).

But when it comes to the testing of religious knowledge claims, Ramsey proclaims a test which is "for plain men, theologians and philosophers alike", the test of the Gospel: "By their fruits ye shall know them" (U-OCP 39). "The final test of a philosophy will be the life to which it consistently points" (U-EP 29); indeed "philosophy must culminate in life itself" (U-OCP 39). But this test is not in essence a species of ethical test for philosophical (or religious) systems of thought. It is, rather, the "empirical test" of measuring philosophy against the immediate encounter-experience from which it was born:

Our view of philosophy is entirely empirical... [it] finds its aim and goal, not in language, but rather in that Experience from which both language and its correlated abstractions are derived. (U-EP 28-29)

But as "Experience is really an encounter of wills; inclusive of, but wider than, cognition", then "Reality is never adequately 'known'; only 'willed'. It is to be lived, and only tentatively and incompletely to be understood" (U-HA: "The Contemporary Philosophical Climate", Cambridge period; cf. U-OCP 5). And the "life" which is the ultimate test for
philosophy (and theology) is the constitutional unity of the immediate Encounter in all its concreteness.40

(5) The Significance of Ramsey's Early Thought

In an unpublished dissertation, Cynthia Cohen has complained that "Ramsey's tacit metaphysical position.... turns out to have a surprising affinity with absolute idealism" (Cohen (Thesis) 264). I shall consider later the extent to which this is true of Ramsey's more mature work, but our study of the unpublished material from his Cambridge period, which was not available to Cohen, reveals the perspicacious nature of this remark. The early Ramsey did embrace, if not absolute idealism, at least "a form of Idealism"41 which drew on both Bradley and Whitehead42. In his paper "Christian Individualism" Ramsey suggests that "while metaphysics has its own peculiar pitfalls, many will continue to wish to make fools of themselves with Bradley and Whitehead than to indulge in the linguistic seances of a Wittgenstein" (U-CI 6). Although in later years he was to show considerably more sympathy for the Wittgenstein of the Blue and Brown Books and the Philosophical Investigations, and to adopt a style and approach to philosophy more compatible with what was acceptable in the Oxford of Ryle, Austin and Strawson, Ian Ramsey seems to have remained - "in his bones" - something of an idealist. Or at least he retained sufficient sympathy with his earlier philosophical guides to believe that they still had something to contribute, despite the "Revolution in Philosophy". Two unpublished remarks, dating from his time at Oxford, illustrate this point. Thus in "Fact, Metaphysics and God" (B1/41) Ramsey wrote: "To bring the linguistic insights of Russell alongside the factual
For this reason I understand that you once had in your thought no certain knowledge of this great and important theory of motion and of the laws of the universe. I have been told by many that you have never seen the beautiful and wonderful appearance of the world as it is now, and have never been able to understand the great and important system of natural philosophy which has been revealed to us. I want us to understand these great and important system of natural philosophy which has been revealed to us. I want us to understand these great and important system of natural philosophy which has been revealed to us.
CHAPTER II:

EXPERIENCE AND DISCLOSURES

1. From "Experience" to "Disclosure"

During his time at Cambridge Ian Ramsey was concerned, as we have seen, with the analysis of "experiential unities", and the more concrete "conational unities". He believed that such an analysis revealed that experience was essentially an active encounter between a Transcendent Subject and a Transcendent Object, the latter being further delineated as "other selves" and "God". If this is true of all experience, properly interpreted, then all experience in the end is religious experience, as it is also sense experience and moral experience.

Ramsey concentrated in this exposition on the sort of basic, undifferentiated, concrete experience to which both Bradley and Whitehead had applied the name "reeling". And it was the appeal to this particular element within all experience, an element that formed the crux of Ramsey's early religious epistemology, which appears to have been the jumping off point for the later development of his thought associated with the concept of the "disclosure". This evolution is nowhere explicitly traced, but it is possible to infer its main features from various hints which Ramsey gives us in his published and unpublished writings.

The second part of the typescript that I have entitled "Fact, Metaphysics and God" begins with an interpretation of Bradley's views on metaphysics. According to Ramsey, Bradley's justification of metaphysics depends on "an appeal to some fact which, while not altogether
different from what objective language refers to, needs more saying about it than can be said in terms of such objective language" (U-FLG B1/71). Bradley describes this fact, which in part eludes the logic of "terms and relations", as a "felt totality". Ramsey goes on to ask:

But what is the "felt totality"? Bradley would answer by presenting us with the fact in question. How? By an empirical experiment... (ibid.)

Ramsey alludes to two accounts of such an "experiment": an earlier version in Appearance and Reality (Bradley (AR) 127-128), and a "more developed presentation" in chapter VI of Essays on Truth and Reality. I shall quote Bradley's account from this latter source and follow it with Ramsey's interpretation:

Our actual object fails to satisfy us, and we get the idea that it is incomplete and that a complete object would satisfy. We attempt to complete our object by relational addition from without and by relational distinction from within. And the result in each case is failure and a sense of defect. We feel that any result gained thus, no matter how all-inclusive so far, would yet be less than what we actually experience. Then we try the idea of a positive non-distinctified non-relational whole, which contains more than the object and in the end contains all that we experience. And that idea...seems to meet our demand. (Bradley (ETR) 188)

Ramsey comments:

In other words, if we take ourselves in any given situation and select within that situation some object or other...in the very act of selecting such an object we are aware of the incompleteness of our selection, and aware that as providing an account of the situation of which it is a part, the object in question is plainly inadequate...

In the desire to reach a less inadequate idea of what we are actually experiencing, we then start. says Bradley, to use a relational technique...to introduce more terms related in such and such ways to the terms we have already discriminated...or...to introduce terms and relations into what seemed at first a homogeneous area... (U-FLG B1/73)
But at no stage are we satisfied with such accounts, and so "the game goes on"....

....until somehow or other a solution breaks in on us...For at some point or other (urges Bradley) the various attempts suggest and make plain a common feature of them all. They bring out and emphasize, where the light breaks,....what we "actually" experience in each case...a "positive non relational, non-objective, whole of feeling". (ibid.; cf. Bradley (ST) 189)

Here, Ramsey claims, is the "odd empirical fact" which justifies metaphysics, and it may be evoked in the way that Bradley describes. Thus Bradley the metaphysician, when properly interpreted, is the "empirical Bradley" (U-FMG B1/77) who appeals to a "most concrete", "given" fact - the immediate experience or whole of feeling - as the basis for his metaphysics.

But the point that Ramsey is really making only comes home when we turn to part III of "Fact, Metaphysics and God". For there, in a discussion of the cosmological argument, Ramsey writes of a certain "elusive awareness", designated as a "self-other awareness", which is induced by the search for causal antecedents provoked by the argument. "The hope of the argument is that suddenly some other fact will strike us, rather like the lines of a Gestalt diagram"; and this "is not all that different from Bradley's evoking of a 'total' experience, by considering the unsatisfactoriness of terms and relations" (U-FMG (2) 10/66/173). Anyone who is familiar with Ramsey's later work will recognise here the sort of language which he uses, and the sort of situation to which he points, in discussing his concept of the disclosure. It is clear that he sees Bradley's "technique...for evoking what he called 'immediate experience' " (FR 204; cf. CD 67-68)
as very similar indeed to the way in which disclosures are evoked. Bradley's immediate experience is thus "a logical synonym for what we call an 'odd discernment' " (RL 52; cf. PPrM 164, EP 18).

With these suggestions before us, we may consider further the development of Ramsey's epistemology. In his Cambridge period, Ramsey stressed the importance of a basic subject - object experience - the "feeling" of Bradley (properly interpreted) and of Whitehead - which is a fundamental part of all experience. He saw his task then as simply that of elucidating the metaphysical implications of such an experience. But at that time he presented little by way of evidence to establish the reality of this basic experience; we are simply told that it is there as the central element in all experiencing. The later Ramsey, however, seems to feel that he now needs to argue for the starting point of his epistemology. He recognizes that Bradley himself provided a sort of argument by indicating a technique by means of which "immediate feeling" can be evoked. And Ramsey takes this further in his own work on disclosures.

In this sense, then, Ramsey's philosophy becomes more overtly empirical, as the "experiential unity" of his Cambridge writings is metamorphosed into the typically Ramseyan "disclosure - situation". As we shall see, the examples of disclosures that Ramsey offers are very diverse: but that diversity (from his point of view at least) is really only superficial. For all disclosures share the same structure, and in the end they all disclose the same object. Furthermore, disclosures are an integral part of all forms
of experience. Here the similarity between disclosure-
situations and the earlier experiential unities should be
obvious; but more evidence can be adduced. Thus religious
experience when analysed in terms of disclosures, like
religious experience analysed in terms of experiential
unities, is not sui generis for it is not separate from
sense experience. The following passage may be compared
with that quoted from Ramsey's early writings above:

"religious experience" emphasises those features
common to all experiences (even "sense experiences"): but those features about which we shall only talk
in language which from the standpoint of perception
logic is "improper", "paradoxical", "odd". Religious
experience then is a claim for experience which while yielding in part to
perception logic, is not exhausted by it; an
experience which in its totality is only evoked,
induced, and in that sense "expressed", by
paradoxical descriptions. (U-FI.IG y/47/154).

Religious experience builds on and goes beyond sense experience.
Both originate in disclosures, and religious disclosures are
mediated through the empirical facts and features of the
world. The emphasis on the interrelatedness of different
types of experience is thus maintained in Ramsey's later work:

Religious experience must not be taken as something
sui generis if this means something logically and
ontologically distinguished from sense experience.
The kind of fact to which metaphysical theology
appeals must be sense experience and more. (U-FI.IG
y/56/163; cf. ibid. 1/36/38).

Ramsey's quarrel, now as before, is with the sort of "empirical
myopia" (PF 338) in epistemology that stops short at the
spatio-temporal elements of a situation. Religious experience
(along with other experiences - e.g. our experience of other
selves) goes beyond, but includes, such elements. This is
reflected in Ramsey's frequent use of the analogies of "depth"
and "another dimension" when he is talking about disclosures
(e.g. TL 14, PI 33, HI 67, Enc. Brit. 593).
Ramsey stressed in his early work the mutual activity of subject and object in experience, drawing a number of his conclusions from premises relating to conational (or volitional) unities. Such language does not appear much in his later writings, but it is clear that some of the components of his earlier analysis are retained. But it is the disclosure that is now described as an "active interchange" (I.DA 13) or "encounter" (RL 26). In a disclosure-situation we "become alive" subjectively as the world "comes alive" objectively (Pa 194, RL 27). There "we know our activity in matching it with an activity which confronts us..." (LDA 61). It is interesting to note that whereas the early Ramsey found it necessary to emphasise the activity of the subject in the encounter experience, the later Ramsey strives to safeguard the objectivity of experience by putting the emphasis on the activity of the object of discernment. In disclosure-situations, he argues, "we are relatively passive" (RPT 28). But it is only a relative passivity. For the later Ramsey can still appeal to Ward's doctrine of "attention" in his own analysis of the active subject of cognition (cf. U-FLG B37/150; T. 82). And in the end he goes so far as to define personhood itself in terms of activity (HP 127-128).

Clearly the duality - in - unity, which Ramsey claimed in his early work to be characteristic of the fundamental feeling-experience, is later taken into his epistemology of disclosures. "Nothing is properly called an 'awareness' which has not a subject-object structure" (SEI 203). Here Ramsey continues to follow Whitehead rather than Bradley (cf. U-FLG B2/93 - B2/95, CL 337, PI 98-9). Even self awareness should really be designated self-other awareness (U-FLG 1/35/37, 3/26/64 - 3/27/69; S:1 203). And "self-other
In these ways, then, we can trace a continuity between Ramsey’s early and later analyses of experience. The striking difference, however, remains. In the Cambridge material Ramsey’s emphasis on the concrete conational/experiential unity goes along with his treatment of certain entities as abstractions from such a unity. Thus the Self is an abstraction, and is itself in turn open to further abstractive analysis yielding "Mind", "Body" and "Timless Self". Similarly physical objects are abstractions from the experiential unity. In Ramsey’s later work it is the disclosure-situation which is specified as the most concrete datum: a cosmos being described as "the most concrete of all situations" (CPCF 54). Now Ramsey emphasises even more strongly than before that it is such concrete situations that provide the starting point for metaphysics and theology.

He would agree with those who treat metaphysics as a study "having more concern for the concrete than for the abstract", being "somehow concerned with illumination, bringing something vividly to our attention, getting us to 'see' what before had been unrecognised" (CPCF 50; cf. CPL 248). For Ramsey this involves our concerning ourselves with experience "at its most concrete" (CPCF 53). But he now portrays the Self, (physical) objective reference and God as being themselves directly disclosed. The language of "abstractions" has disappeared.

This may be only a change of emphasis and nomenclature,
but the contrast between Ramsey's early work and that of his later period can be seen even more starkly if attention is directed to his account of our knowledge of "other selves" and "God". In the early writings such entities are posited by an argument based on abstractions from experiential unities: we know of them by inference. They thus stand at a further remove, epistemologically, from the concrete data of experience. In Ramsey's later writings, however, other selves and God are non-inferentially intuited in a disclosure.

It seems to me that some of these changes are reflected in a shift in Ramsey's general philosophical position. In his Cambridge days he sponsored "a form of Idealism" which seemed to make everything a function of (an abstraction from) human experience. In his later work this idealist note is considerably toned down: witness his account of scientific models - an account which is sympathetic to a position best categorized as "critical realism" (cf. ExurusI). Ramsey's discussions of objectivity are crucial here. I shall argue later that his disclosure-based epistemology is an attempt to transcend the idealist/phenomenalist v. realist distinction. It does so by reducing all disclosures to "disclosures of objectivity". For then what is disclosed in a disclosure is "raw objectivity" ("something which is other than ourselves": FD 131), and this can be talked about in various terms. Material-object language and sense-datum language are both just alternative, fallible accounts of the objective reference that alone is "disclosure-given" and therefore "certain" (cf. FD 121). This may sound very like Ramsey's earlier position which he characterized not only as "a form of Idealism", but also on one occasion as "neither 'objective' realism, nor
ordinary idealism" (SRCP 297). However, Ramsey's whole approach in his later work is far more sympathetic to a realist position, and far less dominated by the jargon of a thorough going idealism. And yet, as I hope to indicate, some elements of the idealist position are retained.

2. 'Broader Empiricism'

In an autobiographical reference in his final lecture, "The crisis of Faith", Ramsey spoke of the factors that led him to develop his concept of the disclosure. It was, he said, in a "youthfulness surrounded by logical positivists and challenged at every point to elucidate the meaningfulness of religious discourse" that he came to see that such discourse must "appeal to empirical criteria and more". "Faced by this predicament", Ramsey continued, "I came to talk of disclosure as that by which the transcendent makes itself known in and through things spatial and temporal" (CF 34-35).

So the epistemology of disclosures is Ramsey's response to the challenge of radical empiricism. The later Ramsey saw himself in many ways as a theological "frontiersman", facing the common-sense paganism of scientists and empiricist philosophers (cf. RSLS 47, CPL 247, CPCF 52). He confesses: "I have always been aware of the yawning gaps that exist between scientific and empirical attitudes and the Christian faith" (U-Credo 1; cf. CELCE 95). Hence Ramsey does his theology cautiously "with an awareness of down-to-earth empiricists breathing down my neck" (U-ITR Evans 2).
We shall see that Ramsey's whole philosophy of religion was worked out with at least one eye on the empiricist challengers of theology. What Jerry Gill has called Ramsey's "epistemological arc" - "the movement from experience to language and back to experience again" (Gill (IR) 108) - is constructed as far as possible on empiricist principles. Thus Ramsey anchors religious language in disclosure-experiences mediated through empirical situations, rejecting all views of religious experience that make it totally separate from sense experience. He analyses religious language as a language of qualified models, the models being taken from our everyday experience of the empirical world. He insists that religious belief is open to some sort of empirical testing: it must show "empirical fit" with the world. He also attempts to forge a synthesis between science and religion by insisting on the need for both tentativeness in theology and is metaphysics in science. And all this/undergirded by a metaphysical viewpoint which is disclosure-based, and hence in some sense "empirical".

But if Ramsey can be called an "empiricist" it is only by widening the term so that it no longer applies solely to the empiricism of the Logical Positivists. Ramsey viewed himself as being very firmly set in the empiricist tradition. But he recognized within that tradition both a narrower and a broader empiricism; and he found his real home in the territory of the latter. It should be noted that critics of Ramsey's empiricist starting point often complain that by adopting it he "already concedes too much" (Hebblethwaite 642), and that
"his religious thought urgently requires a core of disclosure and insight which empiricism will not allow him" (Robinson 44). Ramsey, however, would disagree; believing that a "broadened empiricism" can be, and is, a viable option within the empiricist tradition. He would, on the other hand, agree with all who reject a narrow or "plain empiricism", which "in isolation and by itself... would not be sufficient either as an account of the world or humanity" (53).

It is pertinent at this point to discuss Ramsey's view of the empiricist tradition in British philosophy.

(A) John Locke

Locke's empiricism consists in his denial of innate ideas (J. Locke (Essay) Bk I) and his insistence that sensation and reflection (introspection) are "the fountains of knowledge, from which all the ideas we have, or can naturally have, do spring" (ibid. Bk. II, ch. I, sec. 2). But Locke's philosophy is less radical than that usually connotated by the word "empiricist", as Gilbert Ryle notes:

Most of the doctrines which an Empiricist (as ordinarily defined) should hold are strenuously denied by Locke. That the evidence of particular perceptions can never be a foundation for true knowledge, that true knowledge is both completely general and completely certain and is of the type of pure mathematics, that inductive generalizations from collected observations can never yield better than probable generalizations giving us opinion but not knowledge, are doctrines which Locke's whole Essay is intended to establish. (Ryle (JLIIU) 25-26; cf. O'Connor (JL) 205-206)

But when Ramsey writes of Locke's "broader empiricism", contrasting it with the narrow empiricism of some of his successors (Locke 20), he is fastening on the rôle played by intuition in Locke's epistemology. In the second chapter
of Book IV of the *Essay*, Locke had distinguished three "degrees of knowledge" - intuitive, demonstrative and sensitive. He there defines intuitive knowledge as a direct perception - "without the intervention of any other idea" - of the agreement and disagreement between ideas (J. Locke (*Essay*) Bk IV, ch. II, Sec. 1), and further extends it to cover our knowledge of our own existence (ibid. Bk IV, ch. IX, sec. 3; cf. Coples (*E*) 5 I 126). In Ramsey's introduction to his 1938 edition of Locke's *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, he argues that Locke's account of prophecy fulfilment and miracles is essentially a further appeal to "intuition". For Locke, revealed truths are neither "contrary to" nor "according to" reason, but "above reason". Such truths are not therefore "inconsistent with our clear and distinct ideas" but neither are they simply derived by direct, intuitive deduction from such ideas. They must instead be revealed by God, but may not be completely understood even then (*Essay*) Bk IV, ch. XVII, sec. 23 - ch. XIX, sec. 8). But our acceptance of a putative revelation as revelation must itself be reasonable, and this will depend on the supporting evidence of the outward signs of prophecy fulfilment and miracles (ibid. Bk IV, ch. XIX, secs. 14-15). When Ramsey turns to Locke's views on these two topics he discovers in Locke an appeal to something very like his own disclosure-situations. Thus, for Locke, the fulfilment of a prophecy was the success of a prediction (J. Locke (*E*) sec. 232), but Ramsey comments:

*Is there simply a person to which a descriptive label, already current, at long last fits?... May not Locke rather have implied that in bringing alongside the person of Jesus the Messiah label, there strikes us an aptness and*
appropriateness of the kind which strikes us when, for example, we see at long last the island corresponding to the map we have pondered for years... (Locke 13)

This, Ramsey suggests, would be an intuitive disclosure-situation (ibid.)

Similarly, in regard to miracles, Ramsey contends that on a proper interpretation of Locke "a miracle situation [is] intuitively given, and never adequately assessed in terms of idea particulars alone" (ibid. 15). Analysing Locke's thought in _A Discourse of Miracles_ and _A Third Letter Concerning Toleration_, Ramsey notes his suggestion that the power of a miracle is not the measurable power of civil law and concludes that:

a miracle must be given the same compelling power as belongs to an intuition, for this is all Locke has in his journeyman's bag besides idea particulars. (ibid.)

miracles...are something of which in the last resort we are intuitively aware... (ibid. 90)

And, as Ramsey puts it elsewhere, "it would be these situations of power which, had Locke so wished, would have been for him metaphysical situations" (U-FMG B82/195).

Ramsey must be criticized here for forcing his own insights, at least to some extent, on Locke's epistemology; thus producing a piece of eisegesis rather than exegesis. We shall often find that when he is analysing the views of other philosophers Ramsey reveals more of his own position than he does of theirs.

(B) **George Berkeley**

Ramsey's references to Berkeley are more numerous than those to any other person. What he seems to
appreciate above all else in Berkeley is his doctrine of "notions", which serves as a necessary supplement to Locke's "new way of ideas". In a course of lectures on British Empiricism, delivered at Oxford in 1962 (quotations are from student's notes), Ramsey spoke of Berkeley as a "man of sense and more" adding "the 'more' however had to he notionally given by reference to our activity, a more which eluded observable ideas". Berkeley had recognized that however important ideas were, and for Berkeley they were of course all-important, there must in addition be minds or spirits which know or perceive the ideas. We cannot have ideas of such minds and their operations, for ideas are passive and spirits are active but we do have "notions" of them. Here is Berkeley's "notionalized empiricism" (BPX: 15). Berkeley wrote:

"All the unthinking objects of the mind agree, in that they are entirely passive, and their existence consists only in being perceived; whereas a soul or spirit is an active being, whose existence consists not in being perceived, but in perceiving ideas and thinking.

In a large sense, indeed, we may he said to have an idea, or rather a notion of spirit, that is...we understand the meaning of the word, otherwise we could not affirm or deny anything of it. (Berkeley (P) 1754 edition sec. CXXXIX - CXL; cr. ibid. sec. XXVII; (D) 269)

Berkeley's doctrine of notions is ambiguous and undeveloped, but its presence in his philosophy makes clear that Berkeley does admit that something can be known without being an idea. I get a notion of myself directly, for one's self may be known "immediately, or intuitively"; but I may also arrive at notions of other selves and God "by reflection and reasoning" involving inference by analogy from our own case (Berkeley (D) 267-268). "Hence the knowledge I have of
other spirits is not immediate, as is the knowledge of my ideas; but depending on the intervention of ideas, by me referred to agents or spirits distinct from myself, as effects or concomitant signs" (Berkeley (?), 1734 edition, CXLV).

Further: "we know other spirits by means of our own soul, which in that sense is the image or idea of them, it having a like respect to other spirits, that blueness or heat by me perceived both to those ideas perceived by another" (Berkeley (?), sec. CXL; cf. Park 69-72, 94).

Thus there is a common element in our knowledge of our selves, of other selves and of God, all of which are given as notions and not as ideas. And Berkeley has also drawn a strict parallel between the way we come to know other selves and the way we come to know God. A human spirit is not perceived by sense (for only ideas can be perceived), but the thinking and perceiving agent is known to us through the signs and effects of his activity (the ideas constituting his body). In just the same way God can be known immediately through the visible effects of nature (cf. Berkeley (?), sec. CXLV - CXLII; (A) Dial. IV, sec. 5).

Berkeley's immaterialism has been described as "what you get if you start with Locke's picture and replace matter by God" (Thompson (?), 240). And Berkeley's argument for God does seem to suffer from some of the same problems as Locke's argument for matter, particularly in the eyes of those who do not share the former's curious prejudice against "aoid", "insensible" matter as a possible cause of ideas. Passing over such difficulties, however, Ramsey latched onto the theory of notions as allowing for a wider empiricism.
Διευκρινίστε τα προσωπικά σας δεδομένα και τις λειτουργίες σας.

'υπερβάλλοντας την ευθύνη, η τεχνητή νοημοσύνη αναλύει τα δεδομένα και προτείνει επανέλεγμα. Στη συνέχεια, το σύστημα εξασκεί περαιτέρω διακρίσεις και καταργεί τα είδη που είναι κατάλληλα για την περίπτωση και γίνεται η συνολική αναβαθμίστηση της ευθύνης. 

Ακολουθούν οι ακόλουθες δυνατότητες:  
- Αναλύσεις και επανέλεγμα των δεδομένων  
- Επίλυση και καταργοποίηση των είδων 
- Αναβαθμίση ευθύνης 

Εάν η συνεργασία σας είναι αποτελεσματική, θα πρέπει να υπάρχει πρόσληψη και έλεγχος για την προηγούμενη συνεργασία. 

Ο σεβασμός της μοναδικότητάς σας είναι δύναμη της ηλεκτρονικής τεχνοτροπίας.
Here Ramsey is justified in claiming the support of Berkeley is in the area of self-knowledge: for Berkeley does profess an immediate, non-inferential, awareness of the self (through "inward feeling or reflection": Berkeley (p) sec, LXXIII), which is very similar to Ramsey's self-disclosure (cf. CPR 263-264, BPH 17). It is reasonable, therefore, for Ramsey to conclude that:

Berkeley in his doctrine of notions is pointing to the empirical curiosity of the situation in which I come to myself in being active, and to the need to talk about this self-disclosure in a way that is logically peculiar by comparison with descriptive sentences. (BPH 18; cf. HI 69,71)

(C) **Joseph Butler**

In his Oxford lecture course on British Empiricism, Ramsey turns from a consideration of Berkeley to look next at his contemporary Joseph Butler. Ramsey justifies his inclusion of Butler with these words:

he too centres on the claim that some situations cannot be restricted to ideas and sensations, and on these situations religious belief has its empirical basis... (U-GL 5)

Ian Ramsey seemed to have felt much in common with Butler, who, as Ramsey often notes, was both a student at Oriel and a Bishop of Durham! (cf. ITM Owen 127; J B I 395-396; JB II 1,8-9, 12; CD 23; Sermon (5) 14; MTT 25).

In Religious Language Ramsey draws two themes from Butler's Analogy of Religion: (i) "a 'self-awareness' that is more than 'body awareness'", and (ii) "a total commitment... which sees in a situation all that the understanding can give us and more" (AL 15,17). We may take each theme in turn:
(i) Persons

Ramsey views Butler's claim that it is "contrary to experience" to imagine that "gross bodies are ourselves" (Butler part I, ch. VII, p. 150) as based on a Ramseyan disclosure-situation, "an awareness that as 'living agents' we are more than our public behaviour" (RL 15; cf. FI 332-333). A reading of chapter I of part I of the Analogy ("Or a Future Life"), however, reveals that Butler's arguments there are based rather on analogies with nature and questions of antecedent probability (including the relationship between body and mind in this life). Butler is involved in an argument (mainly by analogy), he is not appealing to any special intuitive experience. And indeed Ramsey's later references to Butler's discussion on the future life do not refer to "self-disclosures" (cf. JB II 16-17). But Ramsey's main point survives this objection. It is that Butler may also be quoted as one who claimed that "we ourselves...... are not 'objects' " (PB 333; cf. U-TLIB 4).

(ii) Commitment and Probability

But Ramsey's main appeal to Butler is in the context of the themes of commitment and probability. Ramsey claims that in Butler's maxim "probability is the very guide of life" (Butler Introduction, p. 7), we have a justification for the "total commitment" of the religious believer which is "appropriate to a 'question of great consequence' " (RL 17) and which goes beyond the (probable) evidence (cf. HG 216-217). Butler had argued that in religious affairs, as in prudential and moral situations, we may be justified in acting according to the balance of probabilities (and indeed, apparently, on low probabilities--
cf. Butler 8, 236-237, 257 etc.), without expecting all difficulties and uncertainties to be resolved first. This doctrine has not, however, been universally acclaimed (cf. Stephen 242-243). A factor in it which Ramsey does not make clear is that Butler also takes into account the "utility" (prudential consequences) of accepting a certain theory (cf. Butler 298 - 299, 304 - 308). According to Anders Jeffner the "value" of a theory equals the "sum of utility" (i.e. the utility of the theory if it is true minus the harm done if it is false) multiplied by its probability (Jeffner (BUR) 81 - 82). If the value of accepting a theory or statement is greater than the value of accepting its negation then one ought to accept it.

But Ramsey, as usual, is less concerned with accurate exegesis than with using another man's thought. And it is clear that Butler's account of probability attracts Ramsey as an apparent parallel to his own view that "Christian convictions based on historical uncertainties are in principle reasonable" (CD 24), despite the fact that "commitment...is always at risk" (RPT 26). And the basis of this reasonableness is that religious (and moral) commitments relate to what Butler calls "matters of practice" in "questions of great consequence". So it is possible reasonably to wed a "problematic theology" with a "total assent" (JB II 16), a sure transcendent commitment with a tentative theology and uncertain empirical evidence.

Degree of assent is not, in matters of faith, proportional to evidence.... religious belief... is as reasonable as a moral decision where we act...in a way that goes beyond the evidence....

(ibid. 19)
We might think that with Hume we have at last arrived at a radically "narrow empiricism". Hume's scepticism extends to mental as well as material substance, for he has no Berkleyan notions to augment his ideas and impressions (cf. Hume (1714) sec. II, §15). Ramsey admits that an epistemology like Hume's, if it is based on impressions alone, cannot support a successful metaphysics (U-FLC Draft 1/24; U-FLC B83/196). But he is unwilling to acquiesce in the usual attitude of theologians to this "notorious infidel" with his predilection for committing divinity books to the flames. Ramsey finds hope for religious epistemology even in David Hume!

Ramsey views seriously the arguments against the proofs of the existence of God presented by Hume in his Dialogues concerning Natural Religion, agreeing that natural theology cannot be built on observed fact by means of analogical argument (cf. U-FLC (2) 10/14/181). But he still claims to find evidence that Hume was in some ways nearer to Cleanthes than to Philo. In a review of Nelson Pike's edition of Hume's Dialogues, Ramsey wrote:

I certainly agree that one might attribute to Hume a position very much like the one we can attribute to Berkeley, viz, that we know God as we know a friend... Does not Hume come near to Berkeley in acknowledging that the existence of God is something which to use the phrase from Dialogue XIII, immediately "flow(s) in upon you with a force like sensation?"... that we become aware of God in some kind of intuition or disclosure.

(Review Pike 233; cf. TL 7)
Consider, anatomize the eye; survey its structure and contrivance; and tell me, from your own feeling, if the idea of a contriver does not immediately flow in upon you with a force like that of sensation.

(Hume (BEK) 128, emphasis added)¹⁵

Elsewhere Ramsey categorises this as "a 'sense' of purpose - a discernment" (RL78). Here again, as with Locke and Berkeley, Ramsey has scrutinized the empiricist's defences in order to find some gap into which he can press his own epistemology of disclosures. In Locke that gap was intuition and its (possible) role in situations of prophecy fulfilment and miracles. In Berkeley it was the doctrine of notions and the related topics of our knowledge of other selves and of God. In Hume it is that philosopher's occasional remarks about "feeling".

These are to be found not only in the Dialogues but also in Hume's Appendix to his Treatise of Human Nature. There Hume expresses doubts about some aspects of his views, presented in the body of the Treatise, on the subject of personal identity: i.e. his celebrated "bundle theory" of the mind (Hume (T), Bk I, Part IV, Sec. VI). This is a theory that Ramsey castigates for pretending that "'I' and 'he' are logically interchangeable" (TI 86)¹⁶. In the Appendix Hume rehearses the arguments in favour of such a theory, reasoning that:

when we talk of self or substance, we must have an idea annex'd to these terms, otherwise they are altogether unintelligible. Every idea is deriv'd from preceding impressions; and we have no impression of self or substance, as something simple and individual. We have, therefore, no idea of them in that sense. (Hume (T) 633)
When I turn my reflection on myself, I never can perceive this self without some one or more perceptions: nor can I ever perceive anything but the perceptions. 'Tis the composition of these, therefore, which forms the self. (ibid. 634)

So far, so good: the self is simply a bundle of distinct perceptions. But when Hume ponders further on "the principle of connexion which binds them together" he can only confess:

no connexions among distinct existences are ever discoverable by human understanding. We only feel a connexion or determination of the thought, to pass from one object to another. It follows, therefore, that the thought alone finds personal identity, when reflecting on the train of past perceptions, that compose a mind, the ideas of them are felt to be connected together, and naturally introduce each other. (ibid. 635)

Ramsey seizes on this. "Feeling" he argues is something "perceptually odd" that cannot be described in terms of ideas and impressions; it relates to an "odd situation" in which a sense of personal identity breaks in on us (cf. PF 335). As we survey a train of particular perceptions there is a self-disclosure (FD 127; cf. RSCS 42). Ramsey recalls Gilbert Ryle's comments on the ambiguous logic of the word "feeling". Ryle notes that "feeling" can have an objective reference, signifying a perception - "we feel things with our hands, lips, tongues and knees" (Ryle (CI/l) 229). But sometimes the word "feeling" has a reference only to the subject: here it is a questionnotof"feeling X", but of "having a [certain sort of] feeling" (ibid. 229, 231).

Ramsey comments: "it is this very peculiarity about the logic of 'feeling' which makes the word fit so well what is being urged as something which is both subjective and objective" (SEI 202); "feeling...can never be less than a 'subject-object feeling' " (U-FLEG Draft 5/24). Here, via Ryle, Hume's
"feeling" is brought into line with that of Whitehead and related also to the "feeling" (in a somewhat modified form) of Bradley and Schleiermacher (cf. J. I 202, U-WWG (3) 11/9/201, U-WWG graft 3/24-5/25). Thus even Hume's empiricism ends up, in Ramsey's hands, leaving room for - indeed demanding - some sort of subject-object awareness or disclosure.

(E) Contemporary Empiricism

If eighteenth century empiricism is broader than it sometimes appears, what of the contemporary scene? Ramsey assesses the two major elements within contemporary empiricism as an interest in meaning and a concern with language (cf. C: proem, CPB 249), both of them deriving from the pioneer work of Locke and Russell. The later development of empiricism in this century falls into two stages:

(i) Logical Positivism

Ramsey admits that here at last we have found "narrow empiricism" pure and simple. The immediate forerunner of logical positivism, however, the Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus*, was more liberal. He tended to view the verification principle itself as a piece of "useful nonsense" and allowed "a mystical fringe to his experience" (CCF 254; cf. BE 176-177, CPBP 48).

Indeed, Ramsey has spoken of a disclosure as something which came "close to what Wittgenstein called 'wonder at the existence of the world' " (U-EBCC;, cf. N24 and Wittgenstein (T) .432-7, pp149-151).

But the logical positivism which developed under the influence of Wittgenstein's early thought was much more restrictive. The positivists followed Wittgenstein in adopting a more logically orientated version of empiricism.
than that given, for example, by Hume. And on combining a logical analysis of meaning with an empiricist theory of knowledge, they concluded that the meaning of every genuine statement was completely expressible by means of observation statements alone. Thus, for them, a proposition had meaning if and only if sense experience was sufficient to decide its truth. Thus logical positivism proclaimed a veto "on most of ethics, almost all metaphysics and certainly all theology - for in various ways their assertions claimed to go beyond sense experience" (CPCF 48).

(ii) The Later Broadening of Contemporary Empiricism

No theology could survive under the rule of the logical positivists; but logical positivism itself was short-lived, for it contained within itself from the start the seeds of its own destruction. Post-war British empiricism therefore enjoyed "a broadening and a mellowing" (CPCF 49) which can still be discerned in the movement today. Manifestly the work of the later Wittgenstein is of primary importance here, and the later Ramsey was at last able to appreciate it! By 1972 Ramsey was ready to wax prophetic on the subject:

We may regard Wittgenstein, I suggest, as he who represents the development of logical empiricism over some thirty years, as, in the providence of God, the Cyrus of our time. (CP 29)

The features of Wittgenstein's philosophy which were taken up in later empiricism, "its concern with language and its interest in the concrete" (CPCF 51), are Ramsey's own concerns in doing philosophical theology. Ramsey has therefore been placed by some students "squarely in the tradition of the later Wittgenstein" (Hall (IR) 44; cf. Richmond 43).
Others, however, have chastised Ramsey for neither following, nor really understanding, the latter (cf. Cohen (LIL) 149; Phillips (PLD) 133-143). In fact it is a mistake to overemphasize the influence on Ian Ramsey of Wittgenstein's later thought. Ramsey saw Wittgenstein as an archetypal "broadener" of empiricism and he thought that he could discern some parallels between Wittgenstein's thought and his own (cf. WC 11, PKZT 165), but otherwise he shows little dependence on the other's work. He may be an heir, but he is not a disciple.

The phase of logical empiricism initiated by Wittgenstein's "conversion" displays itself, as far as Ramsey is concerned, in three main ways (cf. CFCF 51-52, TSCF 220). There is a renewed interest in what is distinctively personal (evidenced by the work of Ryle, Strawson, Hampshire, Ayer etc.). There is an acceptance of a wide range of uses for language, in particular a recognition of its performative and evaluative functions (cf. Austin and Hare). And lastly, but not of the least importance in Ramsey's eyes, there is a rehabilitation of some form of metaphysics - albeit purely "descriptive" (cf. Strawson).

At any rate this type of "mellowed and chastened empiricism" (LH 541) pronounces no peremptory veto on metaphysics and theology (cf. CEL 244). In such an atmosphere of thought a philosopher of religion can - and must - do his work. It is certainly an environment greatly to be preferred to the "Hegelian parody of Christianity which once flourished at Oxford", for it serves to "[call] the believer back to the empirical situation in which his beliefs are
rounded" (Frontier, 5,3 (1962), p.529). And it is to an analysis of such situations of disclosure that we must now turn.

3. The Nature of Disclosure

I will attempt here, as far as it is possible, a purely descriptive exposition of Ramsey's concept of the disclosure, before moving on to criticism and evaluation. It is important to make some attempt to separate the exposition of Ramsey's thought from criticism of it, for we need to grasp the range and variety of his thinking before bringing it before the bar of the critic. Ramsey rarely pauses to provide careful definitions or analyses of the different elements of his epistemology; what he does provide is lavish illustration. We should allow him, then, to speak for himself through the use he makes of certain terms and the vast number of illustrative examples he adduces.

(A) Transitional Period: terminology

Ramsey's early years at Oxford formed a "transitional period" during which his Cambridge thinking developed into the position which is to be found in the well-known publications from Religious Language onwards. The term "disclosure" first appears in Ramsey's writings in that particular work (published in 1957, but based on lectures delivered two years earlier). But phrases which seem to be synonymous with "disclosure" appear earlier than this and they provide a connecting link with Ramsey's Cambridge thought, together with some hints as to the meaning of "disclosure" itself. I will examine each of these in turn.
(1) "Non-Inferential Awareness"

In the lecture summaries from Ramsey's teaching at Cambridge this term is used to designate our "immediate awareness" of the Other which is known in a conative interchange (cf. U-64: "Elements of Philosophical Theology" II, 1940s, p.1). It appears later, in his inaugural lecture at Oxford, as a phrase denoting the fact that is "the ultimate justification of metaphysical words" (U-18; cf. ibid. 16, 22 - 23). In a handout from the early fifties Ramsey is still speaking of an "active duality-in-unity", a "fundamental awareness (heightened in religious experience) of ourselves as [actively] encountering an Other". And he claims that we are "non-inferentially aware" of this "as other than ourselves" (U-65: "The Idea of God", 1951). The phrase is used even later when Ramsey claims that a non-inferential awareness is involved in perceptual experience (U-FLIG-3 11/12/204).

(2) "Self-Other Awareness"

This is another term used by Ramsey in the early fifties. Self-other awareness gives rise to a "notion" (in Berkeley's sense) of our own activity, along with a "notion of our unique relation to an active other" (HII 71). This "odd awareness which a narrower empiricism overlooks to its loss" gives us access to "a situation - subject and object - in structure", "a fact which ex hypothesi can never be described, but only evoked or induced, or shown" (U-FLIS 4). In the earlier papers and lecture handouts from Ramsey's time at Oxford it is this term that is used most often (see CCP 262 - 264, 269; Homage 117 - 119).
Self-other awareness is described as a "total awareness" and related to Berkeley's "reflexion" (CL 337), Bradley's "positive whole of feeling" (ibid) and the "feeling" referred to by both Whitehead and Hume (SEI 201 - 202). Arguments for the existence of God lead to self-other awareness (U-EMG 2) 10/70/177; U-EM: "The Idea of God", c.1954, p.1); indeed "all topics in the Philosophy of Religion,... relate to what we have called a 'self-other awareness' which is made prominent in 'religious experience' " (U-EM: "Prayer and Miracle", 1950's, p.1).

"Characteristically Metaphysical/Theological Situation"

If one surveys a series of summaries from Ramsey's lectures on a given topic produced at different times, the changes in terminology become very clear. Thus the handouts from the lectures on Prayer and Miracle show an evolution in which the early term "self-other awareness" is replaced by "metaphysical situation", and then eventually by "disclosure". This particular sequence also reveals that Ramsey introduced his theory of models and qualifiers, and their evocative function, before he started using the term "disclosure".

The "characteristically metaphysical (or theological) situation" appears in the handouts and published material from 1955 and 1956; it was then replaced by the terminology of "disclosure". The metaphysical or theological situation, like the disclosure, is "evoked" by certain techniques which cause the "light to dawn" (U-EM: "Immortality", c.1955, p.1; PO 265; RL 51 - 58, 153). In its turn it is also related to Bradley's immediate experience (RL 52).
The "Disclosure - situation"

In his essay "Facts and Disclosures", which was perhaps his most careful - as well as one of his last - pieces of writing, Ian Ramsey attempted a clarification of the term "disclosure", a word which he had been using in a technical sense for some seventeen years:

I do not use disclosure in what might be called the newspaper sense of disclosure, i.e., a sense which carries with it overtones of information disclosed. I use "disclosure" not in relation to information, but to refer to situations about which various metaphorical phrases are commonly used. Such phrases, for example, are those which speak of situations "coming alive", "taking on depth", situations in which "the penny drops", where we "see" but not with eyes of flesh, where something "strikes us", where "eye meets eye" and where "hearts miss a beat". Such situations may be of a dramatic and spectacular kind for which a metaphor like "the ice breaks" is plainly appropriate, or they may be of the kind where we gradually come to "see" so that we speak more appropriately of "the light dawning". (FD 115)

Ramsey often uses the term "disclosure-situation" (e.g. FI 152, CE 182), and the above quotation appears at first sight to indicate that such situations of disclosure are merely components of a person's psychological biography (cf. PPIVT 175). But in "Facts and Disclosures" Ramsey goes on to criticize those who have supposed "these disclosures;... to be just some peculiar kind of 'experience', thought to be 'subjective' " (FD 115). Ramsey himself, in his work at Oxford and after, is very chary indeed of using the word "experience". The phrase "religious experience" can be found only occasionally in his later writings, and even then it is often hedged about by "scare quotes" (cf. PG 59, TG 88). And yet nothing could be more evident than that Ramsey's whole thesis is devoted to a general analysis of "experience" and a particular analysis of "religious experience".

The explanation of this paradox lies of course in Ramsey's appreciation of the sort of criticisms that have
been made of the concept of religious experience by the opponents, as well as some supporters, of theism. The most harmful of these criticisms is that a religious experience is something which is "purely subjective"; and the phrase "religious experience" can be used in a dangerously ambiguous way in this regard. Antony Flew has outlined the general difficulty:

\[ \text{Experience can embrace almost everything which is, in a wide sense, psychological,... It has also a fundamental and crucial ambiguity... between, first, the sense in which it refers only to what the subject is undergoing and, second, a sense in which it implies that there must be an actual object as well. (Flew (GP) 125-126, cf. Helm (VB) 151)} \]

Ramsey never tires of stressing, as indeed he must, that his category of "disclosure" is intended to safeguard the objectivity of experience in general and religious experience in particular (cf. CPL 249, PA 179). His concern is with "what is objectively disclosed" (ITR Smart 109; cf. DCCD 12), for "disclosures are not a matter of warm feelings inside... They do in fact relate to a confrontation of a certain kind" BP II 203). Thus: "...then we appeal to 'cosmic disclosures' we are not just talking about ourselves, nor merely of our own 'experience' " (TG 87). In the end all objective reference, and only objective reference, arises in a disclosure (PD 119 - 122, LDA 61 - 62).

However if Ramsey does understand that the problem of objectivity is the central issue in religious epistemology, and if he has constructed his own disclosure-epistemology in a conscious attempt to defend religion against the charge of being simply subjective, why does he speak of disclosures as situations in the way that he does? The answer seems to
be that, despite the "biographical" and "psychological" language quoted above, Ramsey thought that the use of the word "situation" itself served to safeguard the objective reference in a way that the word "experience" did not. In a letter to W.F. Zuurdeeg, Ramsey wrote:

instead of speaking of an I-other awareness I much prefer now to speak of a "situation" making it much more evident that here is something which is subject-object in structure, which is both subjectively and objectively more than "what's seen, heard, touched etc."

But our question now reappears in a different form: Why should Ramsey think that the word "situation" makes this "more evident"? I can only assume that it is because it is possible to speak of such a situation as somehow itself "containing" both the subject and the object of the awareness, whereas that possibility is not open to us in regard to "awareness" or "experience". Thus it would seem very odd to say of my sense experience of this table, or my moral experience of my duty, that such experiences "contained" the table or my duty. But if I talk instead of "the situation in which I see the table" or "the situation in which I discern my duty", then:

(a) such situations can be specified objectively ("I was over there by the door looking into the room'etc."); and

(b) it now makes some sense to say that the table, and even my duty, is a part of the whole situation.

The shift seems almost to be a piece of linguistic sleight-of-hand; for talk about "situations" concentrates attention on my "position" or "circumstances" and takes it away from my "experience" or "awareness". And it is, of course, with regard to the latter that the problems arise. Thus an examination of "my (putative) awareness of an objective X" is replaced by an examination of "the situation in which I
am (putatively) aware of X". And in the latter case it is much more easy to slip over into speaking simply of "the situation in which I am aware of X". Such a "situation" now comprises: (a) myself as aware; and
(b) X, the object of my awareness.

The above analysis may appear rather far-fetched but it does seem to be supported by the great majority of cases in which Ramsey discusses situations of disclosure. He writes: "that the religious man claims is one situation which is both what is seen and more than what is seen" (CPL 245; cf. PPL 172), "a situation not restricted to the 'observables' of sense experience" (PI 11 - 12; cf. ibid. 114). Such a situation is "perceptual and more" (RL 30; cf. 3 46), "a disclosure situation comprising 'what is seen and more'" (PR 216). This is a fact which contains both empirical facts and meta-empirical facts in what might together be called a "disclosed fact". Ramsey prefers to speak of "situations" rather than "facts" (cf. RL59, HG 211); but this is partly because facts are usually taken as the "facts and features of the world around us" (PD 133; cf. ER 155), whereas religion points to facts which - while including empirical facts - transcend them (LDA 60). The transempirical (meta-empirical) element cannot be straightforwardly described, for that would be to make it an empirical fact. It is rather the "sort of fact" (ITR Smart 111; cf. CP 34, LDA 61-62) that is known in an "empirically odd" situation which is " 'matters of fact' and more" (RB 190; cf. RL 102).

But if we are seeking a "factual" basis for religious and metaphysical beliefs it is to such disclosure-situations,
or "odd empirical facts" (TL 3; cf. RL passion), that appeal must be made (FI 125, RL 171). A passage in a letter from which I have already quoted sums up Ramsey's position well:

Christian facts are not supernatural in the sense of being entirely "non-scientific", or, still worse, as being what's seen, heard, touched etc., but in "another world". The Christian faith is supernatural in the sense that it is founded on certain facts or "situations" for which scientific language is not adequate currency. Such situations plainly contain what's seen, heard, touched etc., but the claim is that they contain more as well. (U-ILR 5.1)

Thus, for Ramsey, a disclosure is a situation, a fact, which comprises or contains (or "incorporates": IDA 60) empirical fact together with a transcendent "more". It is only because there are such situations that metaphysics and theology can get started.

To talk in this manner is to concentrate attention on ontology rather than epistemology. The whole point of Ramsey's analysis, however, is that it involves an appeal "to situations which are experienced" (RL 27, emphasis added). Hence the disclosure-situation may be treated not only in terms of what is disclosed, but also in terms of the way in which it is disclosed: i.e., in terms of our awareness or experience. A disclosure after all is "a situation... to which all of us have access in an odd awareness" (U-T.MT 4). Ramsey occasionally treats "situation" as synonymous with "experience" (e.g. UC 87) and commentators usually equate the two terms (Cohen (IRX) 6, Erró (LLG) 139, Tilley (Thesis) 108 n.42). But Ramsey's more careful statements refer to situations in which we have an experience: "situations... where we 'see' but not with eyes of flesh" (FD 115; cf. FT 13).
For the situation is a category which is wider than the awareness it contains, and the category is made even wider by Ramsey writes of "the kind of situation characteristic of religion" as one of "discernment - commitment" or "discernment - response" (RL 49 & 129; cf. ibid. ch. I passim, OCR 2, PAR 211, DCCD 10-11).

(C) Disclosure, Discernment, Commitment

In addition to the meaning of "disclosure" given in the previous section, where a disclosure was defined as a certain type of situation (as in FD 115), Ramsey also writes more generally of disclosure as (an act, or event, or process of) revelation (cf. RL79, CF 34, TL 4, II 19, PA 196, etc.). This is clearly more in line with the everyday use of the word, and its cognate verb "to disclose". The word "disclosure", then, may be used to denote a situation (or fact): we may designate this sense of the term "disclosure". It may also be used, however, to denote the actual element of (mediated) revelation which gives rise to that situation; and we may designate this sense of the term "disclosure". "Disclosure" thus specifies an odd fact or situation comprising empirical facts and "more". "Disclosure" 2, on the other hand, specifies the event - the "making known" or "exposing to view" - whereby the "more" is revealed through the empirical facts. In this latter sense "disclosure" is a correlative term to "discernment": we discern or see the "more" as it discloses itself or reveals itself to us.

It would appear prima facie that Ramsey uses the terms "disclosure" (in the sense of "disclosure" 2) and
"discernment" synonymously; and this is maintained, for example, by Breithwaite (JIR 250), Gaskin (131) & Schnetzer (61). Certainly Ramsey sometimes uses the two words interchangeably (cf. RL 23 & 24); but if discernment is the correlate of a disclosure this is surely permissible. In general, however, Ramsey does not here depart from normal usage which may be summarised as follows:

(i) "discernment" (noun) = insight, perception

("to discern" (transitive verb) = to perceive clearly)

(ii) "disclosure" (noun) = revelation

("to disclose" (transitive verb) = to make known, reveal)

Thus we discern and have discernments; but disclosures "happen to us" as something is disclosed to us (or - as Ramsey prefers to put it - discloses itself to us).

The word "discernment" does not occur very often in Ramsey's writings, despite its importance. (Once more perhaps this is because he wishes to use language that stresses the objective nature of religious cognition, language that - unlike the word "discernment" - begs the question of the reality of the religious object.) "Discernment" is paralleled by "religious insight", "vision" (RL 20) and "awareness" (RL 20). The basis of religion is described as a "transcendent discernment" (CCHR 2; cf. RL 15), a "fuller discernment" (RL 18), "a deeper vision" which goes beyond the objects of perception. "Such 'seeing'," Ramsey writes, "is the correlate of a disclosure" (JIRC 163); it is "a response to a disclosure" (CJ 3); Gill describes it as "the subjective aspect of a disclosure" (Gill (IR) 52).

The following diagram summarises the elements within the disclosure-situation, with the terminology that Ramsey
This diagram cannot adequately incorporate the important "self-disclosure" - the disclosure of the self to itself - for in this case the object of discernment is not an Other, but the Self.

The diagram may help to clarify Ramsey's different uses of the term disclosure:

(1) "Disclosure" 1 = (a) A situation in which "the penny drops", (disclosure-situation) we "see" etc. (i.e. a situation in which there is discernment)

= (b) A situation comprising empirical facts and (a meta-empirical) "more".

= (c) A situation of discernment-commitment.
"Disclosure" 2 = a mediated revelation of a meta-empirical "more" through the empirical (or linguistic) elements of the situation.

As Donald Evans has noted, Ramsey sometimes uses the words "God" and "I" to refer to observables and more (e.g.: RL30, pp 191, p 100); i.e., to refer both to the empirical element and to the "more" that is disclosed through it. Evans argues that it is "usually most appropriate to interpret Ramsey as using 'I' and 'God' to refer to the 'more' considered as distinct from observables" (Evans (INTG) 135). 29

When Ramsey uses such words to refer to observables - and more it may be because he is thinking of the disclosures of God and I in the sense of "disclosure" 1. For to claim in that sense that "God is disclosed" would be to say that we know the transcendent God in a situation that includes but goes beyond observables. Thus God is "given" in such a disclosure as observables and more. Evans' comment reveals his own preference for taking disclosure in the sense of "disclosure" 2 - where what is disclosed is the "more", disclosed through observables. He is surely right to concentrate on this second use, for it points more clearly to the distinctive nature of disclosure, whose correlative discernment is an act of intuition mediated through but going beyond observables. "Disclosure" 2 is a revelation of the meta-empirical through an empirical medium; the empirical medium itself is given in ordinary sense experience and not by the transcendent discernment. 30 I shall myself use the term "disclosure" solely in the sense of "disclosure" 2; the connotation of "disclosure" 1 will be covered by referring to "disclosure-situations" or "situations of disclosure".
A preliminary note on the element of commitment in the disclosure-situation might be relevant here. Ramsey contends that "a fuller discernment which embraces 'objects of sense' and more, evokes and is fulfilled in a response, a commitment" (RB 191). For religion is not a matter merely of transcendent insight or intellectual assent: belief in God is "a conviction, a commitment" (RFT 32). Ramsey argues that moral commitment also has a disclosure basis: the whole of ethics being undergirded by a basic disclosure of value and moral claim (cf. IJGC 162 - 163, NL 394, IacQ 113). The response of commitment is like that of a musician "who... in keen devotion gives himself to the playing of a musical score", responding to the disclosure which it has evoked" (TL 12). Christian commitment is such a response, a devotion matching the disclosure of God in Christ (RFT 34).

(D) Intuition and Revelation

Disclosure-situations may be described in psychological language. In such situations "our hearts miss a beat", "we come alive", and so on (cf. FQ 115, NL 19). Ramsey comments:

Certainly all religious situations may be said to be a matter for psychology since they are obviously owned by and experienced by religious men. But that is as true as it is trivial and unimportant. Certainly I am appealing to situations of which we may all become aware. But that does not make them "subjective". (RL 24).

All those situations...when they occur, have an objective reference and are, as all situations, subject-object in structure. When situations "come alive", or the "ice breaks", there is objective "depth" in these situations along with and alongside any subjective changes. (ibid. 20).

The disclosure-situation is not just a psychological category,
sort of phrases regularly used in popular speech for a situation of "intuition" (cf. F0 264).

Kamsey himself claims that a disclosure involves an act of intuition, or immediate (i.e. non inferential) insight. Clearly the logic of the term "intuition" indicates that it should be treated as a synonym for "discernment" (the verb "to intuit" being a parallel of the verb "to discern"). However Ramsey often refers to the disclosure itself as an intuition (RSP 87, RSCS 6, 12, CPCP 54). Either this is simply a misuse of language, or it may be that here (pace PD 115) Ramsey does sometimes use the word "disclosure" to refer to what is disclosed (and the word "intuition" to refer to what is intuited). On these grounds "disclosure" could also be equated with "discernment" for what is disclosed is the same as what is discerned. In any case Ramsey also writes of the discernment as an intuition (e.g. AC 73), and this usage will be followed here.

It is then the discernment, the awareness component of a disclosure-situation, that is non-inferential (i.e. 21) - and in that sense immediate (PD 119, 132) and direct (Ern. Crit. 602)\(^1\). Ramsey argues that "with what is disclosed we are directly acquainted in the disclosure" (ILR 265; cf. PD 120). So the basic element in a disclosure is not an inferential step, not even a step in an argument from analogy (cf. TDA 16 - 17). It is an alogical\(^2\) awareness involving "a logical leap" (FD 10).

If Ramsey takes "intuition" as a synonym for his "discernment", he also treats his "disclosure" as synonymous
with "revelation". The "more" actively reveals itself to us; it is not simply passively intuited:

a cosmic disclosure reveals something of whose existence we are aware precisely because we are aware of being confronted. Indeed we speak of a disclosure precisely when we acknowledge such a confrontation, something declaring itself to us, something relatively active when we are relatively passive. (TG 07 - 08; cf. OCA 2)

The objectivity of disclosure, Ramsey claims, is precisely "the objectivity of what declares itself to us" (IDA 61; CD 08).

It follows from this that the occurrence of a disclosure cannot be guaranteed (RSCS 92, CMCE 95, CD 68, RL 129): all the empirical criteria, all the elements of the disclosure medium, may be present - but the penny still may not "drop". In the field of religion, of course, "this is only what has been meant by religious people when they have claimed that the 'initiative' in any 'disclosure' or 'revelation' must come from God". (IL 79, cf. RL 189)

(E) The Transcendence of Disclosures

A disclosure, for Ramsey, is fundamentally a transcendent disclosure. This is expressed in several ways:

(i) The "more" that is disclosed is transcendent; it goes beyond - is more than - what is empirically given. In a self-disclosure we know ourselves as transcending our public behaviour (cf. HC 208 - 209), and this always accompanies our awareness of "some 'transcendent' other as well, which is likewise transcendent in being more than what public language speaks of" (FI 99). But it is my transcendent self ("what I am beyond the... ideas of sensation, which are given by descriptive discourse... when I am distinctively active")
which is "the paradigm of transcendence" (BPAI 18).

The "transcendent object" of our discernment may be of many different kinds, but the most important examples are: a moral challenge (FI61), another person, and God (FI 99). The objects of such discernments are clearly "religious" or "metaphysical", for "whatever transcends the spatio-temporal is a 'religious' topic" (ESCS 64), and: "in so far as [it] is not restricted to the observables around which it arises it is in that sense metaphysical" (VL 389). But Ramsey's wide spectrum of disclosure examples indicates that a disclosure may be transcendent if the "more" goes beyond what is directly given in a less obvious sense. Thus a disclosure of an invariant, a gestalt, or a pattern hardly reveals a transcendent metaphysical "more" in the way that a self-disclosure or a cosmic disclosure does. But there is still some revelation of a "more" in these situations, for the gestalt and the pattern are "more than" the dots or lines on the paper (cf. RL 23 - 24, FI 93 - 94). This feature of Ramsey's work, together with his later arguments to the effect that all experience is disclosure-based, necessitate our making a distinction between different types of disclosure. Such a distinction will be based in part on the "degree of transcendence" of their objects (cf. below).

(ii) Ramsey also speaks of a disclosure-situation as transcending - going beyond - the empirical elements around which it arises (PA 180; FI 98 - 99). He thus predicates transcendence of the disclosure in the sense of "disclosure" 1: "a situation which transcends the spatio-temporal while it includes it" (FI 74; cf. ibid. 44 - 45). The transcendent
character" of a cosmic disclosure (CD 45) is a function of the fact that such a disclosure-situation "incorporates both the facts and features of the world of ordinary experience, and something over and above those facts and features" (: Da60).

(iii) The responsive element within the disclosure-situation is also described as "transcendent" (cf. FI 61, OCR 2).

A "characteristically 'religious' devotion" is "one not exhausted by the spatio-temporal objects it includes"(FI 17). It is "a commitment which goes beyond what is seen" (RD 189).

There seem to be two aspects of commitment that make it "transcendent": (i) the fact that it has the nature of "a leap of faith", a reaching beyond what is observable to embrace the transcendent object (cf. RL 189); and (ii) the fact that the commitment itself cannot be adequately described in spatio-temporal terms (cf. RL 404, DCCD 13). In both cases, it may be argued, the "transcendence" involved is of a very limited nature: it is by no means "metaphysical transcendence". However, metaphysical transcendence may be predicated of the responsive commitment in so far as it is "decisive action" in which "we realize our freedom". For our "transcendent subjectivity" is not to be restricted to the observables of our bodily behaviour (MDA 60; cf. FI 17, 26)

(iv) But it is of course the "transcendent discernment" that is the essential element in the transcendent disclosure-situation. This is a transcending intuition - a form of cognition that is mediated through, but goes beyond, what is empirically given. It is Ramsey's "fuller discernment" (RL 13, RD 191), his "deeper vision" (RD 163), and forms the foundation of his whole epistemological edifice.
The transcendence of the object of discernment ensures that what a disclosure discloses will ultimately be a mystery. The object of discernment is a permanent, irreducible mystery; so Ramsey has allowed for a "genuine mystery in the sense that 'what there is' is not restricted to observables" (Ev 210). Again it is the nature of the self that affords the prime example: "Each of us in his own subjectivity has a paradigm of mystery, and it is irreducible mystery because the subject will never be exhaustively objectified" (Ev 6; cf. Ev 26). What is disclosed in a disclosure may therefore be spoken of only by "tentative approximation" in model language (Ev 23). Models give us a "partial understanding of something which in the last resort eludes us" (Ev 265); they "help us to be articulate" about the mystery, but they cannot give us "detailed knowledge" of it (Ev 62; cf. CB 90). Mystery, like transcendence, is predicated of both the object of discernment (= the subject of disclosure), and the disclosure-situation itself (cf. Ev 102, Ev 104 n.24, RL 62 etc.).

(F) The Medium of the Disclosure and its Mode of Evocation

Ian Ramsey's epistemology, including his religious epistemology, is based on the correlative concepts of mediated disclosure (revelation) and mediated discernment (intuition). He writes:

God's activity and mine always meet each other through the mediation of observables [or] the secular world. Like Berkeley, and as against Malebranche, I find it difficult to make sense of "direct inspiration" if this is supposed to have no empirical counterparts whatever. (U-ITR Evans 3)
Gill comments that in Ramsey's view:

knowledge can neither take place apart from
the intermediary factors of empirical experience,
nor be equated with these factors (Gill (Thesis) 170;
cf. (TR) 87 - 88)

The mediated nature of discernment/disclosure is
indicated in Ramsey's work by a variety of prepositions. Most
commonly Ramsey says that a disclosure takes place "around"
its mediating element (cf. TE 147, PA 178 - 179, WC 212, WD 122);
but disclosures are also said to occur "through" (iDA 62, V: 102)
or "out of" (RSCS 13) the medium. Various combinations of
these, and other, prepositions are also used. For example:-
"in and through" (e.g. ILR 269, FD 133);
"in and around" (e.g. iDA 4);
"from and around" (e.g. III 12);
"through and around" (e.g. ML 394, CD 8);
"around and out of" (e.g. IJGC 163, ILR 264);
"around and embraces" (e.g. III 14, 16);
"around and includes" (e.g. CE 184 n.24);
The medium of a disclosure is also described as its "focus"
(iDA 32) or "centre" (UP 22).

A disclosure, then, is a mediated revelation discerned
by a form of mediated intuition. Ramsey writes most frequently
of disclosures occurring around "things" (DCO 12), "objects"
(DP II 103), "events" (III: 58), "perceptions" (U-Credo 2) and
(empirical) "facts" (FD 132). The precise distinctions between
all these need not detain us; suffice it to say that they
may all be broadly categorized as "empirical". I intend,
therefore, to label this large class of disclosures:
"disclosures through an empirical medium".
It is clear, however, although rather more surprising, that Ramsey also claims that disclosures can occur "around" and "through" language. Words, phrases, sentences, narratives and arguments may all act as media for disclosures. Thus, for example, in "Facts and Disclosures" Ramsey writes of disclosures that "occur around physical-object talk" (FD 122, emphasis added). Elsewhere he draws attention to disclosures "around" single words and sentences – or whole narrative sections – in the Bible (BS 51). These types of disclosure I will label: "disclosures through a linguistic medium".

There also seems to be a third type of disclosure; for Ramsey often writes of disclosures which have both a linguistic and an empirical base. Here "language... together with a certain pattern of facts, gives rise to a disclosure" (RL 118). Such disclosures occur around the world and language together; I shall label them: "disclosures through a mixed medium".

An attempt will now be made to classify the examples offered by Ramsey under these three headings; indicating at the same time the ways in which he believes such disclosures are evoked. This will provide us with a broad, general survey of the wide field of Ramsey's disclosures.

(i) Disclosures through an empirical medium

The empirical elements around which disclosures occur vary in complexity from simple sounds and coloured patches to complex configurations of patterns of events. As examples of the simplest type of empirical medium we may cite the disclosure of personal authority through the sound of a whistle (OCR 4, NSCS 91) and the disclosure of a colour universal
Through our experience of coloured patches (FD 130, FI 106). But the most fundamental kind of disclosure through an empirical medium is the disclosure of physical objectivity or objective reference through the sights, sounds, touches, tastes and smells of sense experience (FD 129 & passim).

As we progress in complexity/through the spectrum of examples we meet the important disclosure of the self (the "I") which is mediated through the different perceptions we have of the external world and of our own body and its behaviour (CD 182). Then there are the disclosures we have of other selves through their observable bodies and behaviour (FI 97 - 98, RSCS 14). Even more important, theologically, are what Ramsey calls "cosmic disclosures". He defines these as "situations where the Universe 'comes alive',...in [then] the whole Universe confronts us" (TG 87). Such a disclosure may occur as we progressively "survey the vast unfathomable Universe" (RSCS 33); but it may also occur around the smallest object or event. Thus a flower may give rise to a cosmic disclosure (CD 4), as may a drop of dew or a shower of rain, a gale, or a volcanic fire (HDA 3 - 4, 10 - 11). Man-made objects and human events may also serve as occasions of disclosure - e.g. a symphony or a painting (RFT 28) or, more significantly, the events of Jesus' life (RM 405, RSCS 80, HDA 40) and the phenomena that followed it - e.g. the empty tomb (ITH Shorten 315) and Jesus' ascension - departure from his disciples (TL 21 - 25).

Another type of disclosure through sense experience is the disclosure of an invariant or pattern that takes place around a collection of objects or events. A series of dots
may disclose a line (RSCS 7 - 8), a pattern, or a picture (FL 93 - 94, CD 5). At a further stage the disclosed pattern may itself act as a medium for disclosure: a disclosure, perhaps, of a scientific invariant (RSCS 6 - 10), of the God of miracles (MDA 21 - 22), or of a person engaged in purposeful behaviour (MDA 16).

When Ramsey writes of disclosures around "empirical facts" he is often referring to facts about patterns of things and events. This would be true of ethical and aesthetic disclosures, where "value" or moral "claim" is disclosed around the objective facts of an empirical situation (cr. FD 131 - 132, MJC 163). Empirical situations also give rise to disclosures of various concepts which are frequently used in theology: e.g. "immortality" (NL 52 - 53), "perfection" (NL 57), "unity" (NL 54), "simplicity" (NL 55 - 56) and the "eternal" (E passim, FD 131).

In addition to these general ways in which an empirical medium can give rise to disclosures, Ramsey outlines two specific operations which have such an evocative function. The first of these is **juxtaposition**. Two or more "patterns of images" (OCR 3n.2) or empirical phenomena (MD 53) may together give rise to a disclosure. For example a three-dimensional object may be disclosed through the conjunction of our different views of it (OCR 3, Locke 14, TL 14 - 15); and metaphors are born in disclosures arising from what Ramsey calls "the tangential meeting" of two diverse contexts (e.g. "libraries" with "powerhouses": MII 52). It is often the contrasting nature of the juxtaposed media that evoke the disclosure: "as when light and shade give 'depth' to a picture"
But at other times it is the isomorphic relationship between the "contexts" that gives rise to a disclosure. Thus, for example, human patterns of behaviour disclose a "father" or a "friend". And if there is a corresponding pattern in the "behaviour" of the universe this "cosmic pattern" will match or "chime in with" the human pattern, "and their matching then evokes a cosmic disclosure around natural events such as seed-time and harvest" (TG 81; cf. H 266, OCR 8 - 9). Here the "human case acts as a catalyst for the cosmic case" (TG 6). In an earlier article Ramsey describes two different ways in which disclosures may be generated:

(a) Indirectly, when other finite disclosures are used as catalysts.
(b) Directly, as and when the world comes alive around some pattern which permits of limitless development. (TRT 54)

In Freedom and Immortality Ramsey writes of the contrast between winter and spring (which itself evokes a disclosure of "what abides in what changes") being brought "as a sort of catalyst" alongside a case of death. Then "the winter-spring contrast accelerates and brings off (as we might say) the larger evocation, and without being necessarily involved in the phenomenon of death - as it would be if we linked it by the logical relations of an argument from analogy" (PI 84; cf. RSCS 13, SPE 22, LDA 16). Thus, like a catalyst in a chemical reaction, the medium of the "catalytic" disclosure assists the production of the other disclosure without being directly involved in the latter "disclosure-reaction". Ramsey also speaks of "models born in disclosures" acting as catalysts, and he seems here to be referring to model-situations rather than model-language (TL 53, E43).
Ramsey generally prefers to explain the force of Butler-like "analogies" between the patterns observed in the natural order and the patterns expected on the basis of Christian doctrine by reference to the catalytic effect of one medium of disclosure upon another. There can be no argument by analogy here; such an argument would be "plainly weak and confused...virtually worthless" (PI 83; cf. LDA 16 - 17). This is presumably because we cannot make the inference which gets the argument started without assuming that, for example, the death-situation is truly analogous to the winter-situation and therefore probably will itself lead to something analogous to a spring-situation. Ramsey here, as always, prefers intuition to inference. If we are impressed by the similarity between winter and death, then there is an "interlocking of pictures" and - as "a matter of psychological fact" - we again discern "what abides in what changes" (PI 84 - 85). We might note that these "catalytic disclosures" are equivalent to "second order disclosures"; but the latter term seems only to be applied to disclosures in a mixed medium (see below).

The second "operation" leading to a disclosure is really a more refined version of juxtaposition. Here a constructed series of empirical situations is constructed (or obtains naturally), and a disclosure occurs around such a series. We become aware in this way of "activity" or "motion" when we see the finger of a clock in "two successive positions [which] are sufficiently close to evoke a disclosure around them" (OCR 3). Similarly a disclosure of a circle may occur as we survey a series of polygons with an increasing number of sides (RL 69; PO 264; TG 91).
a disclosure of the invariant $\pi$ may also be given to us, in this case around a series of circles of increasing diameter (ODSR 24, FI 114 - 115, RFT 26 - 27).

(ii) Disclosures through a linguistic medium

Disclosures "around" language also take many different forms of varying complexity. A simple imperative word or phrase - "Silence!" from the schoolmaster, or "let there be light" from the Creator - may operate as a medium for disclosure (OCR 4, 9; RSC 391, 93 - 94). Through such language the school pupils and the readers of Genesis discern authority and creative power respectively. Ramsey also writes of proper nouns and nicknames as media for disclosures. Unlike definite descriptions, such names are able to evoke situations of personal disclosure. Ramsey cites as examples from the Bible the use of "Lazar" in John 20:15-16 and Jesus' use of "Son of Man" in the Gospels (OCR 9 - 10, RL 137 - 144, RFT 33, ES 50).

Disclosures also occur, however, around larger blocks of language. The prayers and hymns of religious worship, for example, often have evocative functions - their language is "used to take us into... a moment of silence where God discloses himself" (UP 21; cf. TRT 56). Even certain philosophical and theological arguments are seen by Ramsey as techniques for evoking a disclosure. He cites as examples certain arguments for immortality (FI 67 - 70, 80), and some of the theistic arguments (CPCF 55, BE II 186). "Seeing the point" of jokes and parables similarly depends on our having a disclosure around them (RL 21, CD 11 - 13, cf. RFT 27). Thus, for example, "The purpose of a parable indeed is to generate a disclosure:
we see its point when around the narrative the light dawns" (BS 51). We may note further that even the fundamental disclosure of objectivity can arise around the medium of (empirical) language: "the reference of empirical facts... is to be found when disclosures occur around physical-object talk developed in a certain kind of way." (FD 122). Ramsey believes that our understanding of the meaning of words and sentences is also disclosure-based (cf. Gill (IR) 52, RL 55).

Just as with disclosures through empirical media, disclosures through linguistic media may also arise from either juxtaposition or a graduated series - in this case of linguistic elements. The juxtaposition of two different languages, and especially two contrasting languages, may evoke a disclosure. For example:

the metaphorical expression "A is B" arises in a disclosure where languages A and B meet tangentially (ibid. 52).

to communicate religion, we must bring alongside its assertions such other stories, such other discourse as already has disclosure point (OCR 11; cf. ibid. 16).

Similarly the mixing of different "universes of discourse" can give rise to disclosures (RL 40); and the "piling up" of a number of models - "the jostling of models" - may have the same effect (TL 10; cf. RL 154).

Just as in the case of the empirical media, tangential contact may be between languages which to some extent complement, "mirror" or "fit" each other; or it may be between contrasting languages. Examples of the first type of contact in theology are to be found in the disclosures arising from the juxtaposition of biblical narratives (e.g. of the crucifixion) and other language (e.g. the language of
Disclosure - by contrast occurs, according to Ramsey, through the medium of the contrary parallelism of some Hebrew Poetry - as in, e.g. Ps. 119 v. 143 (cf. CD 15). The meaning of a word (i.e. its sense) is also often communicated by the method of contrasts: by naming its opposite until "the penny drops". Thus the concept of "unity" may be disclosed by talking of diversity (many pieces of furniture - but one room; many rooms - but one house; many houses - but one city etc.): see RL 54.

Disclosure by a graduated series is also to be found in the medium of language. Such a series is involved, Ramsey claims, in the Biblical account of Creation with its succession of days and creative acts (NCS 92). It is to be found most clearly, however, in examples of infinite series in mathematics. Here the linguistic medium is the "language" of arithmetic or algebra. Ramsey's writings are peppered with such mathematical examples; in particular:

The Sum to Infinity of a Geometrical Progression:

Take the progression, a, ar, ar^2, ar^3, ar^4, ..., ar^{n-1}. This series is convergent when \(-1 < r < 1\) (e.g. when a=1 and \(r=\frac{1}{2}\), the series is: 1, \(\frac{1}{2}\), \(\frac{1}{4}\), \(\frac{1}{8}\), ..., 1, \(\frac{1}{2}\), \(\frac{1}{4}\), \(\frac{1}{8}\), \(\frac{1}{16}\), ...).

According to Ramsey, the Infinite Sum of such an infinite convergent series is given in a disclosure (RL 59 - 60, 69 - 70, PO 264). It is \(\frac{a}{1-r}\) (in this example \(\frac{1}{1-\frac{1}{2}} = 2\)).

The Limit of a Series:

The Infinite Sum (above) is a "limit" (in mathematical terms); for the successive sums of the progression tend towards the limit of 2. The above example may therefore be treated
as a specific example of a disclosure of a "limit".

"On surveying this succession of terms we may well have a disclosure with which is associated the integer '2'. We discern a limit, and we posit '2'. Here is a disclosure which arises by the portrayal of some graduated series" (OCR 4).

Similarly with a series: \( \frac{1}{2}, \frac{2}{3}, \frac{3}{4}, \ldots, \frac{100}{101}, \frac{101}{102}, \ldots \)

\[ \lim_{n \to \infty} \frac{n}{n+1}, \]

the limit \( (*) \) is disclosed as we survey the sequence of terms (FI 120 - 122, FD 115, TL 8)\(^4\). Such examples may be paralleled, Ramsey claims, in the language of the Bible and Christian theology. Thus the repeated sacrifices of the Old Testament referred to in Hebrews chapter 10 culminate in the "limiting case" of the Cross (OCR 7; cf. CD 45), and never ending stories about the future have their disclosed "limit" in the Aschaton (FI 124).

However, for Ramsey's major application of this limit theory we must return to his treatment of individual phrases. Ramsey's theory of models and qualifiers will be discussed in greater detail later, but a preliminary sketch must be introduced at this point. A "model" in Ramsey's terminology is a "situation with which we are familiar", and which can be used for reaching another situation with which we are not so familiar" (AL 61; cf. LL 11, LMR 264). Thus mundane models are used in theology in an attempt to represent the transcendent God. To do this, of course, they cannot be applied literally (univocally) but must be qualified in certain ways. This is achieved in the main by the use of "qualifiers" which "have the logical character of directives, imperatives, operators" (CD 79); they prescribe a special
good man" etc.), where the phrases of the former series clearly refer to the objects or situations (or images or pictures of such situations: cf. RL 68) of the latter series. It may be better to think of qualified-model disclosures as disclosures either through an empirical medium or through a mixed medium. However, we should note that model-situations are often treated by Ramsey as "stories" rather than facts (e.g. RL 52, 62, 68, OESR 18 - 19, U-FE 16, VIB 100): we "tell tales until the penny drops and the vision comes" (PP 330).

Indeed one of the "pictures" of behaviour" (RL 68; cf. U-FE 15) that the model-word "good" provides involves a fictional character (Long John Silver - RL 67). A point I shall be stressing later is that a disclosure arising around an actually observed state of affairs (or a series of such actual states of affairs provided by our memory or imagination) is in a different category from a disclosure mediated through, or evoked by, language which may or may not refer to empirical fact. The disclosures evoked by qualified-models do seem to fall into the latter, less straightforwardly empirical, category.

(iii) Disclosures through a mixed medium

Ramsey writes frequently of disclosures arising from "language...together with a certain pattern of facts." (RL 118). Such disclosures through a mixed medium may occur in many ways, but clearly they can all be subsumed under the general heading that we have met twice already - disclosures by juxtaposition. In this case the disclosure arises from a juxtaposition of language and the world.
He may take Ramsey's analysis of prophecy as an example of a disclosure through a mixed medium. He argues that the point of a prophecy is given in a disclosure which arises around the prophetic utterance together with the empirical facts. There may be a matching of prophetic language and current facts (as in Nathan's prophecy to David: cf. RL 113) or the two may contrast (as in Isaiah's prophecy of peace and harmony in a world of violence and disorder: cf. RL 114). Both types of juxtaposition may give rise to a disclosure in which we "see the point" of the prophet's words.

But the actual "fulfilment" of the prophecy involves a further, "second order", disclosure: i.e. "a disclosure evoked by language which had already a disclosure base" (CD 46 n.1; cf. TL 16, FI 147). Prophetic language is fulfilled, Ramsey claims, if "when brought alongside some situation or other, it generates a second disclosure" (RL 117), "when the language used of one disclosure is used in relation to other facts for a second disclosure" (ibid. 119). For example, the language of Isa.7:14-16 (the Emmanuel prophecy) originally gave rise to a disclosure of hope and promise when brought alongside the depressing situation in Jerusalem during the Syro-Ephraimitic attack on the city in 734 B.C. But when this language was juxtaposed with the later situation of the birth of Jesus, it evoked a further disclosure: a disclosure of hope in Jesus as "God with us" (RL 117 - 119). Again the first disclosure, or rather the linguistic element in its medium, serves as a catalyst for the further disclosure.
The evoking of a disclosure through language being "brought alongside...facts" (RL 119) is "something like what occurs when two similar pictures - not exactly the same to be sure - on being brought together are suddenly seen in a new dimension, and the whole circumstance comes to life" (OBOR 52). Here it is a "tangential contact" between language and fact which gives rise to the disclosure (RL 15). It is worth noting that Ramsey argues, in a discussion of the significance of the crucifixion, that for most early Christians the fact of the crucifixion would not on its own have given rise to any disclosure. It is only when this fact is combined with language, with a theological interpretation (in terms, perhaps, of the Suffering Servant or the Remnant of Israel ), that a disclosure occurs (CD 29 - 35).

It might appear that there is yet another category of disclosure-medium: i.e., other disclosures. Gill argues that religious disclosures are "mediated through" other disclosures themselves (cf., Gill (IR) 59). He presents evidence from a group discussion in Oxford to support this thesis, claiming that Ramsey there "defined a cosmic disclosure in terms of discerning something about total reality through the disclosures of every day life" (ibid). In the final chapter of Models for Divine Activity, Ramsey contends that the otherness of God may be disclosed through dream images, physical objects, duty and the moral law, and persons. Then he adds: "but only when dream images, physical objects, duty, persons become each the focus of a cosmic disclosure" (iDA 62).
Now on Ramsey's view some of these media are themselves known in a disclosure: this certainly applies to persons and duty, but it also applies - in his latest thought - to physical objects as well. So in a sense we have here disclosures mediated through other disclosures; and, indeed, if physical objectivity itself is disclosure-given then the "empirical medium" of disclosures is itself disclosure-based.

This discussion shows the necessity of distinguishing between disclosures of differing status, an attempt at which is made below. Here I shall only make one point about "the medium" of disclosures. It seems possible in talking of mediated disclosures to adopt either of two different languages:

(a) a language that speaks of a disclosure/discernment as being mediated through other disclosures/discernments: e.g. "religious experience is mediated through sense experience"; or

(b) a language that speaks of the disclosure/discernment as being mediated through the subject of other disclosures or the object of other discernments: e.g. "religious experience is mediated through physical objects".

The latter usage would seem to be the more common in general speech and in Ramsey's work, and is perhaps the less confusing of the two. I shall follow it in this essay. Here, then, the medium of a disclosure is taken to be an empirical or linguistic "entity", rather than a revelation (disclosure) or an awareness (discernment).

Yet how significant, in any case, are the above distinctions between disclosures through empirical, linguistic,
and mixed media? I believe that the way Ramsey slides uncorcernedly between the different types indicates that he does not wish to draw these distinctions at all. Thus Ramsey discusses disclosures occurring through the tangential meeting of two "contexts" (111: 52) and then goes on to speak of those contexts both as languages and as empirical situations (cf. also CPFR 50). Similarly, in his references to "patterns" giving rise to disclosure, the patterns (patterns of human conduct or patterns in the Universe: 111: 266 - 267, and patterns of images: OCR 3 n.2) are empirically observable patterns; but one suspects that Ramsey is also thinking of "patterns" of language. This ambiguity does seem to open Ramsey to the criticism that he does not distinguish adequately between epistemologically significant "disclosures of entities" and epistemologically trivial "disclosures of concepts". If that distinction proves to be a valid one, then the significance of the distinction between different types of disclosure medium will become apparent. I shall argue below that Ramsey's work is flawed by a neglect of both these distinctions.
4. The Classification of Disclosures

Ramsey's category of the disclosure is, as we have seen, a very wide one. Indeed one of the criticisms directed against Ramsey's work is that the category is too wide and his examples of disclosure too diverse (e.g. Gaskin 133 - 134, 140 - 141; McClendon & Smith (IRM) 415). Certainly some attempt must be made to distinguish between the various forms of disclosure in the broad "spectrum" (Austin (MLP) 47) of examples offered by Ramsey. Ramsey himself admitted, in a letter to Donald Evans, that his examples "need better ordering", and went on to say how much he appreciated the ordering that Evans himself proposed (U-TR Evans 1). Various other classifications have also been suggested (cf. Gill (IR) 52 - 60, McClendon & Smith (IRM) 415 - 417, Gaskin 131 - 132).

What follows is an attempt at another classification, which may help to draw out some of the main problems associated with Ramsey's concept of the disclosure and to provide a scheme on which to base subsequent criticism. In the previous section many of the examples of disclosure given by Ramsey have already been noted, along with the media of such disclosures and their mode of evocation. The following classification, however, is based on the different epistemological objects discerned in these disclosures.

(A) Introductory Notes

(i) The major problem posed by Ramsey's discussion of disclosure-situations may be expressed as follows: Ramsey provides his
readers with a wide variety of examples, convinced that they are all examples of the "same thing" - i.e. a disclosure. One of his dominant concerns throughout his work seems to be to unify apparently disparate phenomena under this one general heading. As a classifier, therefore, he seeks to subsume as much as possible under his newly discovered classificatory category. He thus treats "disclosure" not as the name of a particular "species" of experience or cognition, but as the name - to continue the biological metaphor - of a whole "phylum" in the kingdom of experience. His major concern is to include an ever increasing number of individuals under this broad heading. He is much less interested in any sub-classification of the examples of disclosure.

We shall see that Ramsey believes he has very good reasons for stressing the unity of disclosure-situations, at the expense of their diversity. However, he does on occasions use language which suggests that he is aware of that diversity and does not wish to blur the real distinctions that are to be found among disclosures. For example he writes of certain everyday situations of discernment-disclosure as "providing parallels to religious discernment" (RL 19, cf. CD 5). Such situations are "reminiscent of" (RL 18) religious disclosure-situations, and serve to provide "some intimation" of them (CELCE 95). But it must be admitted that his more usual treatment of the different examples of disclosure does tend to blur the distinctions between them, and his epistemology leads inexorably in that direction.
(ii) We have seen that a disclosure always reveals something "more" in a situation than its spatio-temporal elements, but that these "mores" are of widely differing types. Those who criticize Ramsey for not defending the transcendent nature of the object of religious experience often do so because they assume that the "more" of a disclosure is always just a "more" which is a reorganisation in thought of what is empirically given; that no discernment gives knowledge of anything over and above observables (cf. Nicholls 330 - 333, Mitchell (JRB) 66, Smart (ICBC) 33 - 34, Dalferth 46).

Ramsey has certainly opened himself up to such misinterpretations by his frequent use of examples of disclosure in which we become aware of a pattern or gestalt, or recognize an empirical object. Ramsey's language is often taken as implying that such disclosures are on the same level as disclosures that reveal, for example, moral obligation, other selves or God. But in these latter cases, although "no new observable fact is presented," what is disclosed around the observable facts of the situation is "some challenge, some claim, something other than ourselves" (MMR 264). Such an object of discernment may not be a new observable fact, but it is a new non-observable, transcendent, fact. But when we recognize, in a disclosure, a "goldfinch" by its plumage (PA 173 - 179), or discern a "cube" from twelve lines drawn on a blackboard (RL 23 - 24), the "mores" that are disclosed are not "transcendent" to the same extent. They may be "more than" what is present in perception at a certain moment, as a gestalt-whole is more than the sum of its parts. But they
are not of a radically different ontological status from the empirical facts and features which disclose it. In other words there is transcendence and transcendence (cf. Woods (T) 61), and to speak in the same breath of "God transcending the world" and a "cube transcending twelve straight lines" is simply confusing. As Ramsey himself notes, "metaphysics, to be genuine metaphysics, must have reference to more than observables, i.e. to the unseen" (PPMT 162). A "metaphysical disclosure", then, is one in which the transcendent object transcends not just these particular spatio-temporal entities but all such entities. Cubes "transcend" lines but they remain no more than empirical objects.

(iii) Of the different types of "more" that disclosures disclose, the disclosure of I is clearly in a category of its own. Ramsey uses the term "self-disclosure", somewhat idiosyncratically, to refer to the revelation to an individual of his own subjectivity or self-identity. It is a disclosure of the self to its self, in which we become aware of our subjective transcendence. This self-disclosure always occurs along with the disclosure of an objective other. Ramsey claims that:

not only may descriptive events be so ordered as to disclose a subject which while it includes them also transcends them, but that descriptive events may also be ordered so as to disclose an object which in a similar sort of way transcends them objectively and that indeed such a transcendent object is associated with a transcendent subject in the same situation. We become aware of it as we become aware of ourselves. (BP I 42 - 43; cf. MDA 60 - 61, CD 88, TL 6, MMR 264, CPCF 53, RSCS 43, PPMT 168 - 169, FD 120)

subjective transcendence occurs along with and as a response to objective transcendence (U-MA: "Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion," 1963, p.5; cf. CD 88, FT 99, TL 6, PG 67).
It should be noted at this point that Ramsey speaks of "objectivity" only in regard to disclosures of the Other. The I disclosed in a self-disclosure is certainly real, but it is a real subject and not a real object, and therefore is not "objective". For Ramsey something is "objective" for a person if it is "some thing 'out there', and so other than himself" (BP II 198). He declares: "I would never call myself an 'object', though I am certainly an 'individual persisting through time'" (ibid. 199). In an earlier note in the same article Ramsey agrees with a critic (J.W. Cole) that the Ramseyan language of "self-disclosure" (disclosure of my subjectivity) and of "self awareness" (awareness of my personal identity) sometimes takes a grammatical form that suggests that the subject becomes an object. But, Ramsey contends, such assertions "can be given a logical form which avoids the blunder", for there must be a "subjective awareness which is not of an 'object' " (ibid. 183 n.4). This awareness must be distinguished from a disclosure of objective transcendence. Thus, for example, "God is objective in the sense in which, when we are aware of ourselves, we are always aware of something other than ourselves" (WM 101). Ramsey therefore "restricts the term "objective" to the 'more' which is external, other than I" (Evans (IRTG) 129).

(iv) Before turning to section (B) - "The types of Disclosure" - a further explanatory word is required. A number of species of disclosure are discussed there in some detail and critically analysed, while others are passed over briefly. The reasons for this are that (a) certain of the types of disclosure (e.g. mathematical disclosures and disclosures of
universals) can only be sensibly analysed when a survey of
the whole spectrum of disclosures has put us in a position
to examine critically some fundamental issues; and
(b) some other disclosures (e.g. disclosures of Self and God)
are so important that they demand separate treatment in
greater detail later.

(B) The Types of Disclosure — I

(i) Disclosures of Meaning

Examples have already been given of Ramseyan
disclosures in which we "see" the meanings of words and
sentences and "grasp" the point of arguments, jokes, poems,
and parables. In these cases what is disclosed is "more
than" the linguistic medium through which the disclosure
occurs, in so far as the meaning (sense) of a language is
always "more than" the sounds or marks of that language in
its spoken or written form.

Ramsey similarly regards certain invariant concepts
of scientific theory as revealed in disclosures (cf. RSCS 26); i.e.
he claims that we come to understand them through an intuition.
These include the concepts of mass (RSCS 9 - 10), the point-
particle (ibid.), "molecular magnets" (ibid. 65), force and
energy (MM 62) and the atom (RL 56 - 57). I shall argue
later that the meaning of such theological concepts as
immutability, impassibility, unity, simplicity, perfection
and eternity are also disclosure-given (cf. RL 50 - 58, E
43 - 44). In such cases the concept is disclosed as we survey
a scene or "tell a tale", or juxtapose contrasting images
or ideas. Thus, for example, the concept of perfection might
be explained by "developing a story" about human beings of
varying degrees of goodness until "a situation was evoked which somehow or other presented to us the 'perfection', the 'ideal' after which we were searching...until a characteristic disclosure was evoked" (RL 58). We may also consider Ramsey's many examples of disclosures through models and qualifiers (cf. RL 61 - 79 etc.) as falling under this heading if they are indeed, as I shall argue, disclosures of limiting concepts such as "first cause" or "infinite goodness".

Other examples of disclosures in which we "see the point of something" (RFT 27) are to be found in Ramsey's discussion of the disclosures of (the meaning of) agapé (RE 404), disclosures of the key-concepts of disciplines such as history and social studies (CD 8, MM 62), and disclosures of the meaning of such words and phrases as "the University" (U-FMG B59/172), "personal backing" (FRFI 349) and "the Truth" (FI 73).

(ii) Mathematical Disclosures

It is not surprising that Ramsey, as a mathematician turned philosophical theologian, finds examples of disclosures in the field of mathematics. Intuitive "mathematical insight" (RL 69, OCR 15) is essential for all real understanding of geometry and arithmetic and this is, of course, a correlate of a "mathematical disclosure". We can recognize two sub-categories:

(a) Geometrical disclosures:

Ramsey is very fond of using the examples of the disclosure of "a circle" around a series of regular polygons with an increasing number of sides (cf. RL 69, TG 91, PO 264)
and the disclosure of the invariant $f$ around a series of circles of increasing diameter (cf. RFT 26 - 27, FI 114, OBSR 24). He also mentions the disclosure of a straight line, something "we cannot strictly speaking draw" around a group of pencil, ink or chalk dots or "lines" (RSCS 8).

(b) Arithmetical disclosures:

We have already mentioned Ramsey's accounts of the disclosure of the limit of a series and the infinite sum of a progression.

(iii) Disclosures of physical objectivity

"Objectivity, something other than ourselves, an objective reference" is given, Ramsey claims, in a disclosure (FD 119; cf. ibid. 127). "The objective reference of a word or phrase or assertion...is given—self-disclosed—in those disclosure situations to which a survey of the relevant states of affairs, or features of the world, or criteria leads" (PA 178; cf. ibid. 196). It is clear from the context of these quotations that Ramsey is referring to the objectivity of physical objects—empirical "things" (cf. FD 126). He implies, therefore, that even sense perception has an intuitive, disclosure basis. Thus the concept of the disclosure is fundamental throughout the whole field of epistemology.

In "Facts and Disclosures" Ramsey denies that sense-data are disclosed:

What is given immediately, what is given without inference, is disclosure-given. But it is not a sense-datum; it is rather objectivity, something other than ourselves, an objective reference. This, and this alone, can be claimed as certain, basic, immediate, without inference...

(FD 119; cf. ibid. 121)

Sense-data, on the other hand, are "things" (FD 122) which
have been introduced in an attempt to express this objective reference in language:

What happens when philosophers sponsor sense-datum language is that some assertions are taken as basic incorrigible accounts of the objectivity which is given in a disclosure. In this way, the objectivity, the objective reference, and the relevant assertions are confounded. The significance of talk about sense-data is that it is rather talk grounded in the disclosure of a reference. Sense-data were supposed both to give a secure objective reference and also to guarantee the certainty of assertions explicating this objective reference. But the certainty of the reference only arises in a disclosure and is never transferable to the assertions themselves. (FD 121)

The "raw", undifferentiated objectivity given in a disclosure cannot therefore be expressed in any infallible language:

Material-object language will not suffice or we would never have illusions; sense-datum language will not suffice not only because there is no sense-datum language - Russell's "simple terms" are as bogus as anything could be - but because no one has ever made it clear what is meant by a sense-datum (FD 121). 51

Thus Ramsey's most mature epistemological thinking leads him to a position which is neither realist nor idealist/phenomenalist. For what is disclosed in a disclosure of physical objectivity is not a material object (cf. FD 121), nor a sense-datum (cf. FD 120), but just "something other than ourselves" - objectivity alone.

In a later part of the same paper Ramsey attempts to "mediate between Austin and Strawson" (ibid. 126) in their argument over "facts" and "things" (cf. also PA 177-178). In brief, J.L. Austin had criticized Strawson for claiming that there was a "complete difference of type" between a fact and a thing (Strawson (T) 135). For F.P. Strawson a fact is what a true statement states; whereas things,
happenings etc. are what statements are about (ibid. 136).
Facts, therefore, are not "parts of the world"; things,
however, are (ibid. 140 - 141). Austin (cf. (PP) chs. 5 & 7)
held on the contrary that "'Fact' was in origin" - and may
still be legitimately used as - "a name for 'something in the
world' " (ibid. 164).

Ramsey comments:

I am with Strawson....Facts and features
are in the world, and of the world, but not
in the world as are things. But I believe that
Strawson still needs to give his concept of
"thing" further analysis. In what circumstances
does objective reference arise? It seems to me
that it arises when we have a context of
sufficient area to generate a disclosure and
this would be the case when we have specified
enough states of affairs, circumstances or
features that lead to a disclosure of what
Strawson would call a "thing", a thing which
exists as the objective reference of these
features.(FD 126; cf. PA 178)

Ramsey therefore distinguishes between "matters of fact, the
facts and features of the world around us" (FD 133), and the
objective reference of such facts. Strawson's distinction
between facts and things is a distinction "between 'existents'
and 'thinghood' " (ibid. 125), and for Ramsey:

at some point or other when we talk in one
way or another about a number of such existents
there may occur a disclosure of "objectivity"...
when around the behaviour patterns of what are
called bodies, and around the physical history
of what are called material objects, an
objective reference is disclosed.(FD 126)

(iv) Recognition disclosures

In his paper "Polanyi and J.L. Austin", Ramsey
interprets Polanyi's concept of "comprehension" (or "understanding")
as a species of disclosure. Michael Polanyi had spoken of
our (focal) awareness of an "entity as a whole" - a "comprehensive
entity" or "coherent entity" - which arises out of, but is
distinct from, our (subsidiary) awareness of a set of particulars - or clues - related to the object. He argued:

We can recognize here two kinds of awareness. We are obviously aware of the object we are looking at, but are aware also - in a much less positive way - of a hundred different clues which we integrate to the sight of the object. When integrating these clues, we are attending fully to the object while we are aware of the clues themselves without attending to them. We are aware of them only as pointing to the object we are looking at. I shall say that we have a subsidiary awareness of the clues in their bearing on the object to which we are focally attending.

(Polanyi (CI) 86; cf. (PR) 239 - 242, (KB) 458 - 463, (PK) 55 - 65 & passim.)

Polanyi gives as examples the psychiatrist's recognition of an epileptic seizure by relying on a multitude of clues ((PR) 239, (KB) 458), the student's identification of natural history specimens, and our everyday recognition of another person's face ((LTI) 4 - 5, (TD) 4 - 5).

Ramsey himself connects this analysis with J.L. Austin's account of the recognition of a bird as a goldfinch "from its red head" or other features (J.L. Austin (PP) 63 - 86), and comments:

What happens in such cases, I shall suggest, is that one or another feature characterizing (say) the head of a goldfinch, brings to mind a sequence of features, few or many, and less or more discriminated, and that we recognize the bird as a goldfinch when around this sequence of features a disclosure occurs.

(PA 175)

My suggestion is that we can only speak of knowing a goldfinch from its head, if around the "infinite number of features which are recognised, or could be picked out and recognised" a disclosure occurs which discloses that object of which the features are features. Only then may we speak of an "object", e.g. a "goldfinch" being recognized. (ibid. 179)

Now we have already seen that, for Ramsey, a disclosure
of objectivity is a disclosure of "raw" objectivity, a disclosure in which we come to know certainly only that there is something there, where we "have intuitive certainty about something or other" (FD 129). Ramsey argues that we cannot be wrong about the objectivity of this "something" but we can be wrong about our classification or description of it. A disclosure of objectivity becomes what we might call a "recognition disclosure" when the objective reference is not only discerned, but discerned as a cat or a goldfinch or whatever. This is essentially the same disclosure-situation, but now the objective reference disclosed is "spelt out in terms of" a certain interpretation "which organise[s] certain facts and features of the world" (FD 132). Polanyi's "comprehension", like Austin's "recognition", "goes beyond the features which may be separately described" (PA 177), because those features give rise to a disclosure of objectivity. But the simple assertion, "There is something there" can be filled out by using the descriptive criteria (features) which served as the medium for the disclosure of objectivity. One could then say, "There is something there; it is an object having such and such features (size, shape, colour etc.); it is a goldfinch". "Goldfinch" is, therefore, one of the labels which might be applied to the something that is disclosed. Physical objects are not just disclosed as objects, they are disclosed as objects- of- such- and- such- a-kind: they are recognized as certain kinds of object.

We may note here a parallel between Ramsey's disclosure epistemology and John Hick's epistemology of "experiencing - as". Hick takes up Wittgenstein's account
of "seeing-as", developed with reference to puzzle-pictures, and expands it into the notion of "experiencing - as" (cf. Hick (RFEA) 23). He claims that "all experiencing... is to be construed as experiencing - as" (ibid. 27), for all experiencing involves the activity of recognising - and "to recognise or identify is to experience-as in terms of a concept" (ibid. 25).

In the introduction to *Words about God*, Ramsey himself quotes Wittgenstein's remarks in the *Philosophical Investigations* on "noting an aspect" (Wittgenstein (PI) 193<sup>e</sup> - 195<sup>e</sup>). Ramsey interprets this passage as "suggeting that understanding a sentence involves much more than the understanding of a string of words" (WG 9), adding that Wittgenstein's "flashing of an aspect on us" which "seems half visual experience, half thought" ((PI) 197<sup>e</sup>) is an element in this understanding. Ramsey then adds:

Here are suggestions which may recall for the reader the place I give to "disclosure", claiming that the understanding, for example, of many assertions in morality and religion depends on their having a disclosure-basis. (WG 11)

Thus, although Ramsey's use of Wittgenstein's "seeing-as" is rather different from Hick's, Ramsey may be interpreted as treating "experiencing - as" as a type of disclosure. Anders Jeffner claims that Ramsey may be understood, at least in part, as proposing a theory of religious knowledge based on our observations of ambiguous objects, "objects with an uncertain Gestalt" (Jeffner(SRL) 48 - 49). We shall note in the next section that Ramsey does interpret knowledge of gestalten as disclosure-based: the disclosure being a species of recognition disclosure.
Ramsey, like Hick, would admit that when we experience (see) a goldfinch we experience (see) an objective something-or-other as a goldfinch. But the distinction made here between disclosures of objectivity and recognition disclosures would suggest that Ramsey, unlike Hick, seems to be willing to distinguish out an element within experience in which recognition is not operative. There are a number of factors, however, which appear to bring Ramsey and Hick rather closer together:

(a) Hick describes our experience of an objective, external world as itself a form of experiencing-as. We interpret our sense-data, he argues, in a realist manner; for example we experience this brown expanse as a table top (cf. Hick (AEG) 110, (FK) 108 - 111). This basic interpretative element in perception has been construed by others as involving an act of intuition of an external object mediated through our sense-data (cf. Owen (CKG) 125 - 128, Ewing (VR) 124 - 125). Our discussion above would suggest that Ramsey holds that when we "intuit a material object" we are interpreting (describing) our intuition of raw objectivity in material object language. Thus a disclosure of physical (objective, external, spatio-temporal) objectivity is itself already a recognition disclosure: a disclosure in which we recognize the "Something", the "Other", as a physical object enduring in space. Ramsey may thus be very close to Hick on this point.

(b) We may note that Hick's experiencing - as, like Ramsey's disclosure, involves a "going beyond" in experience to something "more" than is immediately given to the senses (cf. Hick (RFEA) 25 - 26). This "more" is, however, mediated through
the senses (ibid. 28 - 30; (FK) ch.5). But is "intuition" the same as "interpretation"? (cf. J. E. Smith (BG) 52 - 53 and Kunn (SSR) 123). Hick himself sees a parallel between Ramsey's disclosure-situations and his own "special key points within [human] experience which act as focuses of religious significance" ((FK) 216, cf. ibid. footnote 1). Such key points "set going the tendency of the mind to interpret religiously..." (ibid.).

This is compatible with viewing experiencing - as as an interpretative process that arises from an intuition around a key point of experience. H. P. Owen ((CKG) 152 n.1) has argued that his own intuitionist religious epistemology is in agreement with that of Hick; but can Hick be described as an intuitionist? He certainly denies any "sixth sense" intuition of God unmediated through the empirical world (or rather he denies it of the normal (prophetic-type) religious experience: Hick (SE) 243). Hick's analysis of experiencing - as as involving the "exercise of intelligence or rationality" in an essentially "voluntary act of interpretation" ((FK) 120 - 121) appears to place him in opposition to Ramsey's analysis of disclosures as (apparently) involving essentially involuntary acts of intuition. But then Hick argues for a spectrum of cognitive freedom in experiencing - as: it is at a minimum in "sense experience", and reaches a maximum in "religious experience" (cf. (FK) 123 - 128, (SB) 245). Thus, although man "has an innate tendency to interpret his experience religiously" and "the awareness of God is coercive to one who has it in the highest degree", yet that tendency "can readily be resisted" and "the individual's own free receptivity...plays a part in his dawning consciousness of God"((SB) 246 - 248). I shall argue below that although the intuition itself (whether "religious" or
otherwise) is not under our voluntary control, there are inclining conditions which may be. In which case it may be possible to claim that Hick and Ramsey are in fundamental agreement in their epistemological positions.

(c) In Ramsey's early work he wrote of "interprefects" or "organized particulars" (cf. SRCP 298) = "event - patterns associated with a particular theory or interpretation" (U-H A : "Reasonableness of the Christian Faith", I, p.2) — arguing that the "facts" of mathematics, science, theology or history are essentially interpreted-facts. In his paper "The Authority of the Church Today" he underlined this rejection of the concept of "an isolated, independent, self-authenticating fact". (AC 67), asserting that "Facts have no authority apart from the conceptual scheme with which they appear" (ibid. 68). But here the "facts" are "Facts' as organised in an interpretative scheme", and must be distinguished from "'fact' in the sense of objective reference disclosed around" such "facts" (FD 132; cf. AC 70 - 71).57

However, Ramsey appears on occasions to go even further than this, arguing that objective reference is never actually disclosed "nakedly", but always comes "clothed" in some interpretative language (expressed in terms of sense-data or material objects, or some "facts and features" of the medium of the disclosure). This seems to be an essential element in Ramsey's discussion of authority:

The final authority for Christian doctrine, and the "given" in that sense, is the authority of what it is in such a situation which strikes us, what confronts us as an activity bearing on our own. Further, it is a logical blunder, whose cost is meaninglessness, to suppose that something "given" and "authoritative" could be so given as to be altogether pure,
unsullied by any interpretation whatever; and it is a plain logical howler whose cost is barren confusion, to suppose - the opposite mistake - that any interpretation can have the same status as the activity of disclosure itself, as that which calls forth our Christian commitment, demanding by way of response, life, soul and all.... (U-Inter Communion 15)

This latest remark (the paper was written in 1972) must be used to interpret Ramsey's other comments on authority, for example:

What we must not do is to suppose that when a primary authority is given in a disclosure, there comes with it a given label as well, an expression whose infallibility is self-guaranteed. We must not confound insight and the expression of that insight; we must distinguish between a disclosure and our understanding of what the disclosure discloses.

Ramsey is not denying that a linguistic interpretation is given along with the disclosed objectivity, but only that this interpretation is infallible. The distinction is one which will be examined in detail later. Here we simply note that Ramsey does occasionally recognize, what his language elsewhere often appears to deny, that what is given in a disclosure is not "contentless".

We may conclude, therefore, that Ramsey's disclosure of physical objectivity is no more than an abstraction that can be analysed out of the concrete disclosure. For a disclosure always involves some element of interpretation or description - i.e., of "recognition". Ramsey and Hick do appear to be at one on this issue.

(v) Disclosures of pattern, gestalt, and isomorphy (special kinds of recognition disclosures)

Polanyi's analysis of "comprehension" was itself
"closely related to the findings of Gestalt psychology", which claims that an organised whole is grasped through a subsidiary awareness of its parts (cf. Polanyi (PK)55, (FR) 239, (LT) 1 - 3). In a "recognition disclosure" we discern something for what it is; a raw objectivity is recognised as an objective X. In such a situation we recognize an object as a goldfinch as we survey its observable features (plumage, size, shape etc.). It is clear that disclosures of pattern or gestalt are very closely related to such recognition disclosures, and may be treated as a type of recognition disclosure.

Ramsey argues that we discern a pattern as we survey a number of dots in a child's picture book (FI 93 - 94). We similarly recognize a gestalt, which is more than the sum of its parts, as it is disclosed to us through our perception of those parts. Thus twelve lines on a blackboard disclose a cube (RL 23 - 24, TG 80), two zig-zag lines with intersecting straight lines disclose a staircase (RFT 27, CD 5), and a series of concentric circles disclose a cone viewed from above (MM 10). In these examples the pattern or gestalt is "more than" its constituent elements and this "more" is what is revealed in a disclosure.

Another type of recognition disclosure which may be distinguished is the disclosure of isomorphy. Ramsey claims that metaphors and models are "born in" disclosures. Because of some isomorphism between model and phenomena a disclosure of similarity is evoked (ibid. 12, 16, MDA 7, MMR 266 - 267). As Ramsey puts it, "metaphorical expressions occur when two situations strike us in such a
way as to reveal what includes them but is no mere combination of them both" (ibid. 5). It would appear that a disclosure of isomorphy - a disclosed recognition of isomorphy - is involved in the choice of a concept to model a particular scientific, social or theological phenomenon. Thus W.H. Austin is correct in claiming that "Perception of significant isomorphy is, for Ramsey, a disclosure" (W.H. Austin (MMP) 47). Hence the use of the model-concept of the "flow" of an electric current is only possible because the isomorphic relationship between electricity and flowing water has been disclosed to us (ibid§3; cf, Medawar 57).

Similarly the model of "Father" is used of God because we recognise in a disclosure that there is isomorphy between the activity of fathers and the activity of God.

Just as the use of a certain model in the first place is suggested by a disclosure (of isomorphy), so the continued use of the model - its adequacy as a model - is dependent on a further disclosure. This is the disclosure of what Ramsey calls "empirical fit". A passage in Models and Mystery illustrates the two disclosures well:

Take the case of a psychiatrist presented with a particular patient. He asks sufficient questions to be able to build up some sort of understanding of his patient's condition; the hope being that what he hears will have its echoes in a particular model he has available, so that from his professional understanding together with the facts before him there may occur a disclosure, whereupon he will say, for example, "a mild depressive". (MM 38 - 39)

He will now take the model as a persuasive possibility to be further tested and tried out in relation to the patient's whole life. The psychiatrist will now test how adequate the model is in providing an illumination of the patient's total behaviour, by seeing how far it fits with what the patient says as he now continues to speak further about himself. (ibid. 39)
In this way the concept "mild depressive" has empirical relevance but it is never absolutely falsified or completely verified. Circumstances are enumerated until in a flash of insight the model fits the person and the "fit" is then examined in relation to the widest possible pattern of his personal and social life. (ibid. 39 - 40)

It is clear that the initial disclosure of isomorphy and the later disclosure of empirical fit are both disclosures revealing the same "thing" - i.e. a similarity of structure between the model-situation ("mild depressive") and the empirical situation (this patient's behaviour). The fact that the initial use and the later testing of a model are both based on the same sort of disclosure - i.e. that Ramsey "uses intuition to justify intuition" (Schedler (Thesis) 191 - 192) - is one that will be taken up again later.

(vi) Disclosures of invariants

It has become apparent already how difficult it is to draw hard and fast distinctions between the types of disclosure that are to be found along the spectrum of Ramsey's examples. We have met the disclosures of mathematical invariants under heading (ii), but they are clearly closely related to - and may be said to be dependent on - disclosures of pattern. Thus the disclosure of the invariant \( \pi \) seems on Ramsey's account (e.g. FI 114) to involve the discernment of a "pattern" in a series of circles of increasing diameter: a pattern expressed in mathematical language as:

\[
\frac{\text{circumference}}{\text{diameter}} = \text{Constant} (\pi)
\]

Similarly a number of dots may form a pattern (i.e. we may discern a pattern in them) and such "a pattern...discloses..."
'a straight line'" (RSCS 8).

In the case of scientific invariant, like the boiling point of water, the dots we are concerned with are points on a graph:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thermometer Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Samples of boiling water

If we now "link the various dots together in a pattern, and we associate this pattern with the one which discloses 'a straight line'" then "we now register the line as symbolizing 100° Centigrade" (RSCS 8). Scientific invariants thus arise "when a disclosure grows out of a certain pattern of observations, e.g. water boiling, which can then be extrapolated...to continue the pattern" (ibid. 72; cf. RSP 79).

It is important to note that such disclosed invariants differ from the disclosed patterns from which they arise in that although a pattern is "more than" the units that make it up, a pattern can still be adequately expressed in such units. A mathematical or scientific invariant, on the other hand, "transcends" even the pattern and cannot be adequately expressed by the medium that disclosed it. Thus the pure mathematical concept of a straight line is not instantiated in (inexact) perceptual "straight lines" (cf. RSCS 8; also Körner 141, 158 - 171) and a scientific constant is something more than a pattern of instrument readings.

(vii) Disclosures of Universals

Ramsey claims that predicative universals are known
in disclosure-situations; it is "when a sequence of yellow objects or good deeds has effected a disclosure and discernment, that people have begun to speak of 'Yellow'......, of 'Good'..." (PI 106). We must postpone a discussion of Ramsey's view of the nature of universals until we have tackled in more depth the general problem of objectivity.

(viii) Disclosures of value

"Value arises...", Ramsey claims, "around the facts and is disclosure-given" (PD 132; cf. EW 55 - 156). We may distinguish disclosures of (a) aesthetic value and (b) moral value:

(a) Disclosures of aesthetic value:

Ramsey writes occasionally of the disclosure of beauty which breaks in on us as we look at a painting (RSCS 14) or even at a chemical formula (ibid. 16 - 18; cf. BP II 194 n., 200). Hence the sense of aesthetic wonder is disclosure-based (RL 72 - 73).

(b) Disclosures of moral value:

But Ramsey's most prolific discussion of value is to be found in the area of moral awareness. A "moral claim" or "duty" is revealed to us in a moral disclosure through and around either the empirical elements of a situation (cf. MJGC 163, 166; RL 43; FI 42, 44; NL 389), or the language of prima facie duties (cf. BP II 185 - 186). Such a moral disclosure is matched, Ramsey contends, by a corresponding self-disclosure; a person "comes to himself", attains self-knowledge and realizes his own personhood, as and when he discerns an objective moral challenge (cf. RSCS 42 - 43, FI 37 - 38, PPMT 171). Thus "value arises...around the facts and is disclosure-given, and in common with other disclosure
categories is specially concerned not only with that which confronts us objectively in a disclosure, but with the matching self-disclosure as well" (FD 132). Ramsey's favourite example of a moral disclosure, and its correlative self-disclosure, is the exchange between the prophet Nathan and King David recounted in 2 Samuel 12. In that encounter, "at Nathan's 'Thou art the man!' David comes to himself, the 'penny drops' and the disclosure occurs" (PPMT 167; cf. RSCS 42 - 43, BP I 206; MMR 264).

Such moral disclosures reveal the authority of the moral law, the authority of the transcendent moral challenge of duty (AC yO, PA 189 - 190). For Ramsey a "free", "responsible" decision, one to which a man can give his personal backing, is:

a response to "objects" and more. It is this "transcendent" reference which makes the challenge moral: to be aware of such a challenge is to recognize a moral obligation. (FI 33; cf. ibid. 37)

Now the "transcendence" of moral value, the way in which it is "more than" the spatio-temporal elements of a moral situation (cf. FI 44 - 45), is a different sort of transcendence from those we have so far discussed. Here we have the transcendence of "ought" over "is", of moral worth over empirical fact: a transcendence that is reflected in the radical difference between value statements and descriptive statements (cf. FD 131 - 132). The "transcendence of value" is another problem to which we must return later.

Ramsey constructs what he describes as a "modified version" of R.M. Hare's theory of ethics. Hare argued that moral judgments are not only descriptive (of an empirical
situation) but also prescriptive or evaluative, commending a certain action and prescribing it for oneself (cf. his The Language of Morals). Ramsey accepts that the language of morals is both descriptive and prescriptive, but adds that it is also "responsive", for "to evaluate is to respond to a claim" (MacQ 113; cf. PPMT 172). Ramsey views this supplement to Hare as a defence of the objectivity of morals, an explanation of the universalizable character of moral judgments:

"a"moral" claim is disclosed around a pattern of behaviour whenever this becomes the topic of a moral judgment, and it is to such a disclosed claim that the prescriptivity, of which Hare speaks, arises as a response. (MacQ 113; cf. MJGC 162 - 165)

This disclosed moral claim or obligation is our "duty" in a given situation (cf. RL 42 - 43, U-FMG B44/157, EP I 43); it is "the particular version, suited to those particular circumstances, of that Duty which would reconcile all partial duties" (FI 40). Here Ramsey notes a parallel between his own view and the moral intuitionism of W.D. Ross (ibid., cf. RL 30 - 31). Thus a moral disclosure-situation may present us with mutually conflicting prima facie duties, "with two challenges which generate conflicting responses". The only way to resolve this situation, Ramsey suggests, is "to develop the empirical details in each case until there arises within the one disclosure a single challenge and response" (PPMT 171). This will be a disclosure whose object may be labelled "Absolute Duty" - "a metaphysical category" (ibid., cf. 172).

(ix) Disclosures of Other Selves (other I's)

The "I" of another person is revealed to us, in a
disclosure, as more than his describable, observable, public behaviour. "What has happened," asks Ramsey, "when we say on such occasions that, e.g. (the oculist) now sees Jean as a 'person'; and the 'real' Jean now confronts him? The answer is that around Jean's eyes has been evoked a situation transcending the spatio-temporal..." (FI 98, cf. OCR 4 - 5). Such "seeing" of a person as "more than" skin, hair, eyes etc. - seeing the I behind the eyes - is one of the hints that Ramsey takes over from Berkeley (see Berkeley (A), Dial. IV, sec.5; cf. PPMT 170, FI 98, BPEM 24).

When such a disclosure occurs impersonal situations "come alive" and persons are recognised where bodies stood before (cf. RL 19 - 20, 146 - 147; RSCS 15; PF 335 - 336; TRT 50). We may label such disclosures as "personal disclosures" (with Gill (IR) 52, cf. RSCS 13), but it is worth distinguishing between a disclosure of another I and a "recognition disclosure" of a personal attribute such as love or honesty which may be associated with another I (cf. RG 212 - 213). In the latter case two types of disclosure seem to be involved on a parallel with Ramsey's account of the disclosure of personal purposiveness through a pattern (MDA 16, FI 127): where the pattern itself is, presumably, the product of an earlier disclosure. After all we could, in principle, see "honesty", or even "love", in letters written by a well programmed computer. But the knowledge that we have to do with another person who is the author of the letters and the bearer of these qualities is another matter altogether, demanding a further intuitive disclosure (or, as some would prefer it, an additional inference: cf. RSCS 58).
In the disclosure of another I we find the basis of Ramsey's rejection of a behaviourist analysis of other people. For another self is a distinctively transcendent "more"; another person is more than the observable behaviour he displays and we perceive (cf. PG 66, PPMT 164 - 171). This I is another centre of consciousness and activity standing over against us and transcending the world of observables. It is at this point in Ramsey's spectrum of disclosure examples that we meet for the first time what we might call a metaphysical or metaphysical entity - a transcendent object that is not open to empirical observation.

(x) Disclosures of God

For this study of Ramsey as a religious epistemologist, the species of disclosure that is of primary importance is, of course, the disclosure of God. All the other disclosures must be seen as intimations, parallels or analogies of the religious disclosure (CELCE 95, RL 19; cf. Cairns 191, Owen (PTR) 68).

Ramsey frequently employs the phrase, "cosmic disclosure" in this context; but neglects, unfortunately, to offer any precise definition of it. We may take it, however, that the basic characteristic of a "cosmic" disclosure is that it "involves...in some way the whole universe" (VM 100). A cosmic disclosure arises around "the cosmos, or at least some phenomenon considered as representative of phenomena generally" (W.H. Austin (MMP) 43; cf. RL 73, MDA 3, 10). The cosmic nature of a disclosure is thus a function of the medium through which the disclosure occurs; this medium being either empirical (cf. MDA 59 - 60,
MM 16) or linguistic (cf. CD 7). Such disclosures are potentially, rather than actually, "cosmic"; for clearly no one could in practice survey the Universe in its entirety. Ramsey therefore designates a disclosure as "cosmic", i.e. "unlimited or all-inclusive" (PG 65; cf. TTST 82), in so far as it is "a disclosure from which, in principle, nothing is excluded" (U-PE 15; cf. RSCS 73, MDA 4, RPT 29). He writes:

theology...is founded in occasions of insight and disclosure when the universe declares itself in a particular way around some group of events which thus takes on a cosmic significance. (MM 58, emphasis added)

We may assume that Ramsey's point is that the medium of a disclosure can be considered to be of "cosmic significance" because what is disclosed through that medium is of "cosmic significance" - i.e. of unlimited relevance and application.

Donald Evans points out that Ramsey designates as "cosmic" a form of "negative all-inclusiveness" which characterizes disclosures of particular duties, where "Whatever else may be the case over all the universe, X is my duty in this situation", i.e. "Nothing else matters except doing X, my duty in this situation" (Evans (IRTG) 131 - 132; cf. RL 30 - 31, MDA 60, PG 69). But the adjective "cosmic" is more appropriately applied to disclosures, and concomitant commitments, that are "positively all-inclusive" - in particular to disclosures of God as the "more" of the whole universe (MMR 265). Indeed Ramsey often uses "cosmic disclosure" as a synonym for a disclosure of God (e.g. MDA 3, RSCS 92), despite the fact that other disclosures - e.g. disclosures of duty (MMR 265) and mathematical disclosures (RL 32 - 33) - may also be cosmic in scope. This rather loose usage is confusing; but Ramsey would justify it by his contention.
that in fine all disclosures, as they become cosmic, reveal God. Thus after citing a disclosure of duty as an example of a cosmic disclosure, Ramsey writes: "I give the name God to the single individuation of which we are actively aware in all cosmic disclosures" (U-Credo 3). I shall, however, avoid begging this particular question and will restrict the term "cosmic disclosure" to the more technical usage outlined above; speaking elsewhere of "disclosures of God".

Perhaps a word or two might be appropriate at this point about Ramsey's view of general and particular providence, the first-order and second-order activity of God. The acknowledgment of both types of activity is regarded by Ramsey as disclosure-based, for "God can always be discerned in the regularities of the Universe," (UP 19) as well as in the particular events described as "miracles" or "answers to prayer" (cf. RL 149 - 150). The regularities of the universe, however, are best described in scientific, object-language; whereas miracles require the language of personal activity (cf. M 22 - 23). And yet there is only one activity, an activity that is described in language at two different levels. The danger seems to be that, having experienced a disclosure of God around a particular event, religious people will neglect to broaden their language and speak of a general activity or providence of God (UP 19 - 20, MDA 19 - 22). Such individuals will have failed, we may suppose, to recognize the "cosmic" nature of the original disclosure.

It should also be noted that, for the Christian, a disclosure of God occurs preeminently "around the empirical
Jesus of Nazareth" (RE 405; cf.FI 144) and the events of his life (cf. RSCS 80; CD 45, 59; DCOD 12, RFT 34). Such a "Christian disclosure" (RL 125) is a "cosmic disclosure... which in one way or another arises around the person of Jesus..." (U-WM 21).

With the disclosure of God we have arrived, as it were, at the far end of the spectrum of transcendence. This disclosed "more" goes beyond all other disclosed "mores". Like the self and other selves it is a meta-empirical entity, radically transcending the empirical medium through which it is discerned. But God is also "more than" all other meta-empirical entities. For Ramsey:

God not only transcends the observable universe ....but also transcends all the I's and other centres of particular activity in the universe,(Evans(IRTG) 217)

(xi) Disclosures of the self (I)

Attention has already been drawn, en passant, to the disclosure of I. For this disclosure of subjective transcendence is apparently viewed by Ramsey as an invariable concomitant of all disclosures of an objective "more", and in particular of disclosures of duty, other selves, and God. In this classificatory scheme it has been placed last although in importance it should come first - for Ramsey views it as a paradigm for all disclosures. From another point of view, however, it does not belong in this spectrum at all, but should be classified separately because of its distinctive nature as a disclosure of subjectivity as opposed to the many examples we have met of disclosures of an objective other.
For Ramsey, then, our self identity is given in a self-disclosure:

What "I" means breaks in on us as we survey... "a train of distinct perceptions". We look over a sequence of distinct perceptions and we come to know ourselves. It is in such a disclosure that we are aware of "I" along with, but more than, any and all of its scientific counterparts, (RSCS 42, cf. DPII 183)

The disclosure of self identity arises not only through the medium of our sense experience of the external world, but also through our experience of our own behaviour:

consider the kind of situation in which I become aware of myself as distinctively "I", as being all my observable behaviour and more besides, when in exercising some decisive activity I discern what is more in my activity than the observable movement I display. Here is a "disclosure" situation which breaks in on us... when we survey our public, observable behaviour. (CE 182, cf. FR 215)

The self-disclosure provides Ramsey with a sufficient reason for rejecting behaviourism, even the sophisticated "logical behaviourism" of Gilbert Ryle (cf. SEI, Emp.R., FPMT 164 - 172, CPCF 53 etc.). The I which is disclosed to a person is more than his observable behaviour and, unlike such behaviour, cannot be adequately accounted for in perceptual terms. The I cannot be described, it can only be evoked. Thus the self-disclosure which occurs around empirical facts discloses...

something which is all those facts and more, and it is not a more that will ever be covered by more of the facts... it is a subjectivity for which no set of third-person descriptions, no matter how many or varied, can ever be exhaustive currency (TL7; cf. MM 27, MDA 60)

In the self-disclosure, therefore, we have our final species of disclosed meta-empirical entity. Self-disclosure reveals the transcendent I, "transcendent in the sense that
it is not to be contained within scientific discourse nor reduced to terms within such discourse" (HP 129). As the "paradigm for understanding all disclosures" (FRFI 355), the self-disclosure is clearly of paramount importance in a discussion of Ramsey's disclosure epistemology. We shall analyse it in more detail below.
Having outlined above the wide ranging nature of Ramsey's spectrum of disclosures, it is necessary to examine more closely the sorts of distinctions that can be made between them. To help clarify certain issues in Ramsey's epistemology I shall draw on some aspects of what philosophers in general, and philosophers of religion in particular, have written on the subject of intuition. For, as we have already noted, the discernment element in a disclosure-situation may be identified as a non-inferential awareness or intuition.

In his article on "Intuition" in Paul Edward's Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Richard Rorty distinguishes three principal meanings of the term that are of importance in philosophy. These are:

(a) "Intuition as immediate knowledge of the truth of a proposition, where 'immediate' means 'not preceded by inference' ";

(b) "Intuition as immediate knowledge of a concept. 'Immediate knowledge' here means, roughly, 'knowledge which does not entail ability to define the concept' "; and

(c) "Intuition as a non propositional knowledge of an entity, knowledge that may be a necessary condition for, but is not identical with, intuitive knowledge of the truth of propositions about the entity". (Rorty 204)

Such a classification raises a number of interesting issues when applied to Ramsey's discussion of discernment-disclosure. We may conveniently discuss these under three headings:
(i) Disclosures of Concepts & Disclosures of Entities

The "qualified-model disclosure" (cf. RL 61 - 79 etc.) is one of Ramsey's favourite examples of a disclosure-situation. He claims that the qualifier ("infinite", "all") of the model ("good", "wise") produces in our minds a series of sub-models of increasing goodness or wisdom, and that this results in a disclosure of God "as 'infinitely good' " etc. (cf. RL 70). The function of the qualified-model is to evoke in this manner "the characteristic situation in which God is known" (RL 80). But is it in fact God whom we intuit in this situation? It would seem more natural to say that what we come to know as we survey a series of increasingly wise or good human beings is the meaning - i.e. the sense, not the reference - of the concept "infinitely wise" or "infinitely good". What "breaks in on us", what is disclosed to us, is not an "entity" but a "concept".

For the purposes of this discussion we may accept the definition of a "concept" as "a convenient abbreviation for the connotation or sense of words or phrases as such" (Heath 179). A concept is thus essentially the notion or idea signified by a certain word or phrase.

"Entity", unfortunately, is a somewhat more ambiguous word. I shall take it to be a word connoting a thing that has real existence: i.e. a reality that exists "outside " people's minds (unlike a concept - which might be called a "mental entity")\textsuperscript{67}.

The examples that have been given above as disclosures of concepts (e.g. "unity", "perfection", "eternity" etc.) are not so understood by Ramsey himself. His view
seems to be that such disclosures reveal the meaning of the word in question both by disclosing its sense ("connotation") and by disclosing its referent ("nominatum"). Thus in his discussion of the example of "unity", Ramsey writes:

We are puzzled as to what exactly the word means, so we try its opposite...According to this technique we approach the meaning of "unity"...

If anyone wishes to know what is meant by predicating "unity" of God, the first thing we have to do is to evoke such a characteristic situation. (RL 54; emphasis added)

Here Ramsey is most naturally interpreted as viewing the disclosure, at least in part, as a disclosure of the sense of the word "unity". But such disclosures are at the same time, for Ramsey, disclosures of the "objects" that these words designate. In such disclosure-situations, Ramsey claims, "the word 'God' is posited" (RL 58; cf. ibid. 62, 73 - 74): i.e. we suggest "God" as the appropriate word to designate what is disclosed in such a disclosure.

Thus, although Ramsey stresses that "there can be no formula guaranteed to produce God for inspection" (RL 79), he does not deny that qualified-models, through the sequences developed from them, do disclose God himself and not just part of the concept of God (cf. RL 79 - 80, TL8, MDA 65).

Ramsey's examples of mathematical disclosures, which he treats as suitable "illustrations" of, or "parallels" to, the religious cases (cf. OBSR 23, MDA 206), are most instructive. Ramsey argues:

"Infinite goodness" has a structure not all that unlike "infinite sum" or "infinite polygon", and if we wish to have some clues as to the logical placing of the word "God", we may be helped by reflecting on the relation between "circle" and the polygon stories, or "2" and the sequence stories.
Just as no polygon, however numerous its sides is a circle; just as no sum of no series, however many its terms is precisely 2; so God as "infinitely good" is not on all fours with Long John Silver or even St. Barnabas. (RL 70)

We may readily agree with the last few words quoted, but the rest of the passage seems less convincing. For in the case of an infinite sum, as the series progresses we "just see" that the sum is tending towards a limit that (in Ramsey's usual example) equals 2. That is "2" is posited as the "arithmetical name" of what is disclosed (a certain Infinite Sum) in the disclosure. Similarly "circle" is posited as the "geometrical name" of what is disclosed (a certain Infinite Polygon) in the disclosure around a series of regular polygons with an increasing number of sides. But the latter disclosure could occur even if there were no such things as circles, e.g. in a world in which only straight lines could be drawn. In such a world it would be clear to us — unless with Plato we identified concepts with individual entities or forms that what is disclosed is the concept "Polygon with an infinite number of sides": a concept that corresponds, in our world, to an entity we call a "circle". This reveals the logic of the mathematical case. The concept is disclosed and we know (independently) that the concept is, more or less adequately, instantiated in the real world.

Ramsey admits that the disclosure could occur even if "we had never heard about circles" (TG 91) and did not know them independently of the disclosure (MDA 64). We might then "Call what is disclosed 'X' ", and only later — if at all — add "for 'X' read 'circle' " (MDA 64 - 65). This
"revision of the polygon analogy" (Evans (IRTG) 220) satisfies
Donald Evans at least, but only in so far as what is disclosed
is a concept rather than an entity. For Evans writes:

the religious series is supposed to help us
to come to understand what "God" means and
what "loving" means when applied to God. (ibid. 219)

In the religious case 'X' is "Infinite Goodness", for it is
Infinite Goodness that is disclosed (cf. ibid. 220). But
this only means that the sense of the phrase "Infinite
Goodness" is disclosed to us. We may discover later that
there does in fact exist some instance of "Infinite Goodness";
that there actually is a nominatum, designated (signified)
by the word "God", which instantiates that sense (meaning)
that has already been disclosed. But Ramsey's disclosures
through qualified-models appear to reveal only the sense
(i.e. the concept) of, and not the nominatum of (i.e. the
entity referred to by), the word "God".

But this, of course, is very different from what must
most of all interest a religious epistemologist - disclosures
that reveal a real existent entity. We should agree that
"when we know what the phrase 'infinitely loving' refers
to, we know God" (TL 8). But we must add that knowing what
the phrase refers to is not the same as knowing the meaning
of the phrase. And it is only the latter that a qualified-
model disclosure seems to provide.

(ii) Disclosures of Entities and Disclosures of Truths

"I do not use disclosure", Ramsey wrote, "in what
might be called the newspaper sense of disclosure, i.e., a
sense which carries with it overtones of information disclosed"
(FD 115). In Ramsey's eyes what is revealed in a disclosure
is, generally speaking, an entity (or - as we have argued above - a concept) and not a truth. There can be little doubt that Ramsey believes that we can have intuitive knowledge of an object that is logically independent of the truth of any propositions about that object. In a Ramseyan disclosure we come to have certainty "that x is" without being able to do more than tentatively affirm "what x is". This is the basis of Ramsey's oft-repeated distinction between incorrigible experience and corrigible language. Ramsey appears to derive the distinction from Russell's demarcation between knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description; and it is to an analysis of this account of knowledge that we must now turn.

Bertrand Russell's early views on the different types of knowledge may be displayed through his own summary in The Problem of Philosophy:

We have first to distinguish knowledge of things and knowledge of truths. In each there are two kinds, one immediate and one derivative. Our immediate knowledge of things, which we call acquaintance, consists of two sorts, according as things known are particulars or universals... Our derivative knowledge of things, which we call knowledge by description, always involves both acquaintance with something and knowledge of truths. Our immediate knowledge of truths may be called intuitive knowledge, and the truths so known may be called self-evident truths. Among such truths are included those which merely state what is given in sense, and also certain abstract logical and arithmetical principles and (though with less certainty) some ethical propositions. Our derivative knowledge of truths consists of everything that we can deduce from self-evident truths by the use of self-evident principles of deduction. (Russell (PP) 62 - 63)

On Russell's view we have acquaintance with something when we have "a direct cognitive relation to that object", when we are "directly aware of the object itself" (Russell (KAKD) 152).
On the other hand "we have **descriptive** knowledge of an object when we know that is the object having some property or properties with which we are acquainted" (ibid. 166). For Russell - at this stage - sense-data, universals and (possibly) our selves are known by acquaintance; whereas physical objects and other minds, for example, are only known by description: "the descriptions involved being usually such as involve sense-data" (ibid. 166 - 167). Knowledge by acquaintance is thus knowledge of an entity rather than knowledge of a fact or a truth; unlike "knowing-that" it is not a "propositional attitude". For Russell knowledge by description is knowledge by identifying descriptions. We can be said to know a person or a thing (i.e. an entity) by description, but this only means that "we know that a certain description applies to something and that there is only one thing to which it applies" (Price (B) 65). Thus knowledge of x "by description" reduces to knowledge of truths about x.

This analysis of knowledge was closely tied up with the problem of the attainment of certainty. Russell held that "we may...be certain of a sentence only in the degree to which we are acquainted with its 'constituents' " (Danto 210). For Russell and his followers the fundamental object of such incorrigible knowledge by acquaintance was a sense-datum. For Ian Ramsey, however, it is the undifferentiated Other, raw objectivity, which may or may not be described in terms of sense-data."This, and this alone, can be claimed as certain, basic, immediate, without inference..." (FD 119). Ramsey writes of "Russell's distinction between knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description" suggesting that:
both of these arise at one and the same time out of the same situation. There is an "immediate" direct incorrigible feature, and this is the objective reference which is disclosure-given. There is also the interpretation, the descriptions, the talk, and this is something which is less or more reliable. It may be more vague or more precise, but it will never have, indeed logically it could not have, features that belong only to disclosures and never to assertions. (ibid. 122; cf. MMM 265)

In "Fact, Metaphysics & God", Ramsey devotes some space to an analysis of this aspect of Russell's theory of knowledge. He argues that Russell is trying to do two things:

(a) to indicate a certain sort of detailed datum which can be a solid basis for knowledge. This, he thinks, would be "it", "x", a "coloured patch", but also
(b) I suggest he is trying to call attention to a certain curious awareness which he calls "acquaintance"... (U-FMG 1/5/7)

Ramsey agrees that this "curious awareness" is a factor in all knowledge (ibid. 1/10/12), but prefers to designate it a "curious situation" (1/6/8) of "subject-object awareness" (1/10/12; cf. 1/12/14). Thus it is clear that what Ramsey calls, some pages later, the "empirical oddity" of Russell's acquaintance-experience is closely akin, from Ramsey's viewpoint, to the basic element in religious experience. Ramsey is therefore willing to suggest that "not even sense-data are given without some kind of numinous experience" (U-FMG 9/63/170). Russell's "acquaintance" then, is that relationship between knower and known that Ramsey usually describes in terms of disclosure and (intuitive) discernment.

However is "acquaintance" a form of knowledge, as Russell contends? This point has been much disputed. Critics of Russell have argued that he has confused a causal condition for knowledge with a special type of knowledge. They contend
that our knowledge that $x$ is $y$ is certainly caused by our sensation of $x$, but question whether this means that the mere sensing of $x$ is a distinct species of knowing.

Knowledge by acquaintance is...

...part of the empiricist program of finding objects of experience of which there is no possibility of doubt. Yet this knowledge must be essentially contentless, since any attempt to say what one knows must be to go beyond the immediate experience and desert knowledge by acquaintance. In this sense, therefore, the concept of knowledge by acquaintance is both useless and misguided. There is no such thing as knowledge by acquaintance in this sense, since what one knows must always be identifiable under a description and thus implies knowledge by description. (Hamlyn (TK) 106; cf. Pears (BRBTP) 126)

Albert Hofstadter in his article, "Does Intuitive Knowledge Exist?", distinguishes between two different senses of intuition:

(1) intuition as immediate awareness or apprehension of an object, content, or subject matter, and
(2) intuition as a mode of knowledge developed on the basis of immediate apprehension (op. cit. 81)

Intuition of type (1) is not itself knowledge: "It cannot be knowledge, for there is in it no act of affirmation or denial, no attribution or inference. It cannot be said to be true or false..." (ibid. 82). Hofstadter claims that there can be no non-propositional, non-judgmental knowledge by acquaintance. There can only be "intuitive knowledge" in the sense of "an act of mind about, directed to, or regarding immediately apprehended subject matter" (ibid. 82).

Other criticisms of Russell's view that sensing is a form of knowing have been voiced by H.A. Pritchard, Gilbert Ryle, H.L.A. Hart, A.M. Quinton, and Don Locke. Such a weight
of philosophical opinion must certainly be taken seriously. I would suggest, therefore, that we treat "acquaintance" as a causal condition for knowledge and not as itself a species of knowledge. In which case it seems that our intuitive discernments cannot stand alone, but need to be spelled out in terms of language (truths). Thus intuitions must become "knowledge—that" in order to bear the strain that an epistemology like Ramsey's would bring upon them.

(iii) The Difficult Cases

If we are to interpret Ramsey's intention as that of presenting an account of disclosures of entities, then we are faced by the difficult cases of universals, mathematical "entities" and values. In what sense are these "entities"? Should we rather view them as disclosed "concepts"? Or are such disclosures more naturally classified as disclosures of truths? Some account of the nature of such problematic objects of discernment must now be attempted.

(a) Universals

Predicative universals (i.e. properties and relations of things) are usually accounted for on one of three theories:

(i) "Realism" holds that universals are abstract entities having an existence independent of the human mind. Plato believed that such substantial universals existed (or subsisted) outside space and time; whereas Aristotle's version of realism argued that universals were properties that existed only in particulars.

(ii) "Conceptualism" regards universals simply as mind-dependent concepts.
(iii) "Nominalism" takes a variety of forms. Extreme nominalists contend that only particulars exist and that universals are simply general names, i.e., that all that a class of things has in common is the common name that we use of them all. However, a less extreme version is to be found in the Similarity (or Resemblance) Theory, which can be traced back to Hobbes. This theory holds that the different things to which a general predicative term applies are related by resemblance. On such a view a universal is neither a real entity nor a concept, for to say that there is a universal $x$ is to say only that there are particulars which resemble one another in $x$ -ness (i.e., "in being $x$"), thus when one says that things have a "common property" one does not mean that there is one property present in them all, but that there are real similarities between them which are sufficient for us to use one word of them all.

Contemporary philosophers usually adhere to some form of nominalism, arguing that "what makes a term general is its being used to mark recurrent features of the world and not its standing for a special sort of abstract object" (Ayer, CQP 207). Russell's criticism that resemblance is itself a universal (cf., e.g., Russell, PP 55) is often employed against the Resemblance Theory; it has been countered by the denial that two similarities, even if they are "the same", must be instances of a universal similarity (Woozley, cf. Staniland 60 - 66). A.M. Quinton, who accepts Russell's criticism of the Resemblance Theory, proposes in its place a theory based on the existence of "natural classes". According to Quinton, to say that there are properties is to say that there are natural classes to which concrete
things may be assigned. "A predicative universal", then, "is what the members of a natural set...have in common" (Quinton (U) 381).

But our question must be, "Where does Ramsey stand in this debate?". We must now return to his discussion in "Fact, Metaphysics & God" of Russell's account of "knowledge by acquaintance". Russell, at least at one time, held that we are acquainted with universals (cf. Russell (PP) 28, 62 - 62) which he viewed as subsistent entities (ibid. 57).

We have already noted that Ramsey's disclosure-situation is on a par with Russell's situations of "acquaintance". Later in "Fact, Metaphysics & God" Ramsey notes specifically that universals or "eternal ideas" find their "empirical anchorage" in disclosure-situations. He goes on:

But a universal would not then be something bred by imagination out of particulars unless that breeding continued until more than particulars were evoked - in fact the situation itself. Nor is a universal a long stretch of colour laid up somewhere or other in an occult world as though an eternal idea were some special brand of idea. (U-FMG B 56/169)

In Freedom and Immortality he notes once more that universals are known in disclosure-situations, and reaffirms that they are not "things laid up in some heavenly region" (FI 106). But these apparent rejections of Platonic realism are to be balanced by the fact that Ramsey goes on in Freedom and Immortality to draw a close parallel between the "empirical placing" of language about universals and that of the words "soul" and "spirit" (ibid.). And although Ramsey has been criticized for appearing to make the soul "in no sense an entity" (cf. Lewis (FI) 174) he has roundly denied that this is what he intends (FRFI 352). It would seem that
Ramsey wishes to renounce all talk that could be interpreted as claiming that there is "another world" of transcendent realities that are essentially similar to this world of empirical realities (cf. CF 34). Thus, even if Ramsey believes, as I shall seek to show that he does, that God, the self and other selves are "entities", they are only entities in a transcendent, meta-empirical sense. They are not to be thought of as differing from empirical entities solely in degree.

It may be, then, that Ramsey would accept some form of realism with regard to universals, provided that it was of a sufficiently sophisticated nature. We must now take note of his discussion of universals in "Facts and Disclosures". Here he once more refers to Russell's account of acquaintance with universals, and comments:

In other words, it is as and when we see instances of a particular sensible quality that there may break in on us, sooner or later, a disclosure, and we give the name universal to this of which we are then aware. But this always translates back into particular instances of that which we speak of as the universal, for example, colour. Universal words are no more, though no less, than words which bear witness to a disclosure reached in a certain way viz., by surveying a series of particular qualities. (FD 130)

He then adds, very significantly, "Categories like substance and universals are best seen as labels for different routes into a disclosure of that which is other than myself" (ibid.)

In this paper, as we have seen, Ramsey is discussing at length the fundamental disclosure of objective reference. This is an objectivity which may bear many different labels relating to "the different strands of discourse which provide the stories leading to a disclosure of the one individuation,
the one objective referent, what Locke called 'something' "(ibid.). A universal word, then, is but one - inadequate - label for the other disclosed in all disclosures. The problems raised by this latest discussion of Ramsey's will be examined below. We may note, however, that here again Ramsey seems to be treating a disclosure of a universal as a "disclosure of an entity", so that conceptualism or nominalism would not serve as an adequate account of his own position. Again a sophisticated form of realism might be nearer the mark.

However, those who prefer a view of universals based on resemblance between particulars or the existence of "natural classes", might argue that a disclosure of a universal is a type of "recognition disclosure". For a disclosure around physical particulars would enable us to recognize the resemblances between them (and therefore the classes into which they naturally fall). We may note that Michael Polanyi interprets our knowledge of universals as a species of "comprehension" (Polanyi (LTI)11); and we have already remarked that Ramsey interprets such comprehension as a (recognition) disclosure. This fact may be adduced as evidence that disclosures of universals could be subsumed under the same heading.

(b) Mathematical entities

The formal universals of mathematics may be distinguished from predicative universals in that "while predicative universals can and usually do have instances, formal universals are rather ideal limits to which actual things more or less closely approximate" (Quinton (U) 381).
Such "abstract entities" include geometrical entities such as straight lines, circles, triangles etc. These are "idealized, complex concepts of whose applicability to concrete things we can never be sure" (Quinton (NT) 255). However, they could, in principle, be properties of concrete things.

We may treat Ramsey's disclosure of a circle around a series of regular polygons (cf. RL 69 etc.) as a disclosure of such an "idealized, complex concept"; and this does seem to be how he himself views the disclosure of a straight line (cf. RSCS 8). We have already discussed the thesis that "first cause", "infinite goodness" etc. are limiting concepts of the same general kind.

Geometrical "entities", then, are best treated as concepts. Numbers, however, provide us with a more difficult ontological problem. Plato espoused an essentialist or realist view of all mathematical entities, proposing not only geometrical but also arithmetical forms (i.e. mind-independent, eternal entities). However it does not appear that numbers could, even in principle, be properties of concrete things. Modern philosophies of mathematics, therefore, have treated them rather differently. On the Logicist theory numbers have been treated as classes - the number 3, for example, being the class composed of all classes having 3 members. Formalists, on the other hand, regard numbers as purely formal words (definite quantifiers) whose use involves no ontological commitment on the part of the mathematician (cf. Körner passim, Ayer (CQP) 207 - 208, Quinton (NT) 255 - 257). Ramsey is silent on the issue.
however, so perhaps we may feel free to side with the
formalists and treat at least Ramsey's disclosures of
mathematical limits as disclosures of "concepts". Thus when
"\(1\)" is disclosed as the limit of a series (cf. PI 120 - 122)
we are not being confronted by some mathematical "entity" but
by a formal concept. However it may be even more appropriate
to argue that what we have here is a disclosure of a
mathematical truth - i.e. the truth that the limit of the
series is 1. In a similar way the disclosure of the
invariant \(\pi(3.14159)\) may be treated as the disclosure of
the truth, "there is an invariant relationship of
circumference \(\div\) diameter which equals 3.14159".93

(c) Moral Values

Ramsey may be broadly classified as a "moral
intuitionist", for he believes that we can know by intuition
(discernment) whether a certain action or principle of
action is right or wrong.94 Ramsey writes most frequently,
in fact, of the intuited nature of "moral claims" (cf. MJGC
160 - 168). H.P. Owen, another philosopher of religion who
lays stress on the role of intuition in ethics and religion,
has defended the view that moral claims exist (or subsist),
independently of their instances, as attributes of God
(cf. Owen (MACT) especially chs. 1 and 3). Thus:

The form of the moral law as a categorical
imperative is the personal command of God
and the general precepts of this law
constitute the content of his will. (ibid. 68)

Such a view seems to bestow "real existence" on Moral Values,
but only in so far as they are (somehow) grounded in God
(cf. Owen ibid. 82; also K. Ward (EC) 76, 99, Ewing (VR)
199 - 200).
Ramsey, unfortunately, offers us no explicit ontology of values. But there are indications in his work that he would be willing to accept something not unlike the account described above. For despite his acceptance of the autonomy of ethics (MJGC 167, MacQ 113), Ramsey does write of the theological interpretation of such terms as "Duty" and the "Moral Law" as a matter of setting our everyday value-claims "in a wider context" (MJGC 167, cf. FI 54 - 55). In this way we may eventually, albeit with the requisite circumspection, use of them such phrases as "God's will" or "God's command" (ibid. 170). This "broadening of context" is a quite general element in Ramsey's approach and relates to his basic conviction (discussed below) that "in every disclosure the object can eventually bear the name 'God'" (FRFI 355). In the case of moral obligation the starting point for such "broadening" is our prima facie duties:

Start with prima facie duties. Next, note how a conflict of duties may be resolved by broadening our range of relevant considerations until an "absolute" Duty emerges, or an "absolute" Value is discerned, when we now have a cosmic disclosure: the empirical basis for belief in God. (U-HA: "The Traditional Arguments for the Existence of God (Contd)" H 65, 1965, p.4)

Thus, for Ramsey, "a disclosure labelled 'Absolute Duty' or 'Absolute Perfection' is one which closely resembles in its character the disclosure to which theists appeal when they speak of 'God' " (PPMT 171), and "we should link 'God' to an obligation word like 'Duty' by talking in terms of 'God's will' " (FI 49).

As a postscript to this discussion it should be noted that Ramsey seems to wish to retain his distinction between what is disclosed and our language about what is
disclosed even when discussing values. He thus distinguishes "between a norm which, as a transcendent challenge, is absolute, and a description of that norm which may be relative" (N 1521). As he has previously defined "a prescriptive norm" as "an imperative, accepted by the individual is some kind of intuition" (ibid, 1520), we may be forgiven for being somewhat perplexed as to what a "description" of such an imperative could be. Perhaps Ramsey is distinguishing here between the general, formal moral intuition, "I must do my duty" (as an imperative: "do your duty"), and the specific actions that can give content to "doing one's duty". Thus he can write elsewhere:

when men have spoken of Absolute Duty, Absolute Goodness, or Absolute Perfection, they have been searching for an appropriate label to a disclosure situation in which there was no possibility of any other than a single unambiguous, unmistakable response. But it would not seem that this is ever the case with formulations of duty. (PPMT 171, cr. OBSR 47)

We have returned here to the contrast between the certainty of our intuitions (in this case our moral intuitions) and the tentative nature of the language we use about such intuitions. But in the case of moral intuitions, even more than in other cases, this analysis faces us with a difficulty. For it seems redundant to analyse out a formal "contentless" incorrigible intuition - even if it takes the form of some sort of direct "acquaintance" with the moral nature of God - that is separate from the moral truths (or imperatives), i.e. the moral language, that can alone direct our actions in any specific way. If "moral" experience" is a type of intuition then it surely must involve an intuition, in the most general sense, of a truth.
5. **Intuitionism in Epistemology**

(A) **Criticisms of Intuitionist Epistemology**

It might be convenient at this point to make some sort of review and assessment of the role of intuition in epistemological thinking in general. We shall then turn our attention (in the next section) to the particular problems facing an intuitionist *religious* epistemology.

Generally speaking, contemporary philosophers are less than happy with appeals to intuition. They claim, for example, that to say X knows p "by intuition" is to offer no real explanation for his "knowledge", it is just to hide behind a gratuitous faculty psychology (cf. Hudson (MMP) 103, Ayer (PK) 82, Hospers 137 - 139). Another frequent criticism of intuitionism is directed at the intuitionists' claim to infallibility:

> The trouble with intuitions of any sort is that they lay claim to self-evidence, but cannot be proved. (Walsh (M) 95)

A.J. Ayer voices the views of many when he contends that there cannot be "any mental states of intuition which are such that their existence affords an absolute guarantee that one really is...seeing what one thinks one sees". For, on the contrary, "it must always remain possible that one is mistaken" (Ayer (PK) 22; cf. also Aaron 266 - 268, Armstrong 156 etc.).

> It is not doubted that there may be intuitions in the sense that some things are known without proof, "the force of the word 'intuition' " being "explicitly to rule out the possibility of a rationale" (Hamlyn 82; cf. Ayer loc.cit.).
But such benevolence is usually only shown to "vernacular intuition" which is "psychologically" rather than "logically" intuitive. (Logically intuitive beliefs would be justified beliefs that do not require the support of other beliefs for their justification. A psychologically intuitive belief, however, is logically inferrable from other beliefs but is (usually) accepted by a person as justified without conscious inference: cf. Quinton (NT) ch.5.)

It may be that many apparently intuitive beliefs are in fact "based on inference" in some kind of implicit manner. Gilbert Harman has argued that "beliefs may be based on inference even when they are not based on conscious inference", and in such cases the inference is "unconscious", while still serving in some way, as both the cause of and the justification for such beliefs (Harman 353 & passim).

W.T. Stace's account of these pseudo-intuitive beliefs explains that they are reached "by some psychological process which is not a process of reasoning" (Stace (PUB) 29). Non-rational, "merely psychological non-logical processes", Stace claims, can lead to truth (ibid. 35) - for such mental processes are guided by "associative thinking" ("a crude kind of induction": ibid. 127) which may be described in terms of conditioned reflexes. These "unexplicit thought processes" (130) are usually too rapid or too habitual for their constituents to be clearly distinguished from one another:

The whole process is apt to come in what seems like a single undivided act of thought. (ibid. 129)

When our reasoning becomes habitual and automatic "we are . . . more or less unconscious of what we are thinking, and the
terms, judgments, and 'therefores' telescope' (132). Stace uses this analysis to explain many kinds of "intuitive" judgment, for example:

(a) the judgments of perception made on the assumption of naïve realism, which are a product of immediate apprehension of sense-data together with unexplicit induction to physical objects (134); and

(b) our belief in other minds, which results from an unexplicit act of analogical reasoning based on observation of people's behaviour (138).

It would seem, therefore, that the defender of an intuitionist epistemology must face in particular the problems of:

(i) the incorrigibility of intuitions;

(ii) the extent to which intuitions may be "explained away" as unconscious inferences; and

(iii) the usefulness of "intuition" as an explanatory concept.

We may now consider these problems in turn.

(i) The incorrigibility of intuitions

Contemporary philosophical critics of radically intuitionist epistemologies have presented a good case for saying that the traditional "Quests for certainty" - the searches for incorrigible assertions - are philosophical cul-de-sacs (cf. e.g. J.L. Austin (SS) ch.X, Danto ch.7 & passim). But is an intuitionist epistemology inevitably wedded to the view that intuitions are incorrigible?

A.C. Ewing is one British philosopher who has defended the role of intuition in epistemology in recent years. Ewing
defines intuition as an "immediate insight", a cognition that is "both non-empirical and immediate", or a "direct awareness" (Ewing (NLP) 41, 43; ibid. (FQP) 65). But he believes that the advocate of this form of cognition "can only defend his position if he makes one concession", i.e.:

He must abandon the claim to certainty and infallibility which has been commonly advanced for intuition in the past....we cannot claim that there is a distinctive state or act of mind, intuition, which has the property of being always right (Ewing (NLP) 52)

Of course, Ewing continues, the term "intuition", like the term "knowledge", usually connotes "not only that our attitude to a proposition is of a particular kind psychologically, it connotes also that the proposition towards which we have this attitude is true" (ibid.; cf. (VR) 43 - 44, also Boyce Gibson 25). We should speak then of "apparent" (putative) intuitions or of "claims to intuition" just as we speak of "knowledge claims", for such claims can be either true or false. In this essay, however, I shall follow Ewing in using the term "intuition" to cover both "real" and "ostensible" (i.e. both true and false) intuitions (cf. Ewing (VR) 126 - 127, (FQP) 49; also Schedler (Thesis) 186).

If we allow for the corrigibility of intuitions, the problem of conflicting intuitions becomes transformed into a problem about the testing of intuitions. For only if there is the possibility of "checkability" can we embark on the road to knowledge (cf. Walsh (M) 95 - 96 & K. Ward (MF)).

Ewing suggests that an intuition may be tested in several ways: (a) by its coherence with other (accepted) beliefs; (b) by critical analysis both of the particular element believed to be intuited and of the whole subject-area in which our intuitions arise; and (c) by "negative testing"
for the influence of intellectual confusion or emotional prejudice on the formation of the intuition ((NLP) 62 - 63, (PQP) 50 - 51; cf. also Baillie (SPG) 55 - 56, K. Ward (CG) 66 - 67, Baelz (EB) 25 - 26). In short:

the primary criterion of the truth of an intuition is that we must believe it after an attempt at doubt, following careful reflection on it and all it involves. If we cannot disbelieve after this there is nothing left but to accept it as true. (Ewing (VR) 45)

(ii) Can "intuition" be reduced to unconscious inference?

Ewing believes that the notion of (mediated) intuition is required "throughout most or even all of epistemology" ((VR) 125). He particularly stresses that inference "is quite impossible without intuition" ((VR) 41), for at some point in our inference we must "just see" that A follows from B (cf. (NLP) 39).

Ewing has developed this argument in a rejoinder to the views of Stace and others that equate "intuition" with implicit inference. He argues that:

this is no doubt true of many prima facie intuitions, but it cannot possibly be true of all. For even when all the implicit inferences have been made explicit and all the missing stages interpolated,... it will still be true that we must be able to see how each stage in the inference follows from the preceding one. ((VR) 43)

Although Ewing agrees, therefore, that "A conclusion which is psychologically immediate may not be logically immediate", he adds, significantly, "but this only puts the question further back" ((NLP) 42).

W.H. Walsh accepts this point, but argues that such an element of intuition "is not of major significance for theory of knowledge". For "formal thinking cannot lead to
the discovery of genuinely new knowledge" (Walsh (RE) 59). We may agree that defending this particular piece of ground, although it reveals that we have to allow for intuition at at least one point in our theory of knowledge, does not much aid the intuitionists battle over the wider front.

Stace accepts unconscious inference as the explanation of our intuitions of material objects and other minds, and even of our moral intuitions (Stace (PUB) 134 - 138). However he himself rejects this explanation for our belief that material objects exist when they are not being perceived. The latter belief, he explains, "since it cannot be proved by explicit induction...cannot be reached by unexplicit induction" (ibid. 139). It serves, rather, as a type of "pragmatic" belief. But others would argue that there can be no valid explicit inference, either deductive or inductive, in the other cases mentioned by Stace. For there are many areas of knowledge in which there is a logical "gap" between the evidence and the conclusion, and in order to oppose the sceptic in these areas the philosopher must tackle the problem of "establishing our right to make what appears to be a special sort of advance beyond our data" (Ayer (PK) 78, cf. Wisdom (PD) 66). Thus the evidence for our belief in the existence of material objects, other minds and God (for example) appears to be data, or premises, that are on an entirely different ontological and epistemological level - i.e. sense-data, human behaviour and the Universe respectively. We must now examine the ways in which this gap can be bridged.
The bridging of the epistemological gap

Having distinguished the two classes of epistemological object we may argue that there are several different ways of treating the epistemological gap between them:

(a) Scepticism

The sceptic pronounces the gap unbridgeable. Statements about "objects of the transcending kind" (Quinton (NT) 113) do not follow deductively from statements about observable objects. Nor - since the transcending objects are not open to sense experience - can such statements follow inductively from statements about observables. Scepticism (agnosticism) in the sphere of religion is paralleled by scepticism of the same form about other minds, material objects, the past, moral values, theoretical scientific entities etc.

This is the most radical approach to the problem of knowledge; the other views outlined below all seek to combat this sceptical account of knowledge of non-observables.

(b) Reductionism

The reductionist does not acknowledge that there is any epistemological "gap" to be bridged. He prefers to define the transcending object in terms of observables, treating it as a form of "logical construction" from observable facts (cf. Gasking 192 - 193). In religion and ethics this approach is described as "naturalism"; in the theory of mind and the philosophy of perception it results in "logical behaviourism" and "phenomenalism" respectively.

(c) The Scientific Approach

Those who take this line "accept the existence of
the gap between evidence and conclusion, but they hold that it can be bridged by a legitimate process of inductive reasoning" (Ayer (PK) 80). Evans describes this as the "casual-explanation" view, in which an unobservable cause is postulated as an explanation of observable effects in a way "which is analogous to induction" (Evans (PKCT) 12). Natural Theology (e.g. the argument from design) often follows this approach; as do those who argue for the existence of other minds on the basis of analogy and those who embrace the representative theory of perception.

(d) The "complementary-description" view

This takes the "supporting" and "supported" statements as complementary descriptions, in different and unrelated language-games, of the same thing. There is no answer, on this view, to the question, How do we know x? However, a study of the informal logic of ordinary discourse will reveal that we do know x - and on the basis of our knowledge of observable facts. This approach is akin to Ayer's "Method of Descriptive Analysis", which allows us simply to take the epistemological gap "in our stride", accepting the forms of inference we do employ in disputed areas in "a spirit of natural piety" (Quinton (NT) 114, cf. Ayer (CQP) 107 - 108). The purpose of philosophy is here presented as that of merely describing the ways in which we use language. Once we clearly recognized these ways our epistemological problems will disappear.

(e) The "evaluative - use" view

This approach denies that the utterance which the sceptic questions is a statement at all...Rather, it is a
'value-judgement' "(Evans (PKCT) 11). Clearly this is a viewpoint that is most readily applicable to aesthetic and ethical knowledge, but it may also be used in the analysis of language about, for example, other minds and God.

(f) The Metaphysical Explanation view

Here the transcending objects are "known" as metaphysical (rather than causal) explanations of observable facts. Their existence renders "intelligible" the empirical facts that we know more directly. In this way we might justify realism as "making more sense of" our total experience than does the idealist position.

Similarly it is clear that God serves as a "Cosmos Explaining Being" in the metaphysical system of theism; and the existence of other minds very readily explains the observable behaviour of other bodies.

This approach tends to stress the ontological, as well as the epistemological, gap between "supported" and "supporting" facts. As Evans points out (op.cit.12) a philosopher may take up different approaches in his analysis of our knowledge of different epistemological objects.

However it seems likely that the philosopher of religion will find this particular viewpoint (f) one of the most attractive. And if it proves to be a useful, and defensible, way of justifying knowledge of God, he may be eager to extend it to other epistemological areas. This is particularly likely to be the case when, as with Ian Ramsey, it is combined with a form of intuitionism in which the transcending entity is directly intuited, as well as being recognized as an adequate metaphysical explanation of how things are.
My own view is that, having rejected scepticism, we shall not remain satisfied with either reductionism or the evaluative-use approaches. For neither of them takes seriously enough our commonly accepted views on the nature of the transcending objects. On the other hand we shall find the Scientific Approach, with its dependence on "an analogy to induction", not at all easy to justify in many areas of knowledge in the face of the sceptic's attack. The complementary-description view, however, seems to solve epistemological problems only by ignoring them: so this too we shall wish to avoid. In which case we shall find ourselves holding to approach (f), and/or returning to the only remaining solution to the problem of the "epistemological gap": that of the intuitionist.

(g) Intuitionism

This approach, like reductionism - although in a very different way, seeks to abolish the gap by holding that there is some sort of direct access to the transcendent object. Such objects (other minds, moral claims, physical objects, God etc.) are directly "intuited" by the cognizing mind. Naïve realism is a theory of perception that is basically intuitive in form. In the fields of religion and ethics, religious and moral experience (or "sense") are also often understood as types of intuition.

But the adoption of this approach does raise our final fundamental problem:

(iii) Is the appeal to intuition an explanation?

The intuitionist approach to epistemology has been condemned as "involving mysterious special ways of knowing"
(Gasking 192, cf. Pole 26 - 27) which, being themselves inexplicable, explain nothing. A criticism of this nature, made in reference to moral intuitionism\textsuperscript{110}, has been met by Ewing in the following manner:

It has been suggested that once we admit that no reason can be given for a moral principle nothing is added by saying that we intuit it. Since we can give no reason for the ultimate principles in any case, all we need or can say is that we adopt them as our principles and leave it at that. But I submit that it makes all the difference in the world. Why should I stick to my principles if it does not suit me unless they are judged by me to be morally binding and not merely arbitrarily chosen? But I have the best of reasons if I see them to be true. (Ewing (VR) 98)\textsuperscript{111}

Further, if anything is to be known indirectly, something must be known directly. There must be some foundations to knowledge, and therefore some form of intuitive awareness - even if it is only "empirical intuition" (cf. Quinton (NT) 126, \textit{ibid.} (FK)). The religious and moral (and aesthetic) intuitionist may be criticized because his claims do not attract the universal agreement possessed by intuitions in the realms of logical and empirical knowledge. But this fact merely reveals the more problematic nature of intuitive claims about God and Values; it by no means undermines the general importance of intuition in epistemology. And with regard to these disputed topics we may agree with Ewing that an intuition which forms the basis of a whole department of knowledge should not be rejected out of hand (Ewing (VR) 46, cf. Attfield 337 - 338).

I conclude, therefore, that intuition (including religious intuition) can form a valid basis of knowledge, and does in fact serve as the only, or at least the last, defence against the onslaughts of scepticism. An appeal
to intuition fails "to explain how we know" only to those who have rejected intuition as a basis for knowledge. But without some form of direct, intuitive awareness no knowledge is possible.

(B) **The Rôle of Intuition in Religious Epistemology**

Having discussed the general problems facing an intuitionist epistemology, I now turn to look specifically at the positive views taken of religious intuition by some contemporary philosophers of religion. This will raise some further questions which we must then ask of Ramsey's religious epistemology.

There has been a strong tradition in recent philosophy of religion that treats religious cognition as a form of "cognition in presence" (e.g. Hick (RPEA) 20, (FK) 95, (AEG) 116; cf. Helm (VB) ch.8) or "acquaintance" with the Divine Reality (e.g. Baillie (OKG) 143, (SPG) 15 - 18, cf. 88 - 89). Such an approach is sympathetic to the work of those theologians in the Protestant tradition who treat religious knowing in terms of a sense of "encounter" with the divine, "a self-authenticating direct awareness of God; a knowledge by acquaintance, from which all fallible inference - steps are absent" (Hepburn (CP) 25). These theologians and philosophers all answer Cook-Wilson's rhetorical question with a defiant "No":

If we think of the existence of our friends; it is the "direct knowledge" which we want - merely inferential knowledge seems a poor affair... We don't want merely inferred friends. Could we possibly be satisfied with an inferred God? (Cook-Wilson, *Statement and Inference* Vol II, p.853; in N. Smart (HSPR) 453 - 454)
To treat our knowledge of God as being based on acquaintance is clearly far closer to the accounts of religious knowing in the Bible and devotional literature than is any analysis in terms of inferential argument. Paul Helm writes,

Knowledge by acquaintance...has a clear necessary condition, becoming familiar with by being in the presence of and talking to and being addressed by the one concerned,(Helm (VB) 81)

And that, surely, is what religion is all about.

It is, then, this "acquaintance" with God that a number of thinkers have treated in terms of religious intuition. They offer an account of religious knowing which may be interpreted as defending a form of knowledge based on (deriving from) religious intuition or acquaintance, without our necessarily having to defend the view that the intuition or acquaintance is itself a form (type) of knowledge. But even with this caveat, the notion of religious intuition raises some basic problems for the philosopher of religion. We shall consider just three of these:–

(1) The Problem of self-authentication

Some theists readily accept that religious awareness is in some way self-guaranteeing (e.g. Trethowan (BB) 40 - 42, (AV) 67 - 79). But such claims to self-authentication for religious experiences are thought by others to founder on the rock of conflicting religious experiences: i.e. the lack of inter-subjective agreement between different experiencers (cf. Shepherd 7). W.T. Blackstone contends:
If experience is taken as a guarantee of its own validity, then there is no way of distinguishing knowledge claims which are credible from those which are not. (Blackstone (PRK) 143; cf. 156 - 157)

Ronald Hepburn has complained that encounter theologians ignore the necessity of independent checking procedures, the availability of which alone permits us to speak of an encounter experience as objective rather than merely psychological:

Genuine personal relations certainly do have an immediacy, a directness, and uniqueness; but this sort of immediacy is not self-authenticating, cannot infallibly answer the question, "is there a person here or not?". (Hepburn (CP) 99; cf. also Schmidt ch.VIII; C.B. Martin (RB) ch.5, (RWK))

But there is, as we have seen, at least one champion of religious intuition who is willing to forgo this claim to the infallibility of intuitions - A.C. Ewing. His view of the phenomenon does leave room for "checking procedures".113. Clearly these must be of rather different kinds from the straightforward checks available in normal sensory perception (cf. Ward (MF) 387, Glasgow 235). Quite apart from any other consideration, the religious sense like the moral or aesthetic sense, is one sense. "Perceptual experience" ("sense experience"), however, is a term which covers five very different senses, each of which may be checked against at least one of the others. Of course it could be argued against this unitary view of religious experience, that there are a number of different "religious senses" as well. In which case we could, for example, check the claims of "mystical" experience against those of "prophetic" experience or "numinous" experience (cf. Wainwright (MSP) 276). But those who reject the whole category of religious experience
will not be impressed by this sort of 'checkability'.

I will argue later that the religious intuitionist can agree with Hick that "a sufficiently vivid religious experience would entitle a man to claim to know that God is real", for "in his own experience of the presence of God he has a good, and compelling, reason to be sure of it" (Hick (FK) 210). But the intuitionist does not need to claim further that such "unalterable rational certainty of the veridicality of his veridical experience of God" (Oakes 315) is logically unalterable: i.e. in principle unalterable. It may only be practically unalterable: i.e. nothing in this life will in fact change it, although it remains (in principle) corrigible. Thus it is in principle possible that solipsism is true. Yet the "feeling tone" of my everyday, waking experiences of the world and of other people is such that no argument or experience could ever make me affirm it. But in any case I would contend that the "Quest for certainty" is potentially as stultifying in theology as it has been in philosophy. Religious cognitions are not logically incorrigible, indeed it seems in general true that they are patently practically corrigible. Any defence of religious intuitionism ignores at its peril this perfectly obvious fact (cf. Root 75).

(ii) Is religious intuition mediated?

It seems to be generally accepted among those who recognize the existence of religious intuition that such intuitions, although "immediate" in the sense that they are non-inferential, are nevertheless mediated through certain entities or experiences. Thus Ewing describes religious cognition as "direct" (thus indicating that it is not inferred
from its media) but "mediated". He writes:

To say that some being mediates God is to say that a man may by considering that being be put in a frame of mind in which he can catch a glimpse of God. (Ewing (VR) 123)

This is true, he goes on to claim, not only of our knowledge of God (through nature, other people and various vivid experiences) but also of our knowledge of physical things and other minds (through sense perception and bodily behaviour), of our knowledge of the past, of our moral knowledge and of our knowledge of universals. In all these cases cognition "can use its media to acquire real cognition of its object in the absence of anything like strict proof, and without being directly aware of the latter's internal nature or being face to face with it in all its particularity" (ibid. 125). This account of intuition, which is shared by Illtyd Trethowan (cf. (AV) 48 - 49, (MT) passim), Jonn Baillie (cf. (OKG) 178 - 183), H.P. Owen (cf. (CKG) 135) and H.D. Lewis (cf. (OEG) 49 - 51), among others, has certain implications that we must now consider.

Before moving on to these points, however, we should note that such a "mediated intuitionism" would seem to demand some modification to our earlier account of the intuitionist approach to the knowledge of transcending objects. For, on the theory of mediated intuition, it is not the case that we have direct access to God, other minds etc., quite independently of our knowledge of the "supporting facts" of ordinary perception (i.e. facts about the world and human behaviour). Rather, such transcending objects are "intimated through" the medium of observables. The difference between the two types of intuitionism is expressed in the theory of perception in the difference
between Naive (i.e. Direct) Realism (the view that we perceive the external world directly, as it is) and "Critical Realism" (the view that our perception of the external world is mediated through our sense-data).115

(a) Mediated intuitionism implies, as Ewing indicates, that religious intuition is "a cognition not of God as he is in himself but of God as he is in relation to us" ((WR) 125). The intuition of God's own essence or nature has been traditionally rejected by Christians as heretical; as the heresy of "ontologism". So philosophers of religion are at pains to stress the mediated nature of the intuitions that they embrace (cf. Lewis (GM) 230 - 232, (PR) 145; Trethowan (BB) 113 - 114; Mascall (EA) 80, 89 - 90, (HWI) 73 - 75, 91). It is for this reason that some - particularly those in the Catholic tradition - prefer such terms as "apprehension" (i.e. "mediate but direct awareness of God": Trethowan (BB) 63, cf. 78) or "contuition" (i.e. "the apprehension of the presence of the cause in a perceived effect": Mascall (WI) 85).

(b) But what sort of things can serve as the medium for an intuition? Ewing believes that God may be known through certain entities and experiences, but also through "many kinds of symbols" (Ewing (NLP) 248). Owen also lists symbols, in particular linguistic symbols, among the media for religious intuition (Owen (CKG) 140 - 141; cf. Urban 298, 305). But do symbols serve as media for religious cognition in quite the same way as entities and experiences? This is an issue of some importance in the analysis of Ramsey's thought. For although words (or pictures) can mediate an
intuition of God, they are clearly more "under our control" than things and (even) experiences. After all anyone can write a "Bible" or construct a theology or devotional essay full of powerful symbolic imagery, and such language may indeed mediate (evvoke?) an intuition\textsuperscript{116}. But what sort of guarantee do we have that we are not being duped in these cases? If the intuitions that come through (our experience of) God's creation may be doubted, how much more the intuitions that are mediated by (our experience of) our own creations?

(iii) Freedom and Intuition

In his book, The Moral Argument for Christian Theism, H.P. Owen commits himself to this statement:

\begin{quote}
We are immediately aware of creatures and creaturely activities. It needs a deliberate act of will to discern God in and beyond them as their constant ground. \textit{(op. cit. 34)}
\end{quote}

Like John Hick, then, Owen believes that we have some "cognitive freedom" in our religious perceptions. Is this, however, a view that is compatible with an intuitionist religious epistemology? Presumably there is no room for such "freedom" in our empirical or logical intuitions. And we would find it difficult to defend the objectivity of ethics if our moral intuitions were under our control. Is it not the case that all intuitions "happen to us", that they are "forced upon us"? The rational mind certainly has a role to play in acquiring knowledge, but it is not at this point. We are, of course, free to "put ourselves into a position" in order to receive an intuition of God, as we are free to open or close our eyes or move to a position from which we can see an empirical object; but once we have committed ourselves at this preparatory level the intuition "just comes"
(or fails to come) and we can have no further say in the matter. When the stage of intuition has passed, of course, we move into another area of free response; for we also have the freedom to attend, or fail to attend, to the object intuited. And we have some freedom of judgment in the ways we interpret and seek to understand the intuited datum. But the intuition itself can no more be avoided than we can "avoid" seeing an object when we look at it from close to in a good light. A religious intuitionist, therefore, should make clear exactly which elements he takes to be within our control in the complex cognitive process that we call "religious experience". He must be chary of embracing any radically voluntaristic analysis of faith.

(iv) The importance of religious intuition

One final word before we return from this digression among other philosophers and theologians to look again at the work of Ian Ramsey. In an unpublished paper dating from about 1959, and found among Ramsey's papers, Illtyd Trethowan wrote:

I suggest that the question of an apprehension or intuition forces itself upon theists who do not accept syllogistic demonstrations of God's existence. What alternative is there?

The issue is rarely put in so stark a manner. But if, as I believe, all the theistic arguments fail to prove God's existence, and God - although "explaining" the Universe - cannot be shown to be needed as an explanation for it, then, indeed, what other alternative is there for the theist?

Ewing has put the same point the other way round:
The difficulty about intuition in religion, we should also emphasize, is much diminished when we reflect that, if a benevolent God exists, we cannot but expect him to communicate in some way knowledge of himself to us, and if, as seems to be the case, logical proof of the existence and love of God is logically impossible, such knowledge might be well expected subjectively to take the form of intuitive conviction; I do not see indeed what other form it could take. (Ewing (VR) 123)

Nor do I. Nor, I believe, did Ramsey. He rejected the claims of the theistic arguments "to supply tight deductive proofs", reinterpreting them as providing "talk by which... a cosmic disclosure may be evoked for a prospective believer" (CPCF 55; cf. Bevan 345). Ramsey went to what some people considered to be inordinate lengths to reveal the disclosure-basis of any and every type of religious assertion. This could only be because he had come to accept:

(i) that religious knowledge did as a matter of fact arise basically out of intuitive religious experience; and

(ii) that the Christian apologist must take his stand on the only secure ground left to him: i.e. the rock of intuition:

Unless there is such an experience as religious experience,...there will be no justification for a meaningful metaphysics in general, or a meaningful theology in particular. (U-FMG 90/40/147)

And it is to Ian Ramsey's own viewpoint that we must now at last return.
(C) Ian Ramsey as an Intuitionist

We are now in a position to consider in more detail Ian Ramsey's intuitionist epistemology and the problems it raises:

(i) The Mediated Nature of Disclosures

In Ramsey's view the epistemological object of a disclosure is "given without inference" (FD 119); he is prepared to call such knowledge "immediate" (e.g. FD 122, Enc. Brit. 602), but the term "direct" would seem to be more appropriate (cf. Review Trethowan 336). For Ramsey, like the other religious intuitionists we have examined, thinks of the intuitive cognition of the disclosed "more" as mediated through the observable facts and features of the world:

The plain flat situation...mediates something else, reveals an "undercurrent". Around and out of the "plain facts" a disclosure occurs. (MJGC 166)

For Ramsey, as for Berkeley (cf. Review Sillem 85), God is met and known only "through the mediation of observables (of) the secular world" (U-ITR Evans 3).

We have already noted in some detail the different media through which disclosures occur, dividing them broadly into the categories of "empirical" and "linguistic". However the point was made above that "symbols" (e.g. language) cannot be considered to have the same function as that possessed by "entities" when they act as the medium of an intuition. The problem is that a disclosure arising solely through the "medium" of language has as its medium something which is essentially a human construction, and which
therefore may, but equally well may not, represent the observable facts of the world. But if a disclosure takes place through the medium of an existent entity in the world there is at least that much justification in calling it a "disclosure of what is the case". Disclosures through language, however, can only have this support if the linguistic medium turns out to represent accurately what is the case. To take an example: a disclosure of a moral claim may arise around a story about a certain situation. But what is disclosed here would only be some person's "duty" if and when that situation actually occurs. Even more obviously, we should not give much credence to any claim for a "disclosure of objectivity" that took place around sensation-language, unless that language reported actual sensations. It does appear that Ramsey neglected to make this clear, in his eagerness to recognise the role of language in the evocation of a disclosure.

Now intuitions of God that take place through the medium of a Bible passage, a hymn, or a prayer, do not operate on the above model. The hymn, for example, is not intended to be a literal description of empirical facts about the world. Hence to describe both hymns and empirical facts as "media" of disclosures is perhaps rather misleading. Language may evoke an intuition of God, but that intuition is not "mediated through language". Rather - like other intuitions of God - it is most likely to be mediated through (our experience of) the world, and moral and aesthetic values. Language serves only as a sort of "catalyst" in the evocation of such disclosures.
It may be more appropriate, however, to speak of some linguistic disclosures as "non-mediated" (reserving the term "immediate" for the connotation "without inference"), implying that the cognizing mind intuits the "more" in such disclosures without the medium of the observables of the external world. This latter interpretation may give rise to the criticism that it is falling into the heresy of ontologism (cf. Cohen (Thesis) 74). But there will always be one "medium" left, a medium that no form of cognition can bypass: the human mind. Our minds, with their interpretative categories and concepts, are quite capable of forming as opaque a medium for our knowledge of God as does the external world. I would suggest, therefore, that, in addition to our direct (i.e. uninferred) knowledge of God that is mediated through the world and through our mental apparatus, we can also have a direct knowledge of God that is not mediated through the world but only through our mental apparatus.

But how would Ramsey react to this suggestion?

We should note first of all that at least one of his more important types of disclosure is non-mediated in this sense. I refer to the disclosure of I that takes place when we are exercising our free activity, or when we "realize ourselves" in having an intuition of, e.g., a moral claim or God. Such a disclosure is surely not "mediated" through the observables of the world, not even through our own sense-data of the world or of our bodies. It is, rather, a non-mediated disclosure. So Ramsey himself must allow for such a disclosure at one point in his epistemology.
But what about the possibility of a non-mediated disclosure of God? After all, is it not possible that we might be in a direct cognitive relationship to God that takes the form of a "meeting of minds" and is not mediated through the material world? Such a position would be more akin to the "mystical" form of religious experience, whereas mediated disclosures of God represent the "prophetic" element where God is seen at work in the world and its peoples. Western (Christian) mystics tend to speak of direct contact with God rather than identification with him, or absorption into him, as is common in the East (cf. Lewis (OEG) 270, (PR) 207, (CFRE) 79). We may focus our attention particularly on what has been called the "introvertive" form of mysticism, as opposed to the "extrovertive" form. Mystics who may be placed in the latter category (and are sometimes called "nature mystics") use their physical senses and perceive "the multiplicity of external material objects...mystically transfigured so that the One, or the Unity, shines through them" (Stace (MP) 61). But the introvertive mystic...

...seeks by deliberately shutting off the senses... to plunge into the depths of his own ego. There... he perceives the One - and is united with it - not as a Unity seen through multiplicity...but as a wholly naked One devoid of any plurality whatever. (ibid.)

In this form of mysticism, the introvertive, all "awareness of the world and of multiplicity [is] completely obliterated" (ibid. 122).

We need not necessarily follow Stace any further, certainly not as far as his radical thesis that "the laws of logic do not apply to mystical experience" (ibid. 304). Nor
do we need to accept Stace's argument that dualism is "an undeveloped mysticism" which contradicts the ultimate unity or mystical experience (cf. 231 - 232). I would contend that the dualistic accounts of mystics (i.e. their belief that they have established contact, but not pure identity, with God) are nearer to the truth of the matter than the accounts of mystical experience that stress "the identity in difference of God and the world (including the mystic)" (ibid. 218). That this latter view implies the suspension of the laws of logic is surely sufficient condemnation; and reasons can be supplied to explain why mystics have been tempted to interpret a strictly dualistic experience in a monistic fashion (cf. Lewis (EM) 306, (SI) 189 - 193).

R.C. Zaehner notes that Christian mysticism is essentially theistic. In theistic mysticism "the soul feels itself to be united with God by love", but the individual's ego is not annihilated, nor identified with the Absolute or with God, but only "transformed and 'deified' " (Zaehner 29). Zaehner stresses the prevalence of sexual imagery in the accounts of theistic mystics; God, like the male, both envelops and penetrates the soul, which plays the part of the female (ibid. 151 - 152). Here again, then, we note the element of dualism in Christian mysticism; there is a union with God, but it is a differentiated unity and not a straight absorption or identification. One recalls Ramsey's repeated emphasizing of the duality - in-unity, the "I r O", of experience (cf. SRCP 296-297, SEI 200-201).123

Ian Ramsey's own account of mysticism is brief. Yet he does not seem to discount the possibility of the non-
mediated type of religious experience that we have been discussing. Rather, he devotes his attention to a criticism of the monistic form of mysticism in which the fundamental subject-object distinction is lost; a criticism that he also makes of Hegel and Bradley. In a review of W.T. Stace's work, Ramsey writes:

If once we deny the subject-object structure of the intuition, how can ordinary language ever be used significantly about it, since such language is constructed on a presupposition about experience which the alleged fact denies? We may be the more surprised that Stace, after his vigorous campaign against literalism in the higher reaches, takes this word "unity" so "literally" as to suppose that the experience which it characterises must be unnecessarily a uniform blank. On such a view the best theology will be negative indeed; so negative as to say nothing whatever. (Review Stace 112; cf. JR6)

In Ramsey's eyes there are two cardinal sins relating to the subject-object distinction. One, which is committed by both Hume and Ryle, is the objectification of the subject. The other sin is the one "the mystics commit when they subjectify the object" (SE I 197; cf. also Review Farmer 175). Ramsey believes, on the contrary, that "the model of personal interchange" (i.e. a dualistic model) may be used to cover the mystic's claim as well as the claims of other types of religious experience (U-FMG 9/50/157).

The evocative function of religious language is described by Ramsey in terms that are very similar to those used by some mystics. Thus Ramsey speaks of certain words as having as their "main merit" the ability to give a "kind of technique for mediation" (RL53: cf. CD 67 - 71, Evans (IRTG) 221). Even the ontological argument is viewed as a "technique for inducing a 'sense of the infinite' " (U-FMG (2) 10/82/189). But Ramsey's favourite example is the
language of prayer (cf. MDA 37, UP passim). Ramsey also speaks of silence as that "towards which all theology must point, and from which all theological explication emerges" (TTST 85). He is prepared to draw a very close parallel between a cosmic disclosure and the "meditative silence" of a poem (CD 18; cf. BS 51 - 52, U-NRL 4 - 5). Theology serves to provide us "with an infinite number of strands which express and help us to understand that meeting between God and ourselves which occurs in the 'silence' of every cosmic disclosure" (TTST 85; cf. CPCF 60, UP 21). Clearly this element in Ramsey's thought is also related to the language of mysticism, to the mystic's silence before the mystery of God. For Ramsey it is a "contextualized" silence (U-Credo 6), "a silence into which various models enter and from which various discourse originates" (TTST 84). But it still remains a silence, marking the inadequacy of any language to adequately represent the nature of the transcendent God.

I will add here a final note under the general heading of the mediated nature of disclosures. It might be argued that the whole notion of a mediated awareness is unclear and relies on unexplained metaphors. As we have seen, Ramsey uses various prepositions - e.g. "through", "around", "out of" - to indicate the relationship between a disclosure-discernment and the "things" which serve as its medium. However the use of such metaphorical language would seem to be inevitable. And we are, after all, quite content to speak in everyday contexts of media of communication "through"
which information and experiences are conveyed. We see the Prime Minister through the image on the television screen; we hear our friend through the electrical impulses transmitted down the telephone wires. In both these cases, of course, a number of different media are involved. Thus the media through which we see the Prime Minister when he appears on television include: the light rays from the T.V. set to our eyes, the visual image on the T.V. screen, the electronic circuitry and currents in the T.V. set, the electro-magnetic (radio) waves from the T.V. transmitter via the medium of the aerial and wiring to the T.V. set, the circuitry and currents from (and within) the T.V. camera to the transmitter, and the light rays from the Prime Minister to the T.V. camera. Unless all these media (of widely different kinds) are present, no communication will occur.

We may argue that the situation is the same with our mediated awareness of epistemological objects of a more transcendent nature. In "seeing" God through the world, or other minds through the behaviour of other bodies, our mediated cognition (of God, other selves) is similarly superimposed on our lower-order, mediated cognition of the world and human behaviour through our sense-data. This concept of superimposed levels of cognition is to be found in a number of other analyses of religious experience; especially those of John Hick (cf. Hick (FK) ch. 5) and Jerry Gill. Gill has distinguished between the "realm-model" and the "dimension-model" of reality and experience. On the realm-model we speak of this world of every day existence and experience, and "another world" of transcendent values and metaphysical entities (Gill (PRK) 117 - 119). On the dimension-model, however, we view human experience "as
being comprised of four main, simultaneously interpenetrating dimensions: the physical, the moral, the personal and the religious....The basic relationship existing among these dimensions (being) one of mediation" (ibid. 120). Such a dimension-model is certainly operative in the epistemology of Ian Ramsey (cf. Gill (TSRK) 550 - 552). Ramsey frequently discusses disclosures in terms of our discovery of "depth" or "another dimension" in a situation (cf. TL14, RL 28). In a draft typescript for *Words about God*, he wrote:

[Contemporary philosophy] would warn us against supposing that theology is concerned with some other realm altogether, some sort of counterpart world, a supernatural separated from the natural by a great gulf. For the cost of such a gulf will be intelligibility: we shall price theology out of meaning. But (it might be said) where will theology then discover its topic? For it can neither remain content with matter-of-fact language (when it is not genuine theology at all) nor can it talk intelligibly of something altogether different from empirical fact... My own answer would be that theology gains its reference in situations where around matters-of-fact is disclosed another dimension, where the eye of detail is supplemented by the eye of faith. (U-^Gj draft B, 4 - 5)

Ian Ramsey, then, espouses a multi-dimensional, mediated intuitionism.

(ii) The Certainty of Disclosures

The division between disclosures and language, which is implied by the different chapter headings in this thesis, must not be overstressed. For it is at the junction between the epistemological concept of the disclosure-discernment and the whole issue of language and interpretation, that many of the most important problems in Ramsey's epistemology are to be found. One of these is the problem of the "certainty" of disclosures.
Ramsey's favourite battle cry is "Sure in religion; tentative in theology". For Ian Ramsey religion is about experiences of God, whereas theology is a matter of attempting to construct an ever more adequate, but always in the end inadequate, language with which to talk about what the religious man experiences. So Ramsey writes:

we can be sure of the reference of cosmic disclosures, of what is disclosed in a cosmic disclosure, of what, when the word presides over the appropriate context, we call "God". We begin to see perhaps, because of the inalienable reference, why it seems odd to talk of taking "God" away from a theist. But models of God can be and always are being taken away, criticised, graded and ordered, and we are committed in this way to an endless explication of what cosmic disclosure reveals. We can be sure about God; but we must be tentative in theology. (CD 89; cf. OBSR 23)

Theology is an attempt to "map a mystery" and the mystery of God is a central doctrine for Ramsey. Such a doctrine implies a certain "theological humility" (CPCF 61), which is, however, combined with some element of certainty. The job of the apologist is to expand our vision "until we are certain of one thing - 'God'. Ideally, indeed, God is best communicated in silence...Faith will always be cautious of its assertions - and the more detailed, the more cautious" (ibid. 60). So Ramsey distinguishes in this way between the spheres of religion and theology, pleading that:

we must distinguish between the certainty and assurance of our vision and disclosure...and on the other hand the ever tentative, ever inadequate character of our Christian understanding. (Sermon (4) 61 - 62).

We may start our criticism of Ramsey's sure/tentative dichotomy with this last quotation; taking first of all the notion of the certainty of religious "vision": i.e. discernment-intuition. What does it mean to say that such
an intuition is "certain"? In fact it could mean very little. In All experiences, all sensings, are certain/the sense that when we have them we are certain that we have them. And all language can only be a tentative mirroring of that experience; for the use of language involves reference to (comparison with) data outside the present situation. John Hospers has put this point clearly with respect to sense-datum reports:

It is certain, of course, that you sense what you sense, and that you experience what you experience - but this is analytic; the moment you try to describe the experience in words, even using a simple sense-datum word like "red", you are going beyond the momentary sense-datum that you are attempting to report. A possibility of error arises in the very act of using language. (Hospers 542; cf. D.Locke 191 - 192, Vesey (P) 42 - 44, Price (TC) 28 - 29)

But, to speak rather imprecisely, for Ramsey it is not just the intuition (vision) that is certain, "disclosure" also is certain. We can be sure of, certain of, what is disclosed. In a religious intuition we are not just certain that we "have", or experience, the intuition as a psychological phenomenon. We are also certain that the intuition involves a discernment of a real object. In being sure of our religious experience, we are sure of God.

Here, however, Ramsey strikes a problem of which he does not seem to be sufficiently aware. Let us take the "illustration" that Ramsey himself uses in his book, On Being Sure in Religion (p.23). The example is one that he sees as suggesting the reasonableness of "this union of religious certainty with theological approximation" (ibid.). It is drawn (of course!) from mathematics: If we construct a series of circles of increasing diameter "we may 'see' by
means of this sequence that the circumference divided by the
diameters gives an invariant. If so, we will be sure of
\( \pi \) (OBSR 24). But in expressing \( \pi \) in "language" we never
get beyond "numerical uncertainty" or approximation,
whether we suggest \( \frac{22}{7} \) or 3.14159 (ibid.). However, "in one
good sense of the word", we knew \( \pi \) all along (FI 115;
cf. MDA 65).

But what can this mean? "I am sure of \( \pi \) " is
equivalent to: (a) "I am sure that there is an invariant
relationship between the circumferences and the diameters
of circles", and (b)"I am sure that this invariant is
approximately \( x \)" - where \( x \) may be, for example, the number
3 or a number range (say between 2 and 4). However,
Ramsey claims that the tentative nature of theological
thinking is paralleled by the numerical uncertainty, the
approximate nature, of all figures given for \( \pi \). "We may
be sure of \( \pi \) when the diagrams disclose it, but we are
always numerically approximate in our understanding of it"
(OBSR 24). And yet when we are "sure of \( \pi \) " we are not only
sure that there is an invariant, we are also sure that this
invariant is of a certain nature ("approximately 3", or
whatever). The nature, as well as the existence, of the
invariant is disclosed to us. If this were not so
mathematicians could say "There is a constant factor here,
but I have no idea what it is", which is surely absurd.
It is as bad as saying, "I am convinced of God's existence,
but I am radically uncertain as to what he is like". One
surely must know something with certainty about \( x \) before
one can claim that \( x \) certainly exists.
Now Ramsey did admit, at least on one occasion, that some theological assertions may be "so stable as to be virtually incorrigible" (ITR Owen 127). He added, however, that because "words and phrases in theology live in a changing context... though revelation is 'given', there is nothing 'given' about the discourse which elucidates and interprets it" (ibid.). Thus there is another element in the tentativeness of theology—the fact that "at each stage the tentative is controlled by the context to date" (OBSR 90). I take it that Ramsey means by this that we must be ready to modify our religious language as the everyday situations and everyday language from which our theological models are taken widens and changes (cf. CD 71 - 72). Of course the logical context of all language is liable to such change, although at different rates depending on various historical and psychological factors.

Ramsey does suggest elsewhere that there is a broad spectrum of "tentativeness" along which theological assertions may be ranked; he does not pretend that all theological language is equally tentative. There is, then, "an ordered array of models [which] often characterize theological discourse" and "the more detailed our discourse is about God, the closer our model is to the perimeter of the array, the more cautious we must be as we develop discourse from it. Discourse about God is the more reliable the less detailed it is..." (MDA 23). I propose the following as an illustration of this point. Consider the widening circles or ripples caused by a stone being dropped into a pond. The discernment-intuition (the splash) gives rise to various grades of language (the ripples), some of which serve as more "appropriate currency" (cf. RL 5b, 114 etc.) for the discernment
(being nearer to the splash) than others. But all language (all the ripples) are really inadequate as currency for what is discerned (the stone), simply because they are features of an entirely different entity or medium. In this illustration, we can be certain that we experience the intuition (the splash) and may then commit ourselves to the proposition that there is something that has caused the splash and that it must have certain characteristics (e.g. it must be heavier than air and have fallen through a minimum height). But any more sophisticated attempt to describe the nature of what is disclosed (the stone) would be frustrated, especially if the stone's nature was such that no language could adequately represent it. And this would be the case if the object discerned were a transcendent mystery, e.g. God.

However, our main question must be whether or not we do discern even an "objective something" to which we later apply some tentative descriptions. We should note at this point that Ramsey uses the term "tentative" ("hesitant", "not definite", "experimental") as a synonym of "corrigible" ("open to correction") and as an antonym of "certain" or "incorrigible" (cf. CD 26, CELCE 95, ITR Owen 127, PPMT 176 etc.).

Ramsey suggests on several occasions, however, that "probable" might be a better adjective than "tentative", at least when applied to those basic assertions about God and ourselves" which can neither be rightly regarded as 'absolutely certain' or 'wholly corrigible' (PPMT 176). These are assertions that combine an incorrigible element (e.g. "I exist", "God exists") with
a corrigible one (e.g. "..with a headache", "with such-and-such attributes"). The use of "probable" here is derived from Butler: "a sense which makes a 'probable' utterance completely determinative of one's total behaviour" (ibid.). Ramsey is claiming that we can be reasonably convinced of the existence of God, as Butler claimed that we could be reasonably (and sufficiently) convinced of our duty despite the elements of uncertainty in duty-situations, "while constantly exploring our theological conclusions" (RFT 32).

It is a central plank of Ramsey's apologetic platform that a disclosure can have no "self-guaranteeing description" (cf. Review Trethowan 336, CD 25); that "no theological conclusions follow incorrigibly from a moment of vision" (CD 26). The mistake that Karl Barth makes, according to Ramsey, is to collapse this distinction between a self-authenticating disclosure and the tentative, non self-authenticating, language in which it is expressed:

Barth...supposes that with a uniquely distinctive and compelling revelation - "self-authenticating" as he would call it (and let us allow that phrases like this may be apt labels for the exceptionally peculiar religious situation to which the Christian qua Christian males appeal) - there must necessarily go a unique and self-guaranteeing theology...in this case we have the characteristics of a situation illegitimately transferred to language. (PR 212; cf. Review Barth 137)

Here, as elsewhere in his writings (e.g. PI 48, FRFI 354), Ramsey uses the word "label" in a quite general sense. However, he often uses it to denote "an expression whose infallibility is self-guaranteed", "an infallible assertion" which comes to us attached to an authenticating disclosure (AC 74). In the area of language about God and the self the term "label" thus acquires pejorative overtones,
there it connotes an empirically straightforward descriptive account of what essentially cannot be described

(cf. RL 165, RSCS 10 - 11, OBSR 89, CD 44).

For Ramsey descriptive language contains assertions ("labels") which guarantee their objects" (CPCF 59). Ramsey means by this that "with enough time and trouble complete understanding of these objects can be guaranteed" (ibid.) But he implies also that we can "guarantee" success in displaying the object or state of affairs to which the assertion refers, e.g. "copper sulphate turns white on heating" or "the cat sits on the mat". This is not the much case, however, with disclosure-based language because:-

(a) The disclosed-object is essentially mysterious and transcendent and cannot therefore be understood completely in straightforward (unqualified) descriptive language:

the best examples we know of infallible assertions, for example, "the cat is on the mat", are, like Russell's protocol sentences, devoid of that very transcendent reference which is needful to make them religious. (AC 78; cf. MDA 58)

The problem of disclosures and language is that:

the man of vision...never finds words suited exactly to what he sees...(for) what he sees "passeth knowledge". (CDOS 18)

(b) The language which we use about a disclosed object is in part evocative rather than descriptive; and the "success" of this evocative language cannot be guaranteed:

we can't compel God to disclose Himself to people. Still less think that certain language is bound to do it. (U-NRL 7; cf. CD 68, CELCE 95)

The theologian can offer no guarantee that the object of his language will be "displayed" as and when required. The scientist's success, on the other hand, depends in a large
part on just such a guarantee. The "models" which make up religious language are therefore only "self-authenticating" in the sense that:

either (i) they serve to generate (evoke) a cosmic disclosure;

or (ii) a cosmic disclosure "just happens" which "highlights a particular feature within" the disclosure-situation, and as a result this "focal point" becomes a "self-selected" model word (cf. TG 88, MMR 268). But theology is not self-authenticating in any other, more precise, sense.

We ought now to look more closely at the argument in Ramsey's paper, "On the Possibility and Purpose of a Metaphysical Theology". In this essay Ramsey claims "that we know something incorrigibly, to which corrigible descriptions are inevitably applied" (PPMT 176); contending that this is true both of assertions about ourselves and of assertions about God:

as with ourselves, so with God, intuition and description go together. (ibid.)

"I exist" and "God exists" are strict parallels, both are incorrigible and both are coupled with corrigible descriptions (e.g. "...with a headache", "...with omnipotent power").

It would appear that Ramsey is here treating both I and God as logically proper names without descriptive content. Thus Ramsey argues that, although he is "very willing ... to allow degrees of corrigibility for descriptions", he "cannot see that it will ever reach zero, without a word changing its logical character from a description to a proper name" (PPMT 175 n.2).

A.J. Ayer has spoken of "I" as a "referential expression" whose "use is demonstrative and not descriptive"
(Ayer (PK) 187), and Ramsey accepts this analysis (cf. BP II 181 - 183). "I" is a logically proper name without any descriptive content. So the I disclosed in a self-disclosure is contentless, uninterpreted - it is not disclosed as a "thinking substance", a "Pure Ego" or a "Bundle of perceptions", for these are all descriptions of I. Here is one reason why we can agree with Ramsey that "I exist" is incorrigible. But there is another reason also. For in the case of the assertion "I exist", I am in a peculiarly privileged position as the prime witness to its truth. Indeed I cannot say or do anything and at the same time deny that I exist; as Ramsey himself points out, "I exist" is a logical prerequisite of our use of any language at all. So we may allow that "I exist" is incorrigible. But the situation is different with the assertion "God exists". This is an "objective" claim; a claim for which we are not necessarily the prime witnesses but have, rather, to take into account conflicting evidence and the counter-claims of other people. "God exists" is not a presupposition of our thinking or acting, as "I exist" is. And more importantly, God - unlike I - is not a (contentless) proper name, but a description. This thesis, which has been persuasively argued by Peter Geach, indicates that the parallel between the logical function of "I" and "God" is not as close as Ramsey believes. If we want an objective counterpart to "I" we could use "that" - another contentless demonstrative; but the religious apologist would gain little by arguing for the incorrigibility of "that exists".

We should observe, however, that Ramsey argues, over against Geach, that "for me the term 'God' would be
neither [a descriptive, predicative term] nor [a logically proper name] but show: resemblances to both" (CD 83; cf. TL v - 9, Review Geach 292 - 293). Elsewhere he writes:

"God" is both like (and unlike) a proper name... in so far as a proper name could be in certain circumstances an exact logical equivalent for "I", to this extent we may regard God as a proper name, always realising, however, that... the "I" uttered by God of himself-being that for which God is a proper name, is not exactly similar in its logical behaviour to the "I" of ourselves. (UFMG B 65/178c)

However, Ramsey is aware that in normal circumstances the word "God" does have some descriptive content and thus functions, in Russell's terminology, as a grammatical, rather than a purely logical, proper name. Indeed, as Tilley notes, without this descriptive content, without "carrying some representational value", "God' only refers to the 'other' encountered in a situation of cosmic disclosure; it simply means 'that'" (Tilley (T hesis) 153). As soon as we give "that" any content, indeed as soon as we affirm that it is an objectively existing "that", we have moved into the area of (corrigible) language.

It is necessary now to take up the issue of the objectivity of disclosures as it relates to the present problem; and here we must anticipate a little the discussion of the next section. Ramsey's main point is that "the certainty of the reference only arises in a disclosure and is never transferable to the assertions themselves" (FD 121). But the reference here is what Ramsey calls "objective reference" or objectivity" (ibid. ): this is the only "incorrigible feature" of the disclosure, all talk about it can only be "less or more reliable" (ibid. 122). Disclosures can "guarantee objectivity", the objectivity of the Other
but they can guarantee no language about it. It is this disclosed objective reference of which we can be certain; "One cannot doubt that one is being confronted by a real objective other" (Evans (IRTG) 137). But even if this point is granted, even if we can be sure that "there is something there", this something is no more than raw objectivity, a "something, I know not what" (FD 128). And raw objectivity is an excessively tasteless diet. To give it flavour we need to give it content: "There is no way of knowing whether there is an objective content in a disclosure which is distinct from what people articulate about their disclosures" (Gaskin 140; cf. Heynell (OBSR)). We need at least to spell out what type of objectivity it is— for Ramsey, as we shall see, distinguishes between different species of "objectivity". And these procedures necessitate our moving into the domain of tentative language: especially if we are to conclude, à la Aquinas, that the being whom we know in a disclosure-situation is what all men call "God" (cf. PPMT 176, PG 68).

I conclude, therefore, that if Ramsey is to uphold this claim that we can be "certain of God", he cannot also claim that we are "tentative" in all our theological language. While he is in agreement with his former teacher, A.C. Ewing, that intuitions (i.e., in the sense of the descriptive content intuited) are corrigible; he still wishes to retain some incorrigible reference. But as this can only be an essentially "contentless" reference it would not seem to be worth arguing for. Perhaps Ramsey might have been well advised to avoid such technical terms as "incorrigibility" altogether and defend the less extreme position that we are "practically"
or "relatively" certain of the object of a disclosure, rather than "absolutely" certain of it\textsuperscript{134}. That is that our disclosure-based theistic confession may be indubitable (i.e. we cannot rationally doubt it or reject), but it is not incorrigible (i.e. we may be in error in believing it).

For we do indeed hold many things to be "beyond reasonable doubt" which are in fact strictly corrigeble (cf. Quinton (NT) 146 - 148). But Ramsey is clearly claiming more than this; and in claiming more I believe that he is wrong.
6. The Objective Element of the Disclosure

For Ramsey a disclosure comprises two components:
a disclosure of the Self (a disclosure of subjectivity) and
a disclosure of an Other (a disclosure of objectivity) -
cf. CPL 246 etc. In this section the latter element
will be examined.

(A) Many disclosures, one object

It would appear that throughout Ramsey's writings
his epistemology is dominated by the belief that, in the end,
all disclosures disclose the same object - i.e. God. This
thesis is expressed a little hesitantly at first:

if we are asked what a disclosure discloses,
several answers are possible. A first answer
might be, in relation to the examples 139
we have given: "my wife's warning", "Robin
Hood", "his son's letter". But for the
theist all these phrases would be brought
in relation to the answer which supplements
them all, without replacing any, viz. "God".
So the theist would speak (for example) of
seeing God in a friend, finding God in
literature, family relations and so on.
If the theist sponsors any doctrine of
creation, he need not apologize for ultimately
relating every disclosure to God...(PMFT 172 n.2)

The proposal here seems to be that some sort of metaphysical
construction can be made which relates all disclosed objects
to the term "God". Thus the disclosed objects are "brought
in relation to the answer which supplements them all". But
in a later article, Ramsey puts the point rather differently
- and more starkly - claiming that the disclosed objects
themselves may appropriately be designated by the word "God":-

in every disclosure the object can eventually
bear the name "God". (FRFI 355)
Elsewhere a less extreme, but closely allied, view comes to the surface: the view that all cosmic disclosures disclose but one referent i.e. "God":

I give the name God to the single individuation of which we are actively aware in all cosmic disclosures. (U-Credo 3)

Without some contextual setting, the word "God" plainly means nothing; on the other hand, if the word "God" had a completely adequate contextual setting it would be the name whose reference was the whole universe, and it is this, I believe, which justifies us meanwhile in claiming that the reference of any and every cosmic disclosure, i.e., a disclosure which is restricted to no finite pattern of spatio-temporal events as its centre, is the same, viz. God. (CD 82)

There are several issues that may be discerned here:-

(i) Do cosmic disclosures disclose one God or many?

A cosmic disclosure is a sort of universalizable, "all-inclusive" disclosure (cf. MBR 265), a disclosure "which is restricted to no finite pattern of spatio-temporal events" (CD 82). It is the "cosmic" characteristic of these disclosures that Ramsey takes as an indication that one and the same object is disclosed by them all. He writes:

Now because of the cosmic character of such a disclosure, because of its all-embracing range, because in it the whole Universe confronts us, I think we are entitled to speak of there being a single individuation expressing itself in each and all of these disclosures. In other words, from any and every cosmic disclosure we can claim to believe in one x (where x for the moment remains to be elucidated) precisely because we talk of there being "one world". (TG 87)

Ramsey interprets this argument in part as "an appeal to the criterion of simplicity": "if a cosmic disclosure is genuinely 'cosmic' why should we suppose that it has more than one objective reference in toto " (U-ITR Evans 3).
Such a claim for the unity of God is based on a prior claim for the unity of the world; and this "one world" claim, according to Ramsey, is shared by Gilbert Ryle\textsuperscript{136} (cf. M 20, TL 8, U-TLIE 2, U-FMG 3/2/40). But, as Kai Nielsen points out (Nielsen (S) 84 - 87; cf. Evans (IRTG) 225 - 226), Ramsey gives no reason either for the "one world" thesis or for the "one God" claim raised upon its basis. It seems, in fact, that the argument is so obvious to Ramsey that he does not trouble to set it out in detail (cf. MDA 66). It is based on his understanding of a "cosmic" disclosure, and may be analysed thus:

(i) A cosmic disclosure discloses a single individual "object"; and, (ii) The medium of that disclosure is some part of the world that is representative of the universe as a whole: this indeed is our reason for calling the disclosure "cosmic"; Therefore, (iii) Any two separate "cosmic disclosures" reveal the same object.

In a similar way we might have two disclosures of another person (self) that take place at different times around (i) his affectionate behaviour and (ii) his violent behaviour; but we assume that it is the same self that has been disclosed on both occasions, and we treat the two behaviour patterns as two parts or aspects of a larger unitary behaviour pattern. It may be that such an analogy is at the back of Ramsey's mind when he propounds the thesis we are considering. But is this analogy close enough? A person's pattern of behaviour, or his physical body, is more readily recognizable as a unity than is the Universe. The Universe is the sum total of those entities which we recognize as "individuals" in their own right - i.e. "things" and "persons", but in what
sense is the whole Universe an individual? To speak of "one world" is already to commit oneself to a basic presupposition about the unity of things. Presumably the same physical laws operate in far distant galaxies as operate in our own and such galaxies are composed of the same fundamental particles and complex molecular structures as we know from the world around us. But identical points could be made about two human bodies and their activities, without any suggestion that when they serve as media for disclosures they disclose one and the same self. Ramsey's justification for calling a disclosure "cosmic" seems to be fraught with problems.

Perhaps a better approach would be to concentrate on what is disclosed rather than on the medium of the disclosure. Could we not argue that at least one reason for polytheism developing into monotheism was that people began to recognize that it was one and the same God who was discerned in their different religious experiences—whether these experiences were mediated through the sea, the reproductive cycle of Nature, thunder and lightning, or whatever? The argument is not "All cosmic disclosures reveal one God", but "All disclosures of deity reveal one God"; for all such disclosures have a common object rather than a common medium. Of course other principles also operate in the transition from polytheism to monotheism. People recognized that what was revealed in a religious experience was an ultimate, unconditioned being who could not be just one god among many. Further, monotheism provided a simpler metaphysical schema than did polytheism (where entities appear to be multiplied beyond necessity),
and one which was more easily made coherent and comprehensive.

(ii) The Contextualization of God

In Models for Divine Activity Ramsey sums up his views in this manner:

cosmic disclosures occur around models, and we might mark the objective reference of every cosmic disclosure, since there is only one individuation, by the symbol X. X would then be contextualized in the discourse which the generating model suggested, and in due course X would be contextualized in a multi-model discourse.

It might then happen that we chanced on a book of theology talking of God and love and purpose and activity and so on, father, shepherd, fisherman - indeed a Bible; and we might see that, on the one hand, so to say, where we read X, on the other hand we read the word God. We could then say again: for "X" read "God"...

I agree that the word "God" by itself may seem of little use; unless it is contextualized it is a well-nigh empty name. But it is a useful way of pointing to the one cosmic individuation. In one sense when we have known the cosmic individuation even on the first occasion, we have known God. But in another sense we have nearly everything to learn. (MDA 65; cf. TG 91 - 92)

Thus the unspecified objective reference of a cosmic disclosure, "X", may be talked about "in terms of any model which the various routes to a cosmic disclosure had provided" (TG 91). One could then build up "the most consistent, comprehensive, coherent, and simple discourse from as many models as possible" and the word "God" then "derives its meaning in use as and when it is contextualized in multi-model discourse" (ibid. 92; cf. CD 70). Elsewhere Ramsey writes at another level of the "technique-providing contexts" behind the models used for God (CD 71; cf. MDA 34, CD 41 n1) 139. Knowing about such model-situations is part of the process of contextualization, of coming to know how to use the word "God" (cf. RPT29).
Hence, to the question, "Can we be sure that it is God who is disclosed", Ramsey answers:

We shall reasonably claim that "God" (in a certain context) has disclosed himself in so far as our X context resembles the God context.

(MMR 266)

Therefore, to make the claim "for X read God" we have to do some theology - we have to use language and begin to represent X as "loving father", "good Shepherd", "omnipotent King" etc. We then note that this theology is the same as that found in Scripture and Christian tradition; and only then can we proceed to the claim that our disclosure reveals (the Christian) "God". Here again we note that the recognition that a disclosure reveals God involves us in corrigible language: a point which conflicts with Ramsey's other thesis that we can be certain only of God, and not of language about him.

Certain points of relevance to the present discussion arise at this juncture:

(i) If all cosmic disclosures have one object (X), we may "contextualize" X to read "God" and therefore claim that all cosmic disclosures reveal God;

(ii) The models we use in this process of contextualization are related to disclosures in one of two ways (cf. MMR 265 -267):

Either (a) they evoke the disclosure of X, acting as a "linguistic medium" of the disclosure (e.g. talk about loving fathers evokes a cosmic disclosure of God as father);

Or (b) a disclosure of isomorphy occurs between certain model-situations and certain situations in the Universe, a disclosure which at the same time discloses X (e.g. loving
patterns of fatherly conduct, together with patterns of the world "caring" for us, disclose God as Father).

Clearly, however, different models will be associated with different disclosures of the "same object": the God who is Father is also the God who is Judge, King, Redeemer etc. So we can widen the context of our God-talk by bringing in other models relating to other disclosures of God. But there is a further implication here that brings us back to the main topic of this section. For the way of discriminating between the objects of disclosures is to use language (models) about them, and according to Ramsey these models are tied to the context of the disclosures. And it is a short step from acknowledging this to claiming that if we "widen the context" of any objective disclosure sufficiently, we shall end up eventually with a disclosure of God. Ramsey takes this step.

(iii) The widening of the context of a disclosure

What is this "widening of context"? Regrettably, Ramsey nowhere makes this very clear. He writes of the theological interpretation of value-claims as setting them "in a wider context" (MJGC 167). And he argues in the following fashion in response to a criticism of H.D. Lewis:

I agree that there is a certain arbitrariness about the way in which we talk about what such a disclosure discloses. To mention some of my favourite examples, we may speak of the object of a disclosure which is reached by means of regular polygons of ever-increasing sides as a "circle". For other disclosures we may speak of "persons" being disclosed when they cease to be mere officials; we may speak of Duty, Absolute Value, or God. In this way, talk about the object of a disclosure always comes within a contextual setting, from which it will also derive what justification can be given to it.
But because with a limited, restricted route what is disclosed has some plain evident name, it does not follow that it cannot bear alternative labels as the context is widened. For such names as we first give the objects of disclosures only represent first-stage talking about these objects. As we broaden the contexts in which the disclosure-yielding language is set, then some other phrase as well may become currency for what is objectively disclosed. So while I agree that from the standpoint of first stage discourse disclosures disclose "anything", that does not preclude us from giving wider and wider interpretations, from supplying supplementary interpretations to characterize the object of the disclosure more reliably, as the context is progressively extended. (PRFI 355)

It is after this explication that Ramsey roundly declares, "in every disclosure the object can eventually bear the name 'God'." (ibid.).

The only way I am able to understand Ramsey's argument here is by assuming that when he writes of the broadening of the "context" of a disclosure, he means a broadening of the medium of that disclosure. His argument in "Facts and Disclosures" certainly implies that the medium of a disclosure provides the language in which we may express that which is disclosed (cf. FD 127, 129 - 130). Hence, as the medium is widened, and more of the "more" is disclosed, so our linguistic expression of the disclosed object widens correspondingly. But as the medium of the disclosure is a part of the empirical world (or language representing the empirical world), the widening of the medium results in a disclosure becoming truly "cosmic". In this "widening" process more and more of the world is included as the medium of the disclosure until the disclosure occurs "around the Universe" and must then be a disclosure of the God of the Universe. Hence Ramsey can claim that if the context (medium) of any disclosure is widened sufficiently the object disclosed may eventually bear the name "God";
Categories like substance [and] universals are best seen as labels for different routes into a disclosure of that which is other than myself.

My conclusion then is that the objective reference given in a disclosure to which, for example, stories about things, or universals have led, cannot be further characterized except as the One disclosed in and through the Many, or a "reality" disclosed through "appearances". But for some it has been labelled Absolute, and for others God, though these words only gain a meaning in use in so far as they hold together the different strands of discourse which provide the stories leading to a disclosure of one individuation, the one objective referent, what Looke called "something". (FD 130)

A view like this, of course, has profound ontological implications. Cynthia Cohen has described Ramsey's position as one of "disclosed pantheism in which all disclosed fact is ontologically identical with God" (Cohen (Thesis) 260, cf. Smart (SELR) 37). Ramsey denies the charge of pantheism on the grounds that "God" is an "index word" and index words do not picture fact (CCP 264 - 265). Cohen rejoins, and here I must agree with her, that this defence is irrelevant - for the problem is one of ontology and not one of language:

If the object of a finite disclosure and a cosmic disclosure is the same, although it may bear alternative designations within subordinate and index languages, we are forced to the conclusion that yellowness, pi and persons are obscured manifestations of the single individuation, God. (loc.cit.; cf. (IRE) 15 - 16)

And this is very close to the view of Absolute Idealism that the Absolute is the totality of its experiences. Such a thesis may be termed "disclosed pantheism" or even "disclosed monism" for it is the One disclosed through the many that carries the name "God". Apparently Ramsey has not entirely escaped the dominating vision of his earlier Idealist days.
Can such a position be defended? The present writer finds Ramsey at his most obscure when he is revealing his Idealist predilections. What can it mean to suggest that all disclosed objects are really (parts of) one and the same object, and that that "object" is God? Ramsey may have offered us a hint earlier when he mentioned the doctrine of creation (PPMT 172 n.2). Disclosed objects, persons, moral values, universals and even mathematical entities may all depend on God in one way or another: either directly in their dependence on his act of creation or indirectly by their dependence on the (created) human mind. And one might say that when one discerns a God-dependent object one is in some way enjoying a mediated discernment of God himself (cf. Hascall (HWI) ch. VII). But it must not be forgotten that all these entities are on an ontological level that is radically different from that of God, for they are all contingent created beings.

If Ramsey means only that God can be disclosed through the objects of other disclosure-discernments, i.e. that the disclosure of God may occur through various ontological and epistemological levels or dimensions, then he is right. But it is very misleading to move, as Ramsey seems to move, from "The disclosure of a physical object, another self etc., may serve as a medium for a disclosure of God" to "The disclosed physical object, other self etc., is (though only partially and inadequately) God himself". Ramsey would have done far better to have kept the different types of intuition separate from one another, treating them all, at least in principle, as mediating the intuition of God. Instead he chose to collapse the
distinctions between them, ending up with only one kind of disclosed object — raw objectivity — which could be analysed as anything from a mathematical entity to the transcendent God. Not only does this make the whole scheme appear considerably less plausible, especially to those without Idealist leanings, but it raises serious questions about the nature of God and the extent to which he is truly transcendent over his creation.
We have at last arrived at a point where we can ask what must be our most important question of Ian Ramsey's epistemology. "Do disclosures disclose (i.e. in discernments do we discern) real objects?" Ramsey's answer is an emphatic "Yes", but others have responded in a much more sceptical manner (cf., e.g., Hepburn (MM) 22, Hebblethwaite 644, Ferre (LLG) 141, Gaskin 139 - 140, Smart (ICBC) passim, Lewis (PR) 108).

(i) "All experience is of something"

According to Ramsey, something can only be designated an "experience" if it has an object. He is therefore unable to understand what a "subjective experience" could be (RL 27). "I am... quite unrepentant", he wrote in 1967, "about saying that every experience being 'of something' is 'objective', though I readily admit of course that there are countless types of interpretation of what is other than myself" (MMR 268; cf. RL 24, 28). Naturally this analysis applies also to the "experiences" of discernment-disclosure: if they occur they have an objective referent. We may be certain that there is this objective referent, but we can be only tentative in our interpretation of it. Some "objectivity" is therefore always assured: but the 'type' of objectivity concerned is open to dispute.

Ramsey's general argument that "all experience is of something" suggests that he has not clearly distinguished between two types of object; that is:

(i) "phenomenological" or "epistemological" objects - i.e., the "objects" of experience and knowledge; and
(ii) "real", "objectively existing "objects - i.e. entities that exist independently of human experience and knowledge (see Quinton (BP II) 197 - 198, Cohen (IRE) 14 - 15, Evans (IRTG) 129; cf. also Owen (CKG) 184, Baelz (CTM) 102). A "real" object may be either a spatio-temporal entity (like a table), or a meta-empirical entity (like God). But an "epistemological" object is no real entity at all, only "an object before the mind". The shibboleth, "Every experience has an object" is true only of this latter species of object. Sense data, dreams, hallucinations etc. are all epistemological objects - they are all objects of people's experience; but they are not objects in any stronger sense.

This blurring of the distinction between real objects and epistemological objects is rather similar to Ramsey's cavalier treatment of the distinction between concepts and entities. I suggested earlier that many of the examples which Ramsey adduces can serve only as examples of disclosures of part of the concept of God, and not as disclosures of God himself. I have also indicated the difficulty of assigning some of Ramsey's disclosure-examples either to the category of disclosure of entities or to the category of disclosures of concepts (e.g. universals and "mathematical entities"). For Ramsey, however, these problems do not arise, for he seems to treat both concepts and entities as equally "objective". He even goes so far, on one occasion, as to speak of an "objective element" in a detective novel "when the penny drops we suddenly 'see' the culprit, when the solution forces itself upon us" (PPMT 169).
(ii) Types of Objectivity

Anyone who, like Ramsey, is very free in his use of the adjective "objective", is bound to be faced by a serious problem. As he is willing to call all experience "objective", he must now differentiate between different "types" of objectivity. Ramsey recognizes the necessity for this. Thus he distinguishes, as we shall see below, between the objectivity of hallucinations and the objectivity of veridical sense perceptions. And he draws a further distinction between both kinds of objectivity and the "objectivity of what declares itself". He also acknowledges that God is not "objective" in any scientific, publicly testable, sense (cf. BPEM20, U-FMG (2) 10/84/191). The objectivity of God is, rather, a "transcendent objectivity" (DCCD 13).

(a) The Problem of Illusions

Ramsey recognizes that "the 'felt objectivity' of the numinous must be distinguished from the 'felt objectivity' of what is generally called a 'subjective illusion' " (Review Baelz 170). The problem of illusions, of course, is one that is to be met throughout the theory of knowledge. A sense-datum theorist can easily deal with illusions and hallucinations because he can speak either of sense-data - the immediate "objects" of our sense experience - or of physical objects. Ramsey's approach is rather different in that he speaks generally of the "objectivity" of both illusory and veridical perceptions, but differentiates between the languages that are used to talk of this objectivity. If sense-datum language alone is used, we have to do with an "illusion"; if material object language is employed, however,
the experience is not "illusory". Ramsey distinguishes two senses of the word "objective" as it is used of physical objects:

The one sense of "objective" would talk of something which is "objective" as being independent of particular observers, but this, I would suggest, characterizes no "things", but rather the language that the particular observers use. On the other hand there is something "objective" in the sense of being other than ourselves, and this sense of otherness characterizes the perceptual experience we have. It is clearly a mistake to transfer the independent sort of objectivity which belongs to language, to things invented to suit it; and then to suppose that this is an adequate analysis of the objectivity which characterizes perceptual experience. When we talk of the "independency" of physical objects then, we are claiming:

(a) the publicity of physical object language (which is recognised and admitted by its success) and
(b) some sense of "objectivity" = other than ourselves. Here is what has been called the "non-inferential awareness" present in perceptual experience. 

In this account physical object language is viewed as expressing the discerned objectivity in a particular manner. But what of illusions?

I would say that in some illusions, there is no disclosure at all — just a plain mistake in supposing that the hot tarmac mad on a sunny day had a covering of water. In other cases of illusion, and especially in dreams, there certainly may be a disclosure. In that case, there would certainly be an objective reference. The problem of dreams and illusions is then how to interpret reliably the "something" which is disclosed in this way...it needs something as complicated as a scientific theory in the case of illusions, or something as complex as the account given by Freud or Jung (to say nothing of Joseph or Daniel) to spell out reliably what is disclosed in a dream. 

Thus, for Ramsey, to call a certain situation illusory is really to recommend that it be interpreted at the sense-datum level rather than that of physical objects. (U-FMG Draft 6/13)
In an exchange with Niaian Smart (cf. Smart (ICBC) 33 - 35), Ramsey argues that the objectivity of the inebriate's pink rats is "more reliably talked of in terms of (say) the excess of alcohol in the digestive system rather than in terms of animals who eat corn and get chased by fox terriers" (ITR Smart 109 - 110). Because "all experience is subject-object in structure" Ramsey argues that "even pink rats have some objectivity, some objective reference" (ibid. 109). But he adds:

any claim for objectivity stands or falls with the reliability of the conceptual scheme in terms of which the "object" is talked about; and the claim for objectivity in relation to cosmic disclosures, stands or falls on the reliability of what those disclosures enable us to say about God. (ibid. 110)

For Smart such a position, in making conceptual schemes so determinative, is "heading for subjectivism" (Smart (LE) 352). We should recognize the force of this criticism. I shall argue later that Ramsey's various canons of assessment of metaphysical and religious language (i.e. "empirical fit"; coherence, comprehensiveness, and simplicity) are too vague and all-embracing to serve as practical justificatory criteria for the use of such language. In which case we are forced back to the religious experiences - the discernments - themselves, if we do wish to distinguish between fact and illusion in religion.

In the case of perceptual hallucinations we categorize language about (say) pink rats as "language about hallucinations" for two reasons;

(i) pink rats, though open to sight, cannot be touched;
and (ii) pink rats do not behave like other rats (when, for example, we aim a drunken blow at them).

It is, then, a widening of our original experience that confirms our suspicions that the part of our experience presently under consideration is illusory: that pink rats are "not really there". In the case of our experience of God, however:

(i) our religious experience may be unitary, in which case we cannot check by "spiritual touch" what we think we know by "spiritual sight";

and (ii) the standard "behaviour" ("nature?") of the real God is much more a matter of dispute than is that of rats.

Ideally, then, one would wish to discover some element within the original religious experience itself that can assure us of its objectivity. Perhaps Ramsey is feeling after such an element when he speaks of the objectivity "of what declares itself".

(b) The objectivity of what declares itself

According to Ramsey, the objective reference of a disclosure is safeguarded in so far as "the object declares its objectivity by actively confronting us" (MM 58, cf. TG 88). The discerned object thus declares itself to us and makes an impact on us (cf. ITR Smart 109). Most commentators on Ramsey regard all disclosures as being disclosures of an object that " 'declares itself' to us in a way that is similar to a personal encounter" (Cohen (IRE) 5; cf. Evans (IRTG) 129 - 130). Donald Evans can thus argue very generally that "the more' is objective in that it is a reality which is an active originator of experience" (ibid. 129). Both Cohen and Evans
thus assume that Ramsey uses such language about all disclosures. And, indeed, a large number of examples may be cited of different types of disclosed objects "declaring themselves", including "the Universe": \(^{141}\) cf. RSCS 23, CD 5, PG 66, TC 87, PA 196.

Elsewhere, however, Ramsey seems to claim that the "objectivity of what declares itself to us" is a feature of disclosures of other persons, duty and God, but is not a feature of (for example) disclosures of physical objectivity or the objectivity of dreams:

The claim for "objectivity" - "objective reference" - is grounded in the sense I have of being confronted, of being acted upon, in the discernment I have of some claim impinging on me. I readily grant that this is a particular sense of objectivity; it is not precisely the "objectivity" (which people are often moved to deny) which belongs to dream images; it is not even precisely the objectivity (which people only too often take as a paradigm of objectivity) which characterizes physical objects. It is not precisely the objectivity which belongs to other people as the topic of social studies. It is better suggested by the objectivity of what declares itself to us - challenges us in a way that persons sometimes do. (MDA 61 - 62; cf. CD 68)

Ramsey himself glosses the parallel passage in Christian Discourse with the words, "It is in this sense that disclosures reveal objectivity"; and this might be taken to imply that all disclosures have the objectivity of what declares itself. But the argument in his later paper "Facts and Disclosures" for the disclosure-basis of our and knowledge of physical objects (FD 119)/dream images (FD 131) could be taken to indicate that, by then, Ramsey did distinguish within the category of the disclosure between the objectivity "of what declares itself" and other types of disclosed objectivity. And this does seem to be the more plausible position to adopt; for there is something
distinctive about our intuitions of other people, moral
claims and God. In these areas we feel that we have to do
with an other that actively impinges on us and reveals
itself to us; and we interpret this activity in terms of
another "will" (cf. RL 26 - 27, MMR 264, PI 42 etc.).

What Ramsey seems to have done in some of the
examples cited, is extend this element of activity from its
paradigm cases to all types of disclosure (cf. MMR 58).
According to Ramsey, even the conclusions of mathematical
and logical arguments "strike us" (MMR 265), and the
Universe in all its mystery "declares itself" to us (CD 5).
As Evans puts it, in all such cases " 'The penny drops'; we
do not make it drop" (Evans (IRTG) 130). Or as Ramsey
himself puts it, "if the light dawns there is obviously
an objective reference" (U-FMG B42/155). In the next two
sections we shall look more closely at two aspects of this
central conviction, keeping in mind the question:"Has Ramsey
illegitimately extended this analysis to cover all
disclosures?"

(c) The disclosure of activity

For Ramsey a cosmic disclosure involves "God's
initiating activity meeting our responsive activity" (MDA 33;
cf. ibid. 23, PG 67). And "because we are aware of an
activity meeting and matching our own, there is a sense in
which the objectivity of God, his being something other than
ourselves, is guaranteed" (UP 9; cf. MDA 23). The same
may readily be allowed of disclosures of other, reciprocally
active, selves (RSCS 14, cf. RL 19 - 20). And "activity" may
surely only also be appropriately - though/anallogically- predicated of
a disclosed moral claim (PG 69; cf. MDA 62, MJGC 169).
In all these cases we are confronted by an active agent, or at least something closely analogous to an agent, who challenges and commands us. But Ramsey again seems to wish to extend this interpretation to all cases of disclosure (cf. RFT 28, MM 58). He avers quite generally:

in a disclosure-situation (as that general term "disclosure" itself rightly implies) we are originally relatively passive...we are confronted by something other than ourselves, something/someone whose activity bears on our own, though the active "objects" of different disclosures have different kinds of logical status. (U-Credo 2, emphasis added; cf. Enc, Brit. 603, PG 67, TG 68)

But here the final clause is the important one. In this discussion of the activity of a disclosure, as with his account of the objectivity of dreams and illusions, Ramsey appears to give with one hand and take back with the other. All disclosed objects are "active". But there are, prima facie, many different kinds of active object and presumably, therefore, many different kinds of disclosed activity. And in order to discover (i) whether we may predicate of a disclosed object the "activity" of another person, a moral claim or God; or (ii) whether we may use that term only in a rather different, more etiolated, sense (when applying it to the universe or the objects of mathematical intuition); we must see how "activity" can be used of the disclosed object in question. In other words, to discover the sense of the term "activity" in a particular application we must again move into the domain of language. For the Universe "confronts us" and "comes alive" in a way that is surely only remotely analogous to the way in which John Doe "confronts us" and "comes alive".
So here again we find Ramsey following his usual line of concentrating on the similarities between disclosed objects of different types (arguing that they are all "active"), while apparently acknowledging at the same time that some differentia must be recognized—if we are to classify them as disclosed objects of different types. Unless we accept Ramsey's "disclosed monism", it must be that the activity shown by such objects varies from one to another.

Perhaps we should seek to understand, however, what it is that a theist like Ramsey finds so attractive about the claim that disclosures reveal an active Other. For the discovery of an active agent confronting one is indeed an encounter; and an encounter with quasi-numinous overtones. When there is a knock at the door, or a ring from the telephone, our hearts race— for there is Someone Else there. We are attracted by this mysterious other, fascinated to discover "who?" and "why?". But at the same time we feel a certain fear, even dread, about the possible encounter. And when we actually meet, these two notes of the numinous experience (cf. Otto (IH) chs. IV & VI) are often still present. I am fascinated by the other, but—in a way—dread him. The ghost story offers us a secular analogy. For its most effective point is when the hero discovers something self-active, and therefore unpredictable and ultimately mysterious, in his orderly world. He cries with dread "there is something there"—i.e. "something active".

We know too that our hearts "miss a beat" when we hear the rustling in the undergrowth that speaks of another's activity. Although it is only the activity of some mammal or bird, some of the emotions appropriate to the sensing of the presence of another person are aroused in us. The
revelations of the two kinds of activity have a great deal in common. It may be that Ramsey is simply appealing to an extension of this fact in his implied claim that all disclosures disclose the active Holy God himself.

Ramsey's remarks on activity are tantalizing.

He recognizes that activity may carry either a personal or an impersonal interpretation (cf. U-HA "Traditional Arguments for the Existence of God" 1965, p.2; cf. CD4, ITR Owen 126), presumably because we speak sometimes of the activity of material objects or machines. But it is personal activity, the activity of spirit (cf. NI 60), "activity which has my personal backing" (TW 82-83), that dominates Ramsey's understanding of the term. It is the activity of persons that "challenges" us (CD 89). In this sense "activity is a word which cannot be given an adequate objective analysis" (U-TLIE 15), for "action-logic is not event logic" and needs to be "related to the peculiarity of 'I'-logic" (SEI 202).

The decisive activity of persons, of selves, is an "ontological peculiar" not reducible to spatio-temporal objects or events (FI 28, FRFI 351). This means that temporal categories cannot be appropriately applied to a personal action as a whole (FRFI 351). And a fortiori in the case of God the model of "activity" must be further qualified (U-PMG B 64/177, cf. UP 9).

Ramsey believes that "I am active" can be used "merely...to bear witness to that part of a self-disclosure which is an invariant", the word "active" having no descriptive element (PPMT 176). He distinguishes between a man's "action" and his "behaviour":
I take action to be that which embodies a man's whole personality; in being "active", a man is being most distinctively himself. Behaviour on the other hand is the external expression of this activity; behaviour is what activity yields for study. (BP II 200)

Personality is to be analysed "in terms of a distinctive activity", "an integrating activity, an activity expressed, embodied and scientifically understood in terms of its genetic, biochemical and endocrine, electronic, neurological and psychological manifestations" (HP 128, cf. ibid. 146).

Presumably Ramsey would apply this same argument to the rest of the universe. God could be presented then as one showing an "activity" that is expressed in the "behaviour" of the world. Behaviour is straightforwardly observable, but activity must be disclosed. The behaviourist neglects the latter element in his survey of persons; the atheist has not discerned it in the cosmos. Their opponents, however, see all that they see - but acknowledge something "more" besides.

However Ramsey's attempts (cf. RCS ch 1) to interpret the nature of science as being open to such/personalist analysis, in which the universe is regarded as in "rapport" or "opposition" to us (ibid. 21), seem to be rather far-fetched. Most scientists would be unhappy with such anthropomorphic language. In any case don't these attempts actually concentrate our attention too rigidly on the world? After all the world is only the medium through which God is known. If the universe "opposes us" does this give us grounds for saying that God is active (in opposition?) towards us? There is a general problem here of the relation
between the medium and the subject of a disclosure that we must examine later.

However, there is some sort of relationship between medium and disclosed object, even if we do not accept Ramsey's account of it. Thus our sense-data must be of such and such a nature for them to disclose an objective external world. Similarly a person's body and behaviour must show certain characteristics for us to intuit another I through them.

By analogy we might say that the universe must be of such a nature (showing "rapport" or "opposition") before it can disclose the Christian God. But on an intuitionist epistemology we only discover this, as it were, retrospectively. Having intuited the external world and the creator God, we may hypothesize that sense-data that were not systematically related, or a world without law-like relations between its events, could not serve as media for the disclosures we have had. Having discovered God through this world, we can guess what sort of world would not reveal this sort of God. Similarly, having discovered personal activity through another's behaviour, we are in a position to recognize the types of behaviour that might not lead to such a disclosure.

The difficulty is that in the last case we can check our conclusions. For we can observe comatose, moronic or grossly psychotic human behaviour and discover whether we do have a disclosure of another self in such cases. But the case of God and the world is different: for there is only one cosmos.

It does seem that there are some difficulties here for the place Ramsey assigns to activity in our disclosures of God. One major problem is that the God:world:I:body analogy
is not particularly close. In the case of persons we do not simply intuit activity through a person's spatio-temporal behaviour, for a statement about that behaviour itself serves as a part of our statement that the person is active. Human selves are embodied selves, hence there are links other than just intuitive (non-inferential) links between assertions about bodies and assertions about persons. But is this the case when we turn to the relationship between God and the world? A classical theist would claim that the "more" of the world is transcendent over the world in ways that my "more" is not transcendent over my body - not least because God created the world whereas I did not create my body. It is the panentheist who is willing to argue for there being a close analogy between the body/self and the world/God relationships. Some aspects of Ramsey's thought do seem to indicate that he is willing to move in the direction of panentheism. He speaks, for example, of the universe being active, and treats this as synonymous with God being active through the universe (cf. UP 9). In ways like this Ramsey tends to reduce God to the level of another (embodied) self.

Ramsey's predilection for interpreting the objectivity of disclosures in terms of the activity of the disclosed object results in some rather strained language. How are we to understand the claims that mathematical entities, patterns in the world, and conclusions of arguments are actively confronting the cognizing mind? In what sense are such things "active" rather than "passive" when we discern them? It is surely evident that the category of objective entities is wider than the category of active entities. In which case it is reasonable to treat the latter as a
sub-class of the former, rather than vice-versa. And this argument also applies in the case of God. People do speak of experiences of "encountering", or "being in the Presence of", God; experiences in which we intuit simply that "he is there" - without discerning that he is "doing" anything. Ramsey himself accepts the value of impersonal language in our talk about God: God is "Rock" as well as "Shepherd". Even such an (apparently) inactive God may be objectively real.

There is an argument in Ramsey's paper "A Personal God" which relates the disclosure of an active God not only to his argument about "safeguarding the objectivity" of God, but also to his claim that only one object is disclosed in all cosmic disclosures. Ramsey refers to C.C.J. Webb's analysis of inter-personal reciprocity in a child's act of offering sweets to an elderly friend. Ramsey comments:

the child's claim to a disclosure on a particular occasion may be mistaken; it may not be a genuine person. Even so that very possibility, that very distinction between "person" and (say) a reciprocally active machine, between "genuine person" and paste-board sweet-giver, determines that some cases will be genuine. In the case of God, however, I think there is a more direct certainty. For here there is a cosmic - infinite, all inclusive - disclosure; and I do not see on what grounds there could be the kind of mistake possible in the child's case; for I do not see on what grounds we could deny the "otherness" - the confronting activity, or even posit a variety of referents rather than a single individuation. (PG 69)

It is interesting to note that the argument Ramsey uses here to affirm that we cannot be mistaken in the case of a disclosure of God is similar to the argument that some sceptics use to show that God-claims are without meaning (i.e. "There are no criteria for distinguishing between veridical and illusory cases"). So the argument cuts both ways:
it provides us with no reason either for affirming, or for denying, that we have been duped in our religious experience.

Certainly many have acknowledged the existence of "religious experience" - as a psychological phenomenon - but have gone on to produce grounds for denying the otherness or objectivity of the putative object of that experience (cf. Hepburn (CP), Miles (RE), Nielsen (CPRE) etc.). Further, Ramsey's account does not take note of the fact that theists themselves do not have cosmic disclosures every time they look out on the world. And if the world fails to reveal God to me on one occasion then it remains possible that I am mistaken on the occasions on which it does seem to reveal him. In a similar way I can only recognize my "mistake" in taking a sophisticated humanoid robot to be a person if on some occasion I do not have a disclosure of another self when I survey its behaviour. On an intuitionist epistemology we are unlikely to remain content with an isolated intuition, however "cosmic" it may appear. As in certain perceptual situations, we need to check our intuition by repeatedly "looking again". But in the case of our intuitions of God, unlike most perceptual situations, however hard and however often we "look", we can not guarantee that we shall "see".

(d) Revelation and Disclosure

One of the features of Ramsey's epistemology that has seemed to many to be most sympathetic to Christian thought is his interpretation of disclosures as "revelations". The epistemological object is not simply passively intuited or discerned, it actively reveals or discloses itself.
"Disclosure" and "revelation", "disclose" and "reveal", are used by Ramsey as synonyms (cf. RL 79, RSCS 84, TL 4).

In a religious context, of course, this is entirely appropriate. God makes himself known to his children; they do not just come to know him on their own initiative. As Ramsey puts it:

Revelation is sometimes contrasted with discovery, the former being said to relate to a passive subject, the latter to an active subject, but the distinction is largely one of emphasis. (Enc. Brit. 602)

According to Ramsey, the one who receives a disclosure is "relatively passive"; although the later Ramsey retains his earliest understanding of the I - Other relation in experience as being one of mutual activity. But the point under scrutiny here is that we do not just find God, we find the God who is already actively revealing himself to us. There can only be a "disclosure", however, when we ourselves discern the Revealer.

Such a position is commonplace in theology; but Ramsey seems to stress God's "initiative" (RB 189) more than do many theologians. In any given situation, according to Ramsey, the medium of the disclosure may be present, but yet no disclosure occurs. God cannot be coerced, his revelation cannot be taken for granted. Apparently he has the freedom either to disclose himself or not to disclose himself (cf., e.g., RL 79, 129, OCR 15, CELCE 95, CD 68).

Now this position is somewhat different from the position of those theologians who claim that, although God takes the initiative in revelation, he is always taking that initiative, and doing so for everyone. On the latter analysis our "activity" in discerning the Revealer becomes determinative,
But on Ramsey's account whether or not there is a revelation seems to be dependent upon God's particular activity, as well as ours. And if, as I have argued, the central act of intuitive discernment is not in any case under our free control, then God becomes even more responsible for his revelations. Although this position is perhaps closer to that of the Bible and Christian thinking in general, it does raise the problem of God's "favouritism" in revelation: a problem which Ramsey nowhere discusses.

While on the topic of revelation, we may note briefly that Ramsey sides with the contemporary emphasis in Protestant theology on revelation as "non-propositional" (cf. Enc. Brit 602). It is God himself who is revealed, not a body of truths about him (cf. Hick (PR) ch. 5, Dulles 175 - 180, Baillie (IRRT), Buber (I-T) 110 etc.). Knowledge of God is primarily by acquaintance with him and only secondarily by description of him. We have already noted that such a viewpoint must be tempered by the fact that religious knowledge, like all knowledge, is essentially knowledge of truths; and that our acquaintance - experience of God must be transcribed into propositions about him if we are to give any content to his revelation of himself. In any case I do not see any real objection to the notion of God revealing propositions about himself - perhaps through a process akin to telepathy (cf. Lewis (SL) 171 - 174).

I do not believe that such a position implies that our understanding or recounting of such propositions would be infallibly guaranteed, even if we happened to be the authors of Scripture. It is certainly clear that God is often described in the Bible as revealing himself in language -
both propositional language and the language of imperatives. Theophanies, on the other hand, are rare and shrouded in mystery. It is the prophetic or priestly word that serves as the everyday revelation of God to Israel. And it is the teaching of Jesus, as much as his activity, that reveals the father to the first disciples. It is surely a mistake always to attempt to interpret these propositional revelations in terms of (something like) a non-propositional theophany, treating religious language as nothing more than a medium of such a theophany.

It might be argued that religious epistemology, like the theory of perception, has suffered from the predominance of a "visual" understanding of sensing (cf. Clifford 367 - 368, Macmurray ch.5). Ramsey, like many religious writers, speaks of religious experience as a "vision". Our sense of hearing may tell us little about the presence of another person. But if that person chooses to disclose himself in words our ears can tell us, not only of his existence, but also a great deal more about him than can our eyes. It is the deaf man, not the blind man, who has the most difficulty in "getting to know" other people. The champions of intuitionism in religion, which by its very nature treats religious awareness as analogous to seeing, should not neglect that there may well be other ways in which we come to know God. (It may be argued that the locus classicus for the view that religious cognition is analogous to sight rather than hearing is to be found in Job 42:5:)

"I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees thee, therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes."
But this passage actually contrasts "hearsay religion" (or religious belief based on authority) and "encounter religion". It does not contrast "hearing God" and "seeing God". And the situation that evokes this confession from Job is presented in terms of a speech of Yahweh; there is in the text no description of a theophany in terms of visual imagery.

We have been speaking of disclosures of God; but Ramsey, as usual, interprets all disclosures in the same way. All disclosed objects, he claims, are active. They all reveal themselves to us. Unless we are willing to go along with Ramsey's ontological speculations about the relationship between God and other disclosed objects, these claims will not make much of an impact on us. Another person may actively reveal himself to us; but can a universal do so? Or a Gestalt pattern? And even in the case of other people I have argued that a person reveals himself to us essentially through the words that he speaks - through his statements and avowals and commands and so on. If Bill is standing in the corner and I look at him from across the room and see him, I am not likely to claim that he has "revealed himself" to me. It is only when he comes over and tells me the secrets of his heart that the phrase becomes appropriate. Ramsey is right to stress the importance of revelation in religion, but he is wrong to try and analyse this solely in terms of an intuitive awareness analogous to the sense of sight, and he is wrong to try to include all types of knowledge under the heading of revelation. After all the term "discovery" does also seem to have a use in religion!
(C) The Disclosures of Meta-empirical Entities

In our analysis of the different types of disclosure we categorized certain disclosed objects as "meta-empirical entities". On the objective side of the disclosure-situation there are such entities as other selves and God. On the subjective side the entity disclosed is the individual's own self; this will be discussed in section 7 below.

(i) The disclosure of other selves

Ramsey makes much of the analogy between God and I, treating "the word 'God' as a sort of objective counterpart to 'I' " (PI 48). This intention to "model 'God' on 'I' " (PPMT 173) is expressed basically in the analogical relationships:

I: my body :: God : world.

Ramsey's position is perhaps most clearly to be seen in a passage from his Cambridge period:

God stands to the total external world in a way in which each individual person only stands to a part, viz: to his body and immediate environment.(U-CI 11; cf. RPT 31)

This analogy relies on four points:-

(i) Just as I is a transcendent "more", not exhausted by the observables of my body and its behaviour, so God is the transcendent "more" of the Universe. Thus neither the existence of I nor the existence of God are in principle directly verifiable by sense experience. Further, both "God" and "I" are, from the point of view of empirical language, logically "odd" words. Their logical behaviour indicates that they are not to be used like words labelling observables (cf. CL 337, MMR 269).
(ii) Both God and I are active agents whose activity is expressed through the observables of the spatio-temporal world. The activity of (my) I is revealed through my body; the activity of God is revealed through his world (cf. Homage 117-119, 125).

(iii) Both God and I are known in a disclosure. Indeed, they are often known in the same (cosmic) disclosure, which has both a subjective and objective aspect — revealing both the transcendent subject (I) and the transcendent object (God). Neither God's existence nor the existence of I can be inferred from the world or my body. Only an alogical act of intuitive discernment can carry us across the epistemic gap between the spatio-temporal world and these transempirical realities (cf. PPMT 174, 176; RSCS 73, BPM 22).

(iv) Both "God" and "I" function as "integrator words" linking together various descriptive assertions about the world and myself respectively. Just as "I exist" is entailed by all kinds of scientific assertions about my body and behaviour but entails none of them; so "God exists" is entailed by, but does not entail, verifiable language about the cosmos (cf. PPMT 174, RSP 89-90, RSCS 73-74).

The God/I analogy has been defended by various other philosophers of religion on similar grounds — cf. High 179-182, Poteat (GPI), (BSDC), and Gill (PRK) 220-223. It has, however, been criticized, usually on the grounds that it presupposes a ghost-in-the-cosmos metaphysic which is/ unacceptable, post-Ryle, as a ghost-in-the-machine theory.
of the self (cf. Schedler (GCGM), McLain (FOTGT), (OJH)). One of the advocates of the God/I analogy, however, has criticized Ramsey for concentrating on it at the expense of the related, and epistemologically more significant, analogy between God and another I (cf. High 182). It is clear that, because God is other than ourselves, the claim that needs to be defended is that our knowledge of God is analogous to our knowledge of other selves (cf. N. Kemp Smith (IDEC) 120 - 122, G. Dawes Hicks (PBT) 145 - 147, Owen (CKG) 135). It is therefore rather remarkable that Ramsey says comparatively little about the disclosure of other selves. It is this little, an however, that must serve us as indication of the closest analogy we can have to the disclosure of God.

As we observe another body and its behaviour we discern, through this medium, another I confronting us (FI 97 - 98, PFM 170 - 171, RL 19 - 20; cf. AC 71). Such a disclosure-situation is graphically described by Ramsey in his illustration of a visit to an engineering exhibition. Both figures at the Rolls-Royce stand appear to be made of wax; but what if one of them...

suddenly springs to life and rises to shake us by the hand? - a disclosure indeed! Further, suppose that after the handshake, as we go to inspect the engine on display at the stand, he moves with us. Here is undoubted rapport. When we utter some particular words, he hands us pamphlets - here is positive harmony: but when we have failed to press the clutch-pedal down, he prevents us from trying the gears - here is opposition. In these three ways the claim of our disclosure to reveal a person, to reveal personal interchange, is justified. With the man we nearly knocked over, who was indeed wax and powder, there was no disclosure, nothing came alive. There was neither rapport, nor positive harmony, nor opposition. (RSCS 14)

At first glance Ramsey seems to be implying here that our evidence that we have to do with another I is entirely a
matter of the other body's sophisticated, reciprocal activity. But the point is rather that such activity serves as the medium of a disclosure that reveals another self. In the case of sophisticated robots, presumably, we do not have these disclosures. Reciprocity simpliciter, one notes again, is not enough:

personal reciprocity relates to a disclosure-situation characterized by and arising out of a behaviour pattern displaying mutual variations. I know personal reciprocity in a situation where there is a mutually varying behaviour pattern, a situation in which I am actively engaged with another person whom that varying behaviour pattern mediates, a situation—which I, as a person, realize myself in a self-disclosure as not restricted to the mutually varying behaviour I display. (PG 64; cf. RL 26)

In other words, it is as and when I "come alive" as a person, over against this other body and its behaviour, that this other "comes alive" to me as another I.

Developing these points, we might argue that in Arthur C. Clarke's *2001* the astronauts become aware of being themselves as/in a personal relationship with the Robot "Hal" as (a) they recognize personhood in Hal; and (b) they themselves become more fully persons.

It would seem, however, that Ramsey implies that in such a situation the astronauts must have been duped in their disclosures. For Ramsey appears to affirm, although his argument is by no means clear, that a machine could have "nothing of characteristically personal experience, no subjectivity" (RSCS 62) and could display no "genuine, i.e. self-disclosed, ownership" (ibid. 59); in which case a machine could not be "in an important way, like myself" (ibid.; cf. Review Geach 292). It is not clear to me,
however, what grounds Ramsey has for denying that a machine might have a self-disclosure. How could anyone possibly know one way or the other? If our only knowledge of other selves derives from a disclosure of a "more" through other bodies, what grounds do we have for rejecting the evidence of such a disclosure when it occurs around a man-made "body"? Perhaps Ramsey would argue that in such a case our knowledge that the body was man-made would prevent our having a disclosure around it. As a matter of psychological fact he is probably correct; and the actual occurrence of a disclosure is, in the end, a matter of contingent, psychological fact (as is the occurrence of sense perceptions). But what about the more bizarre example of an encounter (or "encounter") with an extra-terrestrial being? Such a being might be so strangely constructed that it is not clear whether or not it (he?) is an artefact. And such a being would not have been formed, or would not have been observed not to have been formed, before our eyes. We should simply have to wait and see whether we had a "disclosure of another self" when we were in contact with it. No intuitionist with regard to other minds can pretend to decide such cases a priori.

Of course it is another question altogether whether we can accept any "Intuitive Theory" of our knowledge of other minds (cf. Price (OM) 425). The essential difference between our knowledge of other selves and our knowledge of God is that in the former case we have a prior knowledge of a self - i.e. of our own self. Can we not, therefore, simply construct an argument by analogy from our own case and apply it to other people's bodies and behaviour? Can we not argue that such an inferential step is the unconscious basis of our knowledge of other minds?.
The inductive type of argument by analogy to other minds has been ably defended (cf. Ayer (CP) ch.4, (OKOM); Hampshire (AF); Slote ch.4; cf. also Thomson (AA)) in the face of some strenuous criticism (cf. Schlesinger, Wittgenstein (PT)293 - 295, 303 etc.). But it may be most appropriate to view belief in other minds rather differently: as the best "explanation" there is of other people's behaviour (cf. Ayer (CQP) 132 - 136, Ewing (VR) 63, Lewis (SI) 131). In that case it would fall predominantly under solution (f), rather than (c) or (g), in the analysis given earlier 158.
(ii) The disclosure of God

This particular disclosure, of course, has been the main focus of interest in all our study of Ramsey's epistemological thinking. In particular we have already considered Ramsey's claim that all disclosures (ultimately) reveal God. We have also treated his account of the way we come to know God in an intuition mediated through the world; as well as considering the proposal that Ramsey's view is compatible with some form of non-mediated, "mystical" intuition of God. Here two further aspects of the disclosure of God will be examined.

(a) Religious Experience

The "discernment" aspect of a "disclosure-situation" in which God is known refers, in Ramsey's terminology, to what is more traditionally described as the element of "religious experience" in a situation of "revelation" (cf., e.g., Webb (RE) 29). However Ramsey does not refer to all religious discernments as religious experiences. Instead he distinguishes between what I have called "qualified-model disclosures" (cosmic disclosures generated by models which have been qualified in certain ways) and cosmic disclosures that "just happen". It is the latter type of situation that provides "the case of what used to be called 'religious experience' " (TG 88); and in such a case the situation itself supplies a model by highlighting some particular feature.

Ramsey gives examples of these different types of
First of all he argues that God as loving Father may be disclosed either by talking about fathers (loving fathers, very loving fathers, exceedingly loving fathers... etc.) until the disclosure comes; or by "bringing" loving patterns of fatherly conduct — caring, providing and so on, alongside certain patterns in the Universe" until God is revealed through a disclosure of isomorphism (MMR 266).

In both these cases, Ramsey claims, "the disclosure has been generated by a particular strand of discourse" (MMR 265). In what he elsewhere calls "religious experience", however, there is no generating discourse; and in such a case the model for God is not provided by us but "given as the self-selected feature of the disclosure situation" (ibid.). Thus a disclosure of God may occur around an actual father, or a father-like activity, and "father" would then be a "self-selected" model, "some kind of focal point" for the disclosure situation (TG 88, cf. NM 59). Thus in what Ramsey calls "religious experience" the initiative is even more in God's court than it is in other disclosures of God. For religious experiences "just happen" (TG 88), they are not dependent on the evocative power of our religious language. Such disclosures occur without planning. They are "cosmic disclosures which have not been deliberately evoked whether by catalysts, or qualified models or otherwise" (U-HA: "The Traditional Arguments for the Existence of God, Contd." H65, 1965, p.5).

In his published work Ramsey says little under the explicit heading of "religious experience". There is, however, a substantial discussion of the subject in "Fact,
Metaphysics and God" and in the summaries of Ramsey's lectures at Oxford and elsewhere. One of the tasks he set for himself in these writings was to take examples from James' *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, Whitehead's *Science and the Modern World* and Otto's *The Idea of The Holy* in order "to show how the language which these diverse philosophers used to talk of religious experience matched in various ways the kind of situation we have called a disclosure" (U-HA: "Introduction to Philosophy of Religion", Colgate-Rochester lectures, 1963, p.11). Thus religious experience has been spoken of as a "sense of the unseen" or a "sense of presence" and this ties in with a situation of disclosure-discernment in which "the religious object is not inferred but 'given' 'directly' " (U-FMG 9/47/154). Similarly Whitehead's claim that "religion is the vision of something which stands beyond, behind, and within the passing flux of immediate things" (Whitehead (SMW) 227) indicates that religious experience "while being partly sense experience, is more" (U-FMG 9/48/155; cf. also CD 66 – 68). And that, of course, is Ramsey's definition of a situation of disclosure. As we shall see shortly, Ramsey particularly stressed the fact that religion is not concerned simply and solely with what is beyond ("something entirely separate and sui generis"), for if it were it would be "logically inexpressible" (U-FMG loc.cit.). Ramsey's formula for the expressibility of religious experience is that it is in part sense experience - although not reducible to sense experience alone: "while enclosing sense particulars, religious experience extends beyond them" (U-FMG (2) 10/65/172). This is Ramsey's device for building meaning into religious assertions. These assertions can
utilize empirical language as the experiences/which they are based are mediated through the empirical world. The models used for God are justified in so far as religious experience occurs "around" them.

We may now consider Ramsey's treatment of the discussions by three famous theologians of the topic of religious experience:

**F.D.E. Schleiermacher**

Ramsey says very little about Schleiermacher's work. In a draft for "Fact, Metaphysics and God", however, he mentions Schleiermacher's description of the basic religious intuition as a kiss or embrace - "an original 'unity' which passes subsequently into two people in ordinary relationships" (U-FMG Draft 5/24, cf. Enc. Brit. 594 & Schleiermacher (OR) 43 - 44). Ramsey expresses "sympathy" with Schleiermacher's "almost Bradleyan-like" (sic) account. He goes on, however, to add:

Schleiermacher's mistake was to give as a historical or psychological succession what is logically permanent. What we have been concerned to suggest...is that unity and subject-object distinction are always there in all awareness. (U-FMG Draft 5/24).

Schleiermacher's "feeling", then, "can never be less than a 'subject-object feeling'" (ibid.); although Ramsey notes that the phrase "feeling of absolute dependence" is, in speaking of the I-object relation, "at another level of language altogether" and therefore "doomed to inadequacy from the start" (ibid. 5/25). But at the level of the basic feeling-experience Ramsey considers that Schleiermacher is working along the right lines.

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Rudolf Otto

Ramsey is less certain, however, about the approach of Schleiermacher's "Eliša", Rudolf Otto (cf. Otto (RE) VIII, Macquarrie (TAG) 164 - 165). Otto's "numinous feeling", the experience or intuition of the holy, is - like its object - *sui generis*. The religious form of cognition "does not rely on the evidence of the senses", for if it did it would be transformed into "a mere sorry empirical knowledge" (Otto (IH) 226). Ramsey's essential quarrel is not with Otto's phenomenological analysis of the numinous experience and its associated feeling-states. Nor does he spare more than a passing comment for Otto's "Kantian" analysis of the holy as an *a priori* category and his account of the process of "schematization". Ramsey concentrates his attention instead on Otto's claim that religious experience is *sui generis*: "in this matter", Ramsey writes, "we would very much part company". For "Otto is so keen to argue for the further territory of 'religious experience' that he severs it altogether from that nearer home" (U-FMG 9/51/158).

Ramsey's basic criticism is, "How can we talk about the numinous if it has sui generis isolation?" (ibid. 9/52/159); and if we cannot talk about it, then "how do we differentiate between the 'spooky' and the 'religious' " (ibid. 9/53/160). Otto has set up for himself an "epistemological gap" between religious experience and sense experience "which makes it quite impossible for him to answer the central question... How can we do justice to and use language... oddly enough about the facts and experience to which religious people refer?" (ibid. 9/55/162 - 9/56/163). Ramsey claims that religious experience cannot be *sui generis*
in the sense of being "logically and ontologically
distinguished from sense experience" (ibid.).

There is certainly something in Ramsey's criticism
here, if it is the case that in a mediated intuition the
nature of the medium which actually reveals the meta-
empirical object is some indication to us of the nature
of that object. But does not Ramsey himself make the
opposite error to that of Otto? For on Ramsey's account
religious experience does not appear to be distinctive
enough. Although Ramsey distinguishes radically between
perceptual experience and experience of what is more than
perceptual, whilst maintaining that the latter sort of
experience is given with the former, he is too ready to
blur the lines of demarcation between experience of God and
experience of other "mores". Otto's analysis does seem to
ring true to the religious experient as an analysis of the
distinctiveness of that state of awareness and feeling to
which he appeals. Ramsey's account, however, in its attempt
to explain religious awareness in terms of (supposedly)
cognate forms of awareness in perception, mathematics,
personal relationships and morality, seems at times to deny
to the religious person what he holds most dear. These
other forms of cognition may be remotely analogous to the
religious way of knowing, but the analogy is remote. As
remote, I would suggest, as the analogy between their
objects and the object of religious knowledge. The
\textit{mysterium tremendum et fascinans} confronts us, and is known
in such a confrontation, in a way that is distinctive; even
our experience of other people is not exactly 'of the same kind".
Ramsey's concern is to analyse religious experience in such a way that we may use of God certain mundane models, derived from sense experience. His way of doing this is to treat the world, and model-situations within it, as a medium for the disclosure of God. But may we not also postulate a non-mediated awareness of God, which involves no element of sense experience? We could then apply mundane analogies to the God so revealed simply on the grounds that this being appears to be "Father"-like, "King"-like, "loving", "powerful" etc. I do not think that it is essential to the use of such model language that the object to which it is applied should be cognized through the medium of the model (or the model language) itself 161.

F.R. Tennant

Ramsey detects in Tennant an attempt to discredit "religious experience" as bearing all the marks of abnormality and going beyond sense experience only "in the way that may natural phenomena do, i.e. by being 'unbalanced' and 'abnormal' " (U-HA:"Religious Experience and its Significance", c. 1953-5, pl)162. Tennant, however, does accept that religious experience might confirm a theological map, but "it could never be the foundation from which such a map was built" (U-FMG 9/51/158)163. In response to the first claim, Ramsey counters with the assertion that "no views are false because of their origins" (U-HA: op.cit.). All geniuses - even religious geniuses - may be "odd", but this does not rule out the possibility of their possessing greater insight into the truth than those with a "normal" psyche.
Tennant's second criticism of religious experience seems to be based on his belief that sensation alone "rurnishes the essential core of the primary meaning of reality" (Tennant (PT I) 306). Tennant continues:

Religious beliefs and theological doctrines also, according to such science of knowledge, can only be derived indirectly from study of the sensible world, man's soul and human history. (ibid.)

Thus:
Religious experience, it is generally agreed, contains no ultimate elements that do not enter into non-religious experience, save the alleged data which seem to be derived rather than immediately apprehended, and to be read in rather than read off. (Tennant (NB) 85 - 86)

... when the mystic believes he intuits God with sense-like immediacy, he is perhaps but causally interpreting his elation, peace, etc. by aid of a concept already to hand. (Tennant (PT) 318)

Tennant is wedded to an inferential view of religion and a "narrow" empiricism with regard to the nature of experience: "for Tennant the only epistemological givenness is found with sensation" (U-F'MG 9/63/170). Ramsey's work is devoted to the denial of both these positions. However, Ramsey can "Agree with Tennant to the extent that all interpretations of religious experience must arise from sense experience which is its public basis" (U-HA "Religious Experience & Its Significance" a,1953-5, p.2). But Ramsey adds his own conviction that "not even sensation is without its 'religious experience' " (U-F'MG 9/63/170) - for even sense perception involves disclosures. I have already indicated my own reasons for sharing Ramsey's view that natural theology must be experiential and not (as with Tennant) inferential.

(b) Disclosures of God and Disclosures of the concept of God

I criticized Ramsey above for not distinguishing
adequately between disclosures of some aspect of the God-concept and disclosures of God himself. However, although the two are not to be equated, it does seem that there is an intimate connection, on some occasions, between coming to know the concept of God and coming to know God. The practice of religion, after all, is in part the sharing of concepts, images and ideas. It involves getting people to see what is meant, and what is not meant, by the word "God". And is it not true that for many people "the penny drops" and "the light dawns", in such a way that they are forced down on to their knees, when they come to grasp the meaning of "infinite goodness" or "that than which no greater can be conceived"? Indeed is there not some religious impulse behind the notorious ontological argument and its claim that the latter concept is necessarily instantiated: "if you were only to understand it properly you would see that it has (must have?) an instance"? There is here a type of religious discovery which is very like learning the (real) meaning of "love" or "integrity" from a novel, or seeing the point of a poem or parable.

And sometimes, for some people, this may be the way in which they come to know God: by first of all coming to know (i.e. to understand) the concept of God. Learning the meaning of "God" might put them into the position where they can come to discover him, or be discovered by him. This is not just a matter of being able to recognise God as God, as I can "recognise" Jim when I learn that Jim is bald and has a hooked nose. For in the latter case I have been able to see Jim all along. But in religious cognition we might sometimes have to know what to look for before we
can "see" it at all. Perhaps learning religious language is our way of putting ourselves linguistically (or psychologically?) into a position to receive God's revelation of himself. Moses had to do the same thing geographically by climbing Mt. Sinai.

This may be the element of truth in the claim that intuitions of God can be mediated through a linguistic or conceptual medium. For, generally speaking, people do not just intuit a God who is otherwise totally "unknown" to them; they come to know a God who fits the concept of God that they have already acquired at second-hand. Or course that concept may be - indeed ultimately it must be - inadequate, and it will be transcended when the real God is known. But there will be symbols and images and models to hand to interpret the nature of the God who discloses himself. And for some it may be that an understanding of the complex of concepts that makes up "the meaning of God" is itself a necessary, though not a sufficient, condition for intuiting God himself. The disclosure of the concept of God may thus lead to a disclosure of its referent.¹⁶⁶

The explanation of this may be broadly psychological rather than epistemological, for it may be that some people can only come to an awareness of God if they are "favourably disposed" towards the concept of God. Richard Hanson's paper on "The Attractiveness of God" is a frank confession of the way in which the attribute of fascinans of the mysterium tremendum may be determinative in a person's religious belief:
I want to believe in God and I do believe in God because I cannot resist the attraction which such belief holds for me. I believe in God because I want to believe in God. (Hanson 1 - 2)

We choose God, not out of a stern sense of duty nor in a spirit of cool calculation of expediency, but because God makes himself sweet to us. We cannot resist the attraction of his goodness. The motive power of Christian belief is the attraction of God's love. (ibid. 8)

Of course such an analysis is open to the charge of wishful thinking; but this is an almost inevitable response to any attempt to justify people's belief in a loving God. There are, in any case, a number of criteria which we can use to distinguish religious fantasising from genuine religious awareness. These criteria are derived partly from the nature of religious experience itself and partly from post-experiential factors such as coherence with other beliefs. Other criteria are based on our prior interpretation of the psychological make-up of the person holding a religious belief: Is this, or is this not, the sort of person who would be a victim of wish-fulfilment? Is he credulous, easily duped? Or does he - in other areas of belief - reveal a critical mind and a willingness to take into account objections to his beliefs? These questions can be answered without any recourse to independent evidence as to whether, in the case of religious belief, the object of his affections actually exists. Harry Williams has remarked

Because I want something, even very badly, it does not necessarily follow that it does not exist. Because I am madly in love with Betty and want desperately to marry her, it does not follow that she is altogether a figment of my imagination.... So the God I want is not a total illusion simply because I want Him. (H.A. Williams 171; cf. Hanson 2)
I argued earlier that there is little room for the exercise of our freedom in intuitive knowledge, as the central intuitive act of awareness is outside our control. But there certainly are many factors that serve either to encourage (to tend to evoke) or to discourage (to tend to prevent) that intuition. Thus in the cognate moral intuition of the wrongness of an action several factors "influence" the intuition that we have. These factors include the way in which we "meditate on" the action; the parallel (or contrasting) examples, stories or illustrations that we "bring alongside" it; the attention we give to certain aspects of the situation at the expense of other aspects; the extent to which we have sympathy with the participants in the moral situation; and so on. And at least some of these factors are under our free control. We can, for example, freely choose whether or not we get to know the participants in a situation, thus allowing the possibility of our developing sympathy with them. Therefore, although the moral intuition itself is not under our free control, we can—to some extent—determine whether or not we put ourselves into a position to receive it.

My point here is that to open ourselves to the compulsive attractiveness of the concept of God, by positively seeking to understand it, may be to put ourselves freely into a position to receive the religious intuition which is, of itself, outside our control. Isn't this what happens when people are "converted by reading the Bible" (or even by listening to sermons!)? Some at least must understand in order to believe in something understandable, but also because for them understanding results in belief. There are
no close parallels here in other forms of knowledge. The situation, indeed, is almost exactly opposite to the one which is frequently offered as a parable of religious cognition - the recognition of colour by the exceptional person in the country of the colour-blind. For in that account a person cannot understand what colour is until he sees it. On my interpretation, however, a person may not see God until he understands who he is. But there do seem to be one or two cognitive situations which show some analogy to this. For example, one may have to explain to a person "what he is looking for" before he can "see" a pattern in an ambiguous puzzle picture. Perhaps one could also argue that the "morally blind" can only come to "see" their duty in any situation after they have come to understand the concept of duty. I do not pretend, however, that these examples offer anything more than very remote analogies to the situation in religion. For God is different from every other object of knowledge: and to recognize that may be already to be on the way to recognizing him.

7. The Subjective Element of the Disclosure (the disclosure of the self)

Ramsey offers us two reasons for believing in a transcendent personal "more" or \( I \) : ((A) and (B) below):

(A) "I" is a prerequisite of all experience and language

The first piece of evidence is "a logical argument in favour of a transcendent 'I' " (HP 129), to the effect that it is "the presupposition of all language and experience that there is an irreducible 'I' " (RSCS 61, cf. CPCF 53). There appear to be three elements in the argument:

(i) The existence of objects presupposes the existence of a
correlative subject:

whatever is observed implies an observer who is a presupposition of the resultant discourse and cannot be netted within it...all [third person assertions] are within invisible quotes, so that a logically complete assertion is always in the first person. (HP 129, cf. BP II 199, CPL 245 - 246)

The fact that there are any "objects", Ramsey claims, implies the existence of at least one (logically different) "subject" as a matter of logical necessity, "as a condition of our talking significantly about objects at all" (PF 333).

All experience is subject-object in structure; all language presupposes the subject-object distinction (cf. TL4, RSCS 40, 60, Review Stace 112). Language is only language for language users: and language users are the subjects who make assertions about objects. We cannot get rid of - or ignore - the existence of such subjects and still continue to use their language (cf. RSCS 41, BP II 180). In short,

There is a logical need to preserve the subject which all third person assertions about objects logically demand. (MDA 60)

Dallas M. High has made the same point; and it is, I believe, one that we cannot gainsay:

In the instance of the first-person personal pronoun "I" the existence of the subject does not of logical necessity follow from the subject term itself. However, it can be said that it is a form of outrage to language to contract the subject and subject term out of language, for the pronoun "I" and its referent are internal to the possibility of language having a use or being used. This again does not follow of logical necessity but of necessity prior to the formulation of logical or rule necessity that there be an "I" who claims and makes use of speech. (High 184; cf. Davie 36 - 37)

(ii) It is a basic mistake, therefore, to "objectify the subject":

To objectify the subject is to deny ourselves the possibility of ever talking sense. (SE I 197)
This follows as a general conclusion from (i), for there must be one subject if there are to be "objects" at all.

But Ramsey is also saying that in any particular case the attempt to reduce the subject to the level of an object—to "translate" a first-person assertion into third-person terms—commits a very serious error:

there is a subjectivity which each of us realizes for himself which is not, and logically could not be, exhausted by any number of third-person descriptions, however far they went and however various they were. (TL4; cf. RSCS 40, RSP 150)

The fundamental error of Hume and Ryle was to ignore the radical subjectivity of the subject and attempt to describe it entirely in objective language about perceptions and behaviour. Such attempts commit "the logical blunder of objectifying the subject" (RSCS 57):

if per impossibile we could give our identity descriptively or individuality would have disappeared, the subject would have been objectified. (PPMT 166)

Ramsey has an important point here, though by the very nature of the topic he sometimes finds difficulty in expressing it. An analysis of the self like that of Hume and Ryle does seem to leave us with a purely objective self which cannot serve as an adequate account either of our experience or of the language we use to express it. The elusiveness of I must remain, resistant to all reductive analyses.

(iii) The logic of the pronoun "I" is radically different from the logic of "he" (or "me");

"I"—unlike "he"—resists total absorption in an impersonal and completely verifiable predicate. (PRFI 353; cf also Lewis (EM) 151, 159, 209)

This claim, which follows from (ii) above, explains at least part of the logical peculiarity of the assertion "I am dead".
"Death" means the end of observable behaviour, both sociological and physiological (FI 64 - 65). It is therefore a term which may be used of observable entities (e.g. "he is dead"). But it is inappropriate as a predicate in a sentence whose subject (I) is - or includes - an unobservable "more". For then "the existence of the predicate seems to deny the possibility of the subject" (FRFI 353). Thus "I am dead", like "I am asleep", is a logical blunder; for "I" - unlike "dead" and "asleep" - cannot be restricted to what is spatio-temporal.

For similar reasons Ramsey disagrees with A.G.N. Flew's contention that it is logically impossible ("or at least...is very far from being a logically straightforward matter") to witness one's own funeral (Flew (CMWF) 246). Flew would say

that "my funeral" equals an event invoking all that is then left of me, and therefore I cannot witness it. We would say that while "my funeral" is an event which certainly involves my body, nevertheless our present self-awareness yields a situation not wholly reducible either to my body or to any public objects, or to anything spatio-temporal. (PF 337; cf. PI 85 - 87 and the similar account in Poteat (TWD))

We shall consider Ramsey's arguments for immortality in more detail later. They all reduce, however, to the claim that "I" denotes something which is observationally elusive, whereas "he" (or "me") "denotes something as public as anyone would wish" (M 15; cf. PPMT 165 - 167, PR 214 - 215, BS 47, U-WM 8 - 13). But the fact that I am more than any objective descriptions about me can relate, surely does not destroy at a stroke the sceptical assaults of those who deny that "I" will survive "my" death. It may not be logically in order to say "I am dead", but it
does seem proper to predict "I will die". And whatever other users of language may be referring to, when my doctor says "he is dead" he does not just mean "his body is dead". He means also that "he is no longer a conscious centre of experience and activity (at least in relation to this body here)". So it is not the case that "he" can only be analysed in terms of a body and its behaviour (cf. Smart (PR) 227, Strawson (I) ch.3).

(6) **I is disclosure-given**

The "logical argument" outlined above is one that Ramsey takes very seriously. But he believes also that the "logical behaviour of 'I' " is itself "grounded in a disclosure" (PR 215). We can know by argument that there must be a transcendent I, but it is only through a self-disclosure that "we gain access to this which makes us distinctively ourselves" (HP 129).

Ramsey holds that all disclosures involve a subjective (I) reference as well as an objective (other) reference. A self-disclosure, therefore, is a distinct and separable species of disclosure. It is, rather, the inevitable concomitant of each and every objective disclosure. It is a mistake, therefore, to treat the self-disclosure as just one more example within the category of disclosure. For all the other disclosures are disclosures of some "object", the self-disclosure alone is the disclosure of a subject. In a self-disclosure I become aware of myself (at the same time as I become aware of some other), but my self is not an object which discloses itself precisely in the way that other objects disclose themselves.
It is rather that we are intuitively aware of being subjects: centres of consciousness and activity. And this awareness comes to us with the force of a revelation, so that Ramsey can claim that the subject discloses itself (BPI 40), that we are the recipients of a "self-disclosure" (BPI 41, MM 27, BPEM 17 etc.). This "self-awareness" (cf. SEI 203) is also designated by Ramsey as:—

an "insight into ourselves" (MM 26);
"a disclosure of our subjectivity" (U-HA "Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion" A, 1963, p. 5);
and a "disclosure of ourselves" in which a man "becomes aware of his personal identity" (BPI 41).

Ramsey contends that:

the subjectivity which each of us knows in himself is something which breaks in on us when we come to ourselves - when a story is told which effects this self-revelation and disclosure. Such subjectivity ...is that of which I am aware when I know an action as peculiarly "mine" - when it breaks in on me (as with David before Nathan) that "I'm the man" whom a list of descriptive material object predicates refers to but which no list of such predicates ever exhausts....Such a situation discloses my subjective transcendence, what I am besides my overt behaviour ....what I am in and for myself. (CPCF 53)

Such self-disclosures serve as "moments of vision in which each of us finds freedom, spontaneity and fulfilment" (HP 131).

Ramsey fréquently uses language about a person's "self-realization" in this context (e.g. BF II 206, HP 132, TW 84, ITR Owen 126). He seems to employ the phrase both in the sense that a man recognizes his transcendent subjectivity and in the sense that he becomes his true self: free, responsible and active (cf. PPMT 168). Thus:

in a moment of decision there is disclosed the "transcendent" character of a man's personality. It is in making such a decision that he realizes he is not limited to the objective behaviour he displays...in a certain kind of decisive action a man realizes himself as something more than... all of these stories - be they of biochemistry, economics, psychology, and so on - talk about. (PI 26)
Where the latter type of 'self-realization' occurs in response to a moral claim Ramsey says that the person concerned "comes to himself" (WM 28, RSCS 43, BP II 206, TS 166). However this phrase is also used more generally of other situations (cf. PR 215, CPCF 53). Ramsey also uses the phrase "(subjectively) coming alive" as a synonym for "realizing" our subjectivity (cf. HP 129, PA 194). He claims further that the world "comes alive" objectively in a disclosure as we "realize" (= intuit) its "more" and "are confronted with an activity matching our own" (RFT 28).

For Ramsey to say that the world "comes alive" is to use a phrase that is more than a mere metaphor. For all disclosures reveal objective "aliveness" (activity of an other) at the same time as they reveal subjective "aliveness" (activity of the self). It should also be noted that the self-realization that is an activity corresponds to the element of commitment. And this occurs in response to the discernment-disclosure, which is itself a self-realization in the sense of a "becoming aware" (cf. MDA 60).

Ramsey gives a wide range of examples of the disclosure of I, but we must not be misled into treating them as entirely separate instances. Thus the I which is disclosed in the exercise of our free, responsible, moral activity (FI chs. I & II passim, FRFI 355, CE 182; cf. FI 66, RSCS 36) is intuited as we come to discern our duty or our God (BP II 185, FI ch II passim, 76, PG 67, RSCS 42 - 43). And as duty and God are disclosed through the medium of (our sense perceptions of) the world, we should not be surprised to learn that the disclosure of I can also occur "around" our sense perceptions (BPEM 18, BP II 163, SEI 203 - 204; cf. PF 335). This last feature may tempt us to speak of
self-disclosure as "mediated", but the word is better avoided in talking of the disclosure of the self. We come to know I, as we survey our perceptions of the world, as the I that integrates those perceptions and gives us our self-identity. But my "I" - my personal "more" - is not disclosed to me through the medium of my perceptions in the same way that other "mores" are disclosed. For "I" am not at the "far side" of the medium revealing myself to myself "through" it. It is better to view the self-disclosure - as indicated earlier - as a "non-mediated" disclosure, i.e. a disclosure that is not mediated by the world and our experience of the world. Ramsey himself seems confused over this question. For he writes of a person's self-awareness as "a self-affirmation of such a kind that he recognizes the distinct perception to be 'his', becomes aware at the same time of what it is to be himself, the same self; becomes aware of his personal identity" (BP II 183). But he then goes on to add:

"The disclosure of ourselves occurs around a certain set of circumstances or other, which then constitutes, by way of descriptive terms, a descriptive approximation of what it is that has been disclosed to us" (ibid., cf. ibid. 190). However I can become aware of I in a self-disclosure that occurs around my perceptions of (say) an elephant. But neither the elephant, nor my sense-data of the elephant, can serve as a " descriptive approximation" for I. What Ramsey really intends to denote by the phrase above is either (a) the perceptions another person may have of me, or (b) my perceptions of my own body and its behaviour (cf. CE 182). But the fundamental disclosure of my self as a subject of experiences can come to me whatever the object (context) of those experiences might be, and it is distinctive for me as the one who has those experiences. Compare SEI 199-200, BPEM 23, BP II 41, RSCS 42 etc.
Ramsey's account of the self, together with a fully adequate criticism and development of the problems it raises, could occupy an entire thesis. Here I can only sketch the main elements.

"When a disclosure-situation occurs", Ramsey writes, "we do not find our subjectivity laid before us as an object" (HP 129). "'I' has a logical status all of its own and is not a perception word" (U-FMG (3) 11/10/202), for we do not "gain access to that which makes us distinctively ourselves... by observation" (HP 129). It is the temptation to forget this central fact that leads, Ramsey believes, to the paradoxical and bewildering things that philosophers have said about the self.

In reply to a request from H.P. Owen that he should "indicate clearly and more fully his attitude to the various theories of mind and selfhood that philosophers have offered" (Owen (PTR) 72), Ramsey comments: "I am sure that I ought to say much more than I do about this supra-empirical element [in human personality]" He goes on, however, to make two points that are worth quoting in full:

(i) It is important to realize that we could not (logically could not) on my view describe this element further, and we could not describe its relation to associated phenomena. The supra-empirical element is rather something to be realized when we spontaneously and actively respond to something which inspires us. The supra-empirical element in human personality is the subject of a self-disclosure to each of us. In one sense we can only know what this supra-empirical element is, and how it is related to its associated phenomena, by coming to know the relationship in an act of self-realization, an activity whose matching discourse will be in part performative and not merely descriptive.
(ii) It is perfectly true that phrases like "the timeless self" or "the real self" or "soul" or "spirit" might be thought to say more about this supra-empirical element, and that we might speak of it, to use a phrase of C.D. Broad's, in terms of the "unity of centre". But all these words and phrases could be no more than pointers to what is revealed in an act of self-disclosure. We know the supra-empirical element when we realize ourselves in an activity which integrates all those spatio-temporal phenomena which can variously be described as my bodily events and my mental events. The supra-empirical element is that which each of us knows in an act of self-disclosure which holds together, in a single common ownership, our mental events and bodily events. They are "mine" in so far as they fall within such an integrating activity.

(Rowe Owen 125 - 126)

Ramsey is in particular exceedingly chary of accounts of the self that treat it as a mental substance whose mode of existence and behaviour is strictly analogous to those of material substance. It was just such a notion of a ghostly "counterpart" to the body which Ryle's critique set out to destroy, and Ramsey certainly took the criticism to heart:

"the soul" must not describe some ghostly sort of "thing" distinguished from material objects mainly in not being seen. (Emp R 162; cf. CCP 255 - 256, FI 104 - 106)

However Ryle had proposed in its place "the extrovert par excellence" (CPCF 53): by treating mental concepts solely in terms of observable behaviour, he provided a grossly inadequate concept of the mind (cf. CCP 258, SEI passim).

Ramsey agrees with Berkeley that we have a "notion", but not any "idea", of our own activity (NI 68 - 69). Activity has an "odd logic" compared with that of our everyday, empirical language (BPEM 20). And for Ramsey activity is the key to an understanding of the self:

the one unifying concept, definitive of personality, is not soul nor mind nor body. There is no kind of
underlying cushion to which all our bodily and mental events and characteristics are attached as pins; and any basic personality matrix is not static. Rather is personality to be analysed in terms of a distinctive activity, distinctive in being owned, localized, personalized.... What we call human behaviour is an expression of that effective, integrating activity which is peculiarly and distinctively ourselves.

(HP 127 - 128)

Ramsey attempts a definition of the terms "mind" and "spirit" along the following lines:

"At death", Ramsey continues, "my activity ceases to be expressed through that organism and behaviour pattern". But "the Christian view is that this activity which is definitely ourselves is then expressed elsewhere and in other contexts..." (TW 82).

Now Ramsey is right to stress the importance of activity in our understanding of the self (cf. Campbell (SG) ch VIII). He is right also to refuse to view the self as a "thing", a "ghostly counterpart" of the body (cf. FI 111 - 112, RSCS 28). He is further correct to avoid the more extreme views of those dualists who treat mind and body as a "dichotomy", ignoring the "unified personality" of the "whole man" (U-WM 28, cf. TW passim). But can activity alone
serve as an adequate characterisation of the "elusive I" (U-WM 10)? Am I not more than my activity? Where, for example, do consciousness and memory fit into the picture? I am surely the transcendent perceiver and knower as well as the transcendent actor. Can these other human attributes be adequately analysed in terms of "activity"? Furthermore, although there is no space to argue the point fully here, it does seem to me more realistic to speak of my self, the subject of my consciousness and experiences, as my mind, rather than as some neutral element which "has" both a mind and a body. As H.D. Lewis puts it: "In an important sense our thoughts and experiences are what we are, they 'belong' ... in a very distinctive and irreducible way" (Lewis (SI) 193, cf. ibid. (EM) 151, 159). In speaking of the self solely in terms of activity, Ramsey is open to the interpretation that he views the self (in these later writings at any rate) as a series of events, rather than (as in the so-called "theory of agency": cf. Shaffer (PM) 85 - 88) as an entity in which activity originates.

However at an earlier stage Ramsey is to be heard insisting that his view does not make the self "in no sense an entity" (FRFI 352; a comment, interestingly enough, provoked by a criticism from H.D. Lewis: (FI) 174). And he was content then to speak of the "immortality" of I (cf. FI 104, 112) and even of its "pre-existence" (FI 136 - 140) - although these doctrines were not to be interpreted along traditional lines. Many students of Ramsey have been puzzled by this ambiguity in his work on the self. Cohen suggests that he is (intentionally?) alternating between two different views:
(i) The self as a distinct entity which is only contingently linked with a particular body;
and  
(ii) The self as "more a poetic disclosed concept than an entity" (Cohen (Thesis) 113).

H.D. Lewis has suggested that Ramsey may be in danger "by substituting helpful metaphor for philosophical analysis" (Lewis (FL) 174). Schedler argues that the "more" of a person may be viewed simply as "a connexion or pattern or pro-ject which characterizes human phenomena" but that in his own analysis Ramsey "wants an entity, not a connexion as the ground for this kind of talk" (Schedler (Thesis) 259; cf. also Lewis (EM) 325). A great deal seems to hang on how far Ramsey's views are consistent with the self being a distinct entity in its own right, an entity capable either of surviving death in a disembodied state or of recreation in an embodied state. In comparison with such a view the interpretation of the self as an "activity" disclosed through the pattern of our bodily behaviour (cf. HP 128) seems somewhat reductionist. The "more" that is "I" is surely more than my activity - as the "more" which is God is more than his (cf. King 65 and passim).

We may mention at this point Ramsey's discussion of the terms "soul", "timeless self" and "pure ego". He treats "soul" as "a synonym for 'I' or 'person', where 'person' describes the whole living being - 'objects' and more" (FI 110). We should avoid all talk that treats the soul as some quasi-object, a counterpart to the body (FI 101, cf. Cleobury (CRPA) 37); rather "the word 'soul' can only be justified in relation to certain situations where what is more about human personality
than its overt behaviour, is disclosed" (BPII 178). Similarly
the terms "Pure Ego" and "Timeless Self" are related to situations
of self-disclosure, though in these cases the phrases are
treated as qualified-models:

we take as our model the "self" or the "ego",
meaning by these words that which is public
about myself to everyone including myself....
"Timeless" and "pure" are both of them
qualifiers for such a model, urging us so
to talk about our temporal characteristics
and public behaviour as to make more evident
- in a disclosure - "what is the case" besides.

(FI 97, cf. E 46)

This treatment of such terms as essentially evocative of a
self-disclosure enables Ramsey to avoid some of the problems
associated with an over literal view of their function as
descriptions of the self (cf. FI 20, 103; FRFI 348). But,
as we shall see, Ramsey accepts elsewhere that qualified -
model language does have some representative function. So
he ought to be willing to accept that in this case the
terminology under consideration can serve as valid representations
or expressions of the nature of I (cf. E 46 - 47). Although
Ramsey wishes to avoid the use of traditional substance
language about the self (cf. NI 68), he does hint at a possible
disclosure-basis as justification for such metaphysical
language in his discussions of the concept of material
substance (U-FMG B 51/164 - B 53/166; cf. FD 129, RL 159 - 160).
It may be, therefore, that Ramsey's view of the self is
sufficiently open in its ontological implications to allow
for a more traditional "pure ego" or "mental substance"
interpretation - provided that it was sufficiently dynamic.

Ramsey claims that he is "often accused of wanting both too
much and too little" in his account of the self (RSCS 61).
I would side with those critics who find Ramsey's theory
inadequate. Certainly to speak only of "activity" is to want
too little in an account of the I.

(B) Freedom and Immortality

Ramsey's arguments are summarised as follows:

what is called "an act of will" is an empirical
odity, of which each of us becomes aware, e.g.,
when stories having been told of prima facie
duties (which themselves may conflict), there
emerges the Duty of a particular situation,
which situation has then the character of an
obligation-response; and in which we speak of
responding "freely". The odd character of
such decisive behaviour may likewise be realised
by continually countering stories of predictability
or unpredictability (as the case may be) until
their inadequacy strikes us; or by developing
stories of occurrent causation until they fail
to satisfy. (U-HA: "The Problem of Freewill"
(B),c. 1955)

Because of the subjective transcendence which
each of us knows in self-disclosure, we can
legitimately talk of our "immortality", our
existence beyond death. For the "life" we
know now, being not restricted to, being already
more than, the behaviour pattern we display, is
not ended with the cessation of these behaviour
patterns at death; though to talk about post-
death existence with logical adequacy one
must always predicate some behaviour patterns.
(U-HA: "Introduction to the Philosophy of
Religion" M/66, 1966, p.2)

Ramsey believes that the claims for "free-will and "immortality"
are essentially one and the same: i.e. "that there are occasions
of human activity which will not be exhaustively unpacked
in scientific language, however far these languages go"
(RL 29). As I am more than observables, and as it is observables
- spatio-temporal objects - that are "determined" and "mortal",
Ramsey concludes that we may appropriately make the claim that
I am both "free" and "immortal" (cf. PF 334, BP II 197, FI 26).

He writes:

So to justify "freedom" by appealing to decision-
situations which exceed public behaviour,...is,
at the same time, to justify belief in immortality.
For to do either shows that we are not restricted
or confined to those features of our existence which are in space and time. Because we are in that sense "free", in that sense we are "immortal".

(FI 66)

The free-will claim is the claim that there is something more to me than the behaviour that the scientist can observe, what Ramsey calls my "personal backing" (BP II 177, FI 22 etc.). "The freedom of the will", Ramsey argues, "is a claim for the uniqueness of the subject, known in occasions of activity in which the subject 'comes alive' and realizes his subjectivity as that which cannot be reduced to the behaviour patterns and facts - i.e. the objects - of the natural and social sciences" (Enc. Brit 602). The claim for immortality is a claim of a very similar nature and this also arises in situations of self-disclosure.

we are immortal in so far as we know a situation which transcends space and time. (FI 89)

When there has been a self-disclosure of transcendence, of what cannot be characterised in space and time, one cannot say that any self so disclosed entirely comes to an end. In this sense, there is an argument for personal immortality, though one can only talk sensibly about it by expressing immortality in terms of continuing personal life. In Christianity this becomes speech about the resurrection of the body, and in Hinduism it becomes speech about reincarnation in this world or in the universe at large. All detailed talk about a future life, whether in Christianity or other religions, is only a way of spelling out and pointing back to that experience of man's transcendence here and now, in terms of language that expresses the claim that such a transcendent element is not annihilated by death. (Enc. Brit. 602)

Language about freedom and immortality, then, is justified only in so far as it relates to a self-disclosure in which the mysterious, transcendent I reveals itself as more than body-and-behaviour.
Thus Ramsey interprets freedom and immortality as doctrines relating to the existence of a personal "more" in the here and now. This may be an appropriate justification for the claim that I am now free, but claims about immortality are of a somewhat different status. For what reason is there for believing that the "more" of my present existence will survive the death of my body? Ramsey's argument here is rather a priori: the "more" is not an empirical object, therefore it cannot die; for only empirical objects die. But the fact that we only observe the death of bodies does not imply that only bodies die, for the personal "more" - being observationally elusive - could not have an observable demise. Yet it may be that even transcendent Is die.

We are confronted here by the difficulty posed by Ramsey's wide spectrum of "mores". If the I is immortal because it is (at least in part) more than observable, can we apply the same argument to, for example, a Gestalt pattern? Does it survive the "death" (the destruction) of the observables through which it is disclosed? Such a suggestion is absurd. Simply being more than observables cannot guarantee immortality. The self must be a "more" which is rather more independent of its related observables than is a Gestalt pattern, if we are to predicate survival (let alone immortality) of it.

We have noted already something of Ramsey's treatment of the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. He views it as "complementary" to the doctrine of the immortality of the soul in our understanding of the meaning of "the immortality of I":

The one doctrine - the resurrection of the body - reminds us that to understand what "my immortality" talks about, public behaviour stories will be relevant and necessary; the other doctrine - the immortality of the soul - reminds us that such stories will never themselves be adequate.

(PI 107 - 108)

Resurrection - talk, like soul - talk, evokes and articulates the basic self-disclosure on which all our beliefs about our transcendence are based. But the former type of language serves only as "an expression of the point that 'personal activity' while not exhausted by the logic of spatio-temporal events is nevertheless and necessarily, in part, worked according to it" (U-HA: "Immortality" (B), c.1952, p.3).

Ramsey is here treating such language in the formal mode rather than the material mode. His refusal to indicate what future state of affairs there may be to which the doctrine refers leaves one very doubtful as to what he believes the destiny of man really is. A similar problem arises with regard to Ramsey's treatment of pre-existence.

While admitting that "the old doctrine of pre-existence is just about as naïve and mistaken as the old doctrine of future existence", Ramsey claims to be equally happy with them both, providing "they are logically complex enough to be currency for that kind of disclosure-situation in which our 'immortality' is known" (FI 140). This entails, of course, that pre-existence should not be taken as "straightforwardly descriptive" (cf. PR 199). But Ramsey does not indicate how - or how far - we may use the phrase as a valid representation of what is in fact the case.
8. Commitment

(A) Types of Commitment

Ramsey's account of religion is by no means entirely a story of experience and knowledge. Religion, for Ramsey, involves both "a fuller discernment" and "a total commitment" (RL 18); and some element of commitment is to be found in all situations of disclosure. This element is also described as an "acknowledgment", a "response", an "option" (U-FMG E45/158), a "devotion" (FI 17, 37), and a "conviction" (RFT 23, OBSR 28). Ramsey ranks commitments in some sort of order so as to bring out the different characteristics of the different types:

(i) Mathematical/Scientific commitment

Mathematical reasoning, for example in geometry, involves a commitment to various axioms, "posita" or "options" which we take up through a form of mathematical intuition (RL 32 - 33). This sort of commitment, however, is at a low level:

After having a morning with Euclid you can have the afternoon with Lobatchewsky or Riemann or someone else. (RFT 23, cf. RL 33)

On the other hand although there isn't much "depth" in mathematical commitment, although mathematical posits "express only a loose or partial commitment", they do have a "universal use" (RL 34). Mathematical "commitment" is universal because our mathematics, once correct, is correct everywhere. "Here then is a partial commitment extending to the whole universe" (ibid.): it covers the whole world, but doesn't serve to organize a person's whole life.
Scientific language with its "extended perspective but highly abstractive character", also involves a partial commitment to the whole universe (CCP 266). The scientist, qua scientist, must sit fairly loosely to his explanatory schemes.

(ii) Personal commitment

"Personal commitment" is one way of characterizing the "response which involves our whole personality" - the exercise of our free will (RL 29). This is expressed particularly profoundly in situations of moral decision ("'decisive' commitment": RL 31) or in loyalty to a school, college or nation (ibid.). In situations of love there is a "dominating loyalty", "a total commitment", "a final option, which organizes the whole of a man's life" (RL 39). It is such an element of total commitment - of "depth" (RL 36) - which marks out personal commitment. Yet it is of its very nature "a total commitment to a very small part of the Universe" (CCP 266). We don't, after all, fall in love with everyone 181. Total commitment is also present, however, in a man's "devotion" to his pastime or his ship. Ramsey calls such examples of commitment "quasi-personal" (RL 35), for:

the ship is his life....the ship is personalized - "she" - so that it comes to be paralleled with our total commitment to someone we love. (RL 34 - 35)

In personal commitment we are "gripped" or "dominated" by something outside ourselves to which we respond. We are, moreover, "converted" to the object of our commitment. We can only lose such a commitment at the cost of a personal revolution, a "conversion to infidelity" (RL 36 - 37, cf. de Maule 181).

These elements are also to be found in our third type of commitment:
(iii) Religious Commitment

Religious commitment...combines the total commitment to a pastime, to a ship, to a person, with the breadth of mathematical commitment. It combines the "depth" of personal or quasi-personal loyalty...with the range of mathematical and scientific devotion. (RL 35 - 36)

Religious commitment, therefore, is "a total commitment to the whole universe" (RL 37). Here is "the response of soul, life and all" (RL 87) which is characteristic of religion. It is a response to the "whole universe" because disclosures of God, like mathematical disclosures, are "applicable" everywhere - they reveal a "more" of universal relevance and they may arise around anything and everything. In Ramsey's later terminology they are "cosmic" in scope. "Commitment to the whole universe" is an appropriate way of expressing our commitment to the God who is revealed in and through the whole universe. Such a "unitary cosmic loyalty" (U-PE 20) is:

a total response to what is discovered when on some occasion, the universe or some part of it becomes the occasion of a cosmic disclosure expressed in and around but certainly transcending the perceptual features of such an occasion. (GS 4)

Thus this "full commitment" or "full loyalty" is a response to a fuller discernment of objects of sense and more (cf. RB 190 - 191). It may be described, then, as "a commitment which goes beyond what is seen" - as did the Apostle Thomas' confession "My Lord and my God" (ibid. 189). It is in such a "transcendent commitment" that "each of us realizes what he is more than a topic of combined scientific investigations" (OCR 2). Here - in commitment, loyalty, devotion, expressed in free and decisive action - we "come to ourselves", becoming what we really are: persons. Such a commitment
may be termed "faith", the faith of a Christian which is "called forth by a cosmic disclosure around Jesus of Nazareth" (GS 4).

There are problems with any analysis of religious commitment that seeks to define it other than in terms of its distinctive object. Keith Ward argues that Ramsey appears to imply that "Anything could be a religious disclosure if it involved total commitment and was all embracing" (K. Ward (CG) 69). Certain neo-Wittgensteinian theologians seem to adopt the view that the tenacity with which religious beliefs are held in the face of conflicting evidence is the factor that makes such beliefs religious. Similarly, we might argue, Ramsey tends to define religious commitment in terms of the formal criteria of "breadth" and "depth" rather than by reference to the nature of its distinctive object or topic. Roger Trigg remarks:

It is no accident that for both Ramsey and Wittgenstein there is no room for doubt in religious belief, since their eyes doubt must be a weakening of commitment. (Trigg 80)

He refers to RL 130 in support of this interpretation of Ramsey. There Ramsey claims that "no one can be doubtful about the 'Resurrection' as we may be doubtful about empirical events" (e.g. the Empty Tomb). But Ramsey only means that Resurrection belief is "more than "Empty Tomb belief, because Resurrection belief is tied to a situation of discernment-commitment. "To disbelieve the Resurrection", therefore, "is...to be converted to infidelity" (RL 130 - 131) - for it is to lose the discernment which is religious experience and the responsive commitment which is religious faith.
But it is by no means clear to me that Ramsey views commitment as "an 'all or nothing' - affair, with a stark choice between 'infidelity' and 'full commitment'" as Trigg maintains (op. cit. 80)\(^\text{183}\). For this would be to make religious commitment sui generis, and Ramsey is most unwilling to allow this in the case of the correlative religious discernment. However, "religious" doubt is rather different from merely "empirical" doubt such as doubt about the emptiness of Jesus' tomb, although the latter may contribute to the former\(^\text{184}\). "Religious" doubt proper is doubt about a religious disclosure and the reality of its discerned object. It is not just doubt about observables, though they may serve as a medium for the particular disclosure in question. If, as in the case of God, that which is doubted is the existence of the "more" that is disclosed through observables, then the issue becomes the familiar one of the importance of the particular observable - medium of a disclosure. The burning bush, the ark of the covenant, even the figure of Jesus, are only media for the disclosure of God. God is disclosed "around" them as one who is "more" than them. Such media are not part of the being of God; he is the transcendent "more", not the medium - and - the - "more". Thus the particular medium in this case is not crucially important, for God may be disclosed through any part of his creation. Hence we may doubt particular media reported in the Bible (the burning bush perhaps, or the parted Red sea) and still not doubt God, provided that we accept that there must be some empirical medium for his disclosure\(^\text{185}\). But in some cases that which we doubt is not just a "more" but is, by its very nature, a medium-plus-
a-"more". And in such cases if we doubt the medium we are
doubting something which is a part of the whole entity or
event. To take the obvious example, in my mundane life I
am my-body-and-more. The more may be the "real" I, as we saw
above, but the man who doubts the existence of Astley's body
doubts the (mundane) existence of Astley. And the man who
thinks that my body is seven feet tall, or black, or leprous,
is mistaken about Astley. Now "the Resurrection of Jesus"
(i.e. "Jesus being resurrected") may be a state of affairs
of the same logical kind, i.e. observables - and - more
rather than a "more" alone. Thus to doubt the observable
element in the state of affairs is to doubt an integral
part of the concept of Jesus' resurrection. For "Jesus is
risen" = "The tomb is empty" + more (e.g. "Jesus appears to
his disciples", "he is no longer limited by space", "he is
ascending to the Father", "he has conquered death" etc.).
Of course it is open to us so to interpret the Resurrection
as to deny this equation, and this is what is done by
the
those who deny that/emptiness of the tomb is relevant to
belief in Jesus' rising from the dead. For them "Jesus
is risen" = the more alone; they have immunized themselves
against the ravages of one form of doubt - empirical,
empty-tomb doubt.

Our earlier criticism of Ramsey's view of commitment,
we should now confess, was perhaps a little unfair. For we
implied there that Ramsey was defining religious commitment
(in terms of breadth and depth) rather than just describing
a commitment which he would define ultimately in terms of
its object. It is probably the case that Ramsey does not
say enough about religious commitment for us to decide which
position he actually does hold.
(B) The Disclosure - Commitment Relationship

Commitment, according to Ramsey, goes with disclosure:
"The basis of Christian behaviour", he writes, "is to be found in a disclosure situation..." (U-UBMD 2). He criticizes those thinkers like R.B. Braithwaite who attempt - or so it seems to Ramsey - to treat religious belief entirely in terms of commitment and ignore the element of objective disclosure (RE passim, CPL 248 - 249, WC 12 - 13, TTST 78; cf. Braithwaite (ERB)). But what precisely is the relationship between disclosure and commitment?

There is much in Ramsey's writings which could be taken as implying that commitment always follows from disclosure. Thus Ramsey writes of "that odd discernment with which religious commitment, when it is not bigotry or fanaticism, will necessarily be associated" (RL 47); "whenever a cosmic disclosure occurs...I respond with a commitment" (LDA 60; emphasis added). The odd religious discernment "if evoked, provokes a total commitment" (RL 50) - apparently as its sufficient cause.

And yet Ramsey also uses the language of "response", often in the context of talk about free-will, in his discussions of the element of commitment (cf. RL 29, 37, 49; FI 33, 36; PPMT 172; LJGC 162 - 163; PA 194; TL 12). He is willing to incorporate this into a definition of "disclosure" as "a discernment to which the religious man responds with an appropriate commitment" (PR 211). This use of "response" - language, though it might suggest the unavoidable "response" of a stimulus-response reflex action, seems to carry more of the connotation of something non-
automatic, something which is given freely. The precise meaning of the word is a crux in the exegesis of Ramsey's account of the disclosure-commitment relationship. I would contend, however, that the issue can be clearly decided by three pieces of evidence:

(i) Ramsey speaks, albeit only on one occasion, of religious commitment as "a free and spontaneous response to a disclosure" (Sermon (4) 61, emphasis added).

(ii) Ramsey also speaks of moral behaviour in terms of personal commitment. He is insistent that such moral behaviour, which "pre-eminently occurs in a response to a disclosure" involves our free and responsible decision (BP II 189, cf. FI 26 etc.).

(iii) Ramsey further argues in Religious Language:

Such a [religious] commitment without any discernment whatever is bigotry and idolatry; to have the discernment without the commitment is the worst of all religious vices. It is insincerity and hypocrisy. (RL 18)

Presumably Ramsey believes that disclosure without commitment would be "insincerity and hypocrisy" because it would involve our consciously, freely and responsibly deciding not to make the appropriate response of devotion to the God disclosed in religious experience. But I wish only to draw attention here to the fact that disclosure and commitment are viewed as separable elements, and to the fact that Ramsey condemns disclosure-without-commitment as morally reprehensible. Both points surely indicate that he treats commitment as a free response to a disclosure.

However, many commentators interpret Ramsey as holding that the disclosure-commitment relationship allows for no free responsiveness on our part. Some are
content with such a position (e.g. Tilley (Thesis) 236 - 239), others are less happy (e.g. Dunbar 104, Braithwaite (MMR) 253 - 254, cf. ibid. (CECP) 93). Tilley claims that "The discernment and commitment disappear together (when we "fall out of love") because they are logically connected" (Tilley (Thesis) 235; cf. RL 36 - 37). He goes on:

If one had no discernment of God as "infinitely loving", one would not have this sort of ultimate commitment; if one did not have this sort of ultimate commitment, one could not discern God as "infinitely loving". (ibid. 236)

Other students of Ramsey have toyed with the idea that the disclosure-commitment connection may be necessary in some form (cf. McClendon & Smith (IRM) 421, Hudson (DS) 440 - 443). But I believe this approach to be fundamentally mistaken - even if it were a fair interpretation of Ramsey's position. It may be true that I necessarily cease to "love" X when I cease to discern in her the loveable qualities which I have "seen" before. But I can still "commit myself" to her. I can - in my actions - still be "devoted" to her. The example that Tilley chooses is problematic only because in it the discernment ('being in love' = (my) vision of (her) loveableness) is expressed in the same terms as the commitment ('being in love' = (my) activity of "loving" - i.e. caring, cherishing, seeking her good etc.). But in this case, and in the case of God, it is surely possible to have the discernment without the commitment. We are able to see God, even the infinitely loving God, and still reject him. The same situation also obtains in moral disclosures: for we can "apprehend" ("acknowledge") a moral claim without necessarily committing ourselves to it (cf. K. Ward (EC) 65 - 66).
And now one final point. W.A. de Pater claims that Ramsey's later position on the question of commitment was that:

Commitment is there from the beginning...speech about God goes back to experiences in which one, and indeed every person, is spoken to, and to which one replies out of a prior understanding. (de Pater 163, own translation)

This may be compared with Hudson's remark:

religious discernment, like all forms of experience, involves conceptual commitment, which is logically prior to the discernment which it characterises. (Hudson (DS) 443)

Certainly Ramsey's discernments do not come to an experiencer who stands naked of any sort of prior commitment. But it is also certain that our commitment - and our "conceptual schemes" - may be shattered by the new discernment we have and the new commitment we give to it. This after all is what is involved in conversion. And conversions do-after all - happen (cf. Enc. Brit. 593).
CHAPTER III:

LANGUAGE AND METAPHYSICS

I have felt it necessary to expound and criticize Ramsey's understanding of experience and disclosure at some length. In any attempt to analyse his religious epistemology these areas are of fundamental importance, and they do seem to have been treated rather briefly by other commentators on Ramsey's work. The area which has mainly attracted their attention is that of religious language, and it is to this topic - and the related subject of metaphysics - that I too must now turn.

"Experience and Disclosures" is concerned with what Ramsey calls "insight". "Language and Metaphysics", on the other hand, is concerned with "understanding". These two topics must be distinguished, but they must also be held together:

Insight without understanding would be that blind enthusiasm condemned in the early Church as Montanism... But understanding without insight - a modern heresy - is..."hollow" talk. (MM 56; cf. Sermon (4) 61 – 62).

It is Ramsey's thesis that theology and all other intellectual disciplines "combine insight and discursive reasoning, mystery as well as understanding" (MM 56; cf. PPMT 176, CF 35, TG 97, Enc. Brit. 595). The disclosure-situation is marked by "appropriate language interacting with the experience" (Plowden 23; cf. CELCE 95 – 96).

Ramsey confesses that he is concerned in all his books with "understanding a mystery" (MMR 263; cf. TL lecture I), in the sense of attempting a partial, rather than - per impossible - a complete, understanding of the mysterious nature of God and his universe. The various disclosed "mores"
are, as we have seen, all mysterious to a greater or lesser degree (cf. PP 332, CE 184 n. 24). For they all elude sense-perception, and they therefore also elude description in the language of observables. Religious mysteries, like religious paradoxes (cf. below), are irreducible (cf. Locke 17, PR 218). For this reason theology - and theistic metaphysics - must have the humility "which while it strives energetically to build...the best theological map it can, recognizes that it will never succeed in 'embodying' the Mystery" (OBSR 90; cf. LEP 542, CPCF 61). As we shall see shortly, it is by the use of models that all disciplines, including science but especially theology, enable us to achieve a partial understanding of what is ultimately mysterious and elusive (cf. MK 20 - 21, MMR 263, TL 12).

1. Ramsey's general approach to religious language

Ramsey wishes to be ranked with those who stand in the tradition of "linguistic philosophy" (cf. RL 123, PO 266, FPMF 159, OCR 16). That is to say he is concerned to produce a clear and accurate account of the logic of people's religious (or scientific or moral) speaking, writing and thinking. For Ramsey religious man is essentially a religious language-user, and Ramsey views such a person's language as determinative of his religion. It is, after all, a man's religious language which evokes and expresses what is at the centre of his religion - the disclosure of God.

Ramsey is not just concerned with the systematization and appraisal of concepts from the theoretical language of theology. He gives a great deal of space to analysing the less sophisticated and self-conscious language of religious
experience, worship and commitment. Thus the reader is invited to study not only the finer points of Christological and soteriological doctrine (e.g. RL 168 - 171, CD ch. II), but also the language of hymns, prayers and passages of Scripture (e.g. CD 6 - 8, 72 - 73, TL 17, RL ch. III). For Ramsey believes that "religion" and "theology" share common linguistic presuppositions and problems.

In fact Ramsey tends to use the phrase "religious language" in its widest connotation, so as to include theological language as a sub-category. This has inclined some (cf. Cohen (Thesis) 6) to accuse Ramsey of confusing theology and religion (in its more narrow connotation). However, there is plenty of evidence in Ramsey's writings that he treats theology as "a kind of second order language, reflecting on its first order language" (FL 50), and believes that no one should "confuse the 'ordinary language' of the religious man at worship with the second order language of the systematic theologian, who is already something of a philosopher" (Review Ferré 976; he accuses Ferré here of ignoring the importance of this distinction in Language, Logic & God). Ramsey is conscious that "The highly developed language of a technical theology may only too well conceal the distinctive character of religion" (Review Evans - Pritchard 244). The great danger, as far as he is concerned, is the development of a "theology without religion" (FI 102; cf. ibid. 133, PR 216, RSCS 94); and he stresses that it is religious language which is most directly and most explicitly grounded in the disclosure of God (CPL 247). Further, in his concern to distinguish between "tentative" theology and "certain" religion, Ramsey is surely opposing
any tendency to confuse theological thinking with religious
faith (cf. Mccluskey 180). I think that we can claim, on the
basis of all this evidence, that Ramsey would be more than
willing to agree with Don Cupitt's assertion:

Theology can toy facetiously with the notion
of God, but only religion can actually present
him. (Cupitt 42)

The task of systematic theology is recognized by
Ramsey as that of "systematizing...the riotous mixture of
phrases" which characterizes religious language (RL 156;
cf. U-FMG B 64/177). The systematic theologian must "grade
the models" thrown up in everyday religious discourse "on
the basis of the range and reliability of the discourse
to which a model leads" (TL 30; this is the "problem of
preferences" discussed below). The systematic theologian
must also unite the different strands of discourse, with
their different dominant models, which arise in the language
of Christian experience. He does this either by attempting
"to trace transverse connections" or by searching for "a
yet more dominant model" (TL 28). This would appear to be
an activity which is much further removed from religious
experience than are our attempts to structure religious
language so that it evokes and expresses religious
disclosures. However Ramsey is insistent that "even
systematic theology explicitly or implicitly must always
make the disclosure reference clear" (TL 30).

Ramsey claims to present us with an analysis of the
way in which people actually use religious language. His
analysis is thus of the type labelled by Anders Jeffner as
"Descriptive 1" (Jeffner (SRL) 16). Thus Ramsey insists that:
Philosophy will take the language of the Bible, of the Gospels, of doctrine, of liturgy, as it stands and try to elucidate its point and significance. (CPL 249; cf. GS 5)

However Ramsey does accept that certain of his points about religious language may appear to some to be "highly artificial"; and he admits that his account does not "describe what always happens in the case of religious people" (RL 74). But Ramsey would certainly not wish to be construed as offering what Jeffner calls a "Descriptive 2" analysis - i.e. an analysis of how people think that they are using religious language. He does not argue that the writers of hymns or Biblical narratives have consciously and explicitly constructed their writings so as to produce the logical structure (for example of qualified-models) which Ramsey discerns in them (cf. RL 91 - 93, 154 - 155; Review Pike 237; TL 17; OBSR 9).

But he would claim that his theories present a reasonable analysis of what "could happen" when religious language is used (RL 74), and he clearly believes that such language does normally operate according to his analysis.

At any rate Ramsey does not intend primarily to present a "constructive" theory of how religious language should be used (but isn't). However he does have a tendency to mix constructive insights with descriptive analysis, if only because he acknowledges that some uses of religious language - for example as picturing language - are not in fact religious. Jeffner argues that Ramsey "starts from a descriptive theory based on a definition of religious language that is not analytically neutral":

It is possible that he stipulates which situations are religious in a way which fits his analysis. (Jeffner 49 & n. 42)
There seems to be an element of truth in this criticism. Having developed a theory which seems to explain the function of some types of religious language, Ramsey applies it across the whole range of such language. Yet he also insists that religious discourse is very varied, and therefore should be more wary than he is of pouring it all into the same linguistic mould. We may, however, view Ramsey's work as an analysis of certain forms of religious language. We need not reject it out of hand because it does not seem to be applicable right across the board.
2. The "Logical Oddness" of Religious Language

Ramsey claims that all forms of religious language, and indeed of other "disclosure-based" languages, have a complex and "odd" logic. It is the death of religion to treat its language as simple and straightforward, for "what is not verbally odd is void of disclosure power" (MM 69, cf. RL 48). Thus "Christian education", according to Ramsey, "must evoke disclosures and train us to have an eye for logical peculiarities, and to be suspicious of all too plain and evident grammatical forms" (DCCD 14). It is only by recognising the complexity and oddness of religious language that its real meaning and purpose will become clear. So Ramsey's exhortation is: "Let us never take theology or bible-narrative at its face-descriptive value" (OCR 13).

Ramsey argues that the distinctive logic of religious language derives from "the odd kind of situation" from which it stems and to which it leads. Religious language is "suitable currency" for religious situations (RL 38). And as the religious situation is itself epistemologically and ontologically odd, we can expect that its linguistic counterpart will have its own (logical) "oddness" (cf. RB 188). Unless religious language is suitably odd, "it will not tell of the kind of situation which can be properly called 'religious' " (RL 96). But in what does this "oddness" lie?

In the first place, religious language is "objective language and more, i.e. object language which has been given very special qualifications, object language which exhibits logical peculiarities, logical impropriety" (RL 38).
Clearly the explanation of this is that religious situations are characterized by the "odd discernment" which is "perceptual and more"—an intuition which espies the meta-empirical "more".

In the second place, religious language seeks to be currency for the "total commitment" which is another distinguishing feature of religious situations. Religious commitment, as "total commitment to the whole universe" (RL 37), demands a suitably odd form of language as an appropriate representation (cf. RE 404). In this case, however, the "oddness" of religious commitment language—in so far as it expresses the actual commitment rather than the discernment from which it arises—is largely a function of the "significant tautologies" it contains (RL 40, 44). In its commitment aspect, therefore, religious language is as "odd" as moral language, and for similar reasons. Ramsey argues:

"God is love"...is a significant tautology pleading "love" (or "God") as a commitment word. (RL 47)

Thus words like "God", "Love", "Duty" etc. are key words which point to the realities which are the objects of commitment. The tautologies of religious language, e.g. "God is Love", express the loyalty and commitment that form a major part of religion. Such a phrase, Ramsey claims, is a "significant tautology labelling a commitment" (RL 46).

It is along such lines that Ramsey traces the function of religious language in representing the commitment element in the religious situation.

But language can only be described as "odd" or
"unusual" by comparison with some other form of language. Religious language, Ramsey contends, is "odd" when compared with our most frequent use of language - its "ordinary" use to describe straightforwardly empirical (perceptual) situations (cf. PR 213; RL 38, 62, Emp R 162, OCR 2, Mf 69). Thus religious language, like the religious situation out of which it arises, is "odd from the point of view of objects of sense" (RB 188). This use of "odd" language, as we have already noted, is not restricted to religion. It is to be found in all disciplines that at some point "go beyond" observables, even the scientific disciplines themselves (cf. RL 48, Mf passim). It is to be found perhaps most obviously in poetry (cf. RL 135 - 136, Mf 55).

Paul Helm claims that Ramsey's notion of logical oddness is unclear and is open to at least four possible interpretations (Helm (VB) 53 - 59). He concludes:

Ramsey may mean that for the religious believer either certain propositions do not have straightforward empirical truth - conditions; or that they involve a subjective blik on the facts; or that they have truth-conditions that it is impossible to conceive; or that they make peculiar moral demands on the believers. (ibid. 59)

But this criticism (which is based solely on an analysis of a few passages from Religious Language) seems to miss the essential point. For Ramsey's basic intention in using the phrase is to point to the fact that religious language is "more than" empirical language. Religious language is "qualified" empirical language; it is therefore "odd" by comparison with literal, descriptive language about what is observable.
Ramsey wages total war against the idea that the language of religion functions as a "description" of that which is disclosed, in the way that straightforward empirical language describes that which is observed. "Let no one blind himself", he writes, "to the sheer atheism to which a 'plain and literal' understanding of theology may lead us" (OBSR 65, cf. ES 44 - 46). For "religious language can hardly be literal and do its job of understanding mystery" (TL 3). Because the religious situation involves a disclosure which reveals a transcendent meta-empirical, "more", that situation and its disclosed object cannot be "described" or labelled" (cf. RL 167, CE 182, LEP 544, CD 44). Thus, "Religious assertions must not be taken as plain descriptions of fact", Ramsey exclaims in italics (OCR 1).

Although the religious person can "articulate" his faith (cf. TL ch II passim, MM 15, MDA 19 - 20), this articulation is a matter of "significant stuttering", "theological stammering" (LEP 542, MMR 263). It is not the smooth articulation of literal description.

We may pause here to consider the fact that Ramsey's plea for the "oddness" - the non-literalness or non-descriptive nature - of religious language is a move in the opposite direction from that provoked by his concern for intelligible theology. Ramsey claims that religious language combines mystery and understanding. It may be odd by comparison with empirical language; but it does "embrace" empirical language. Its foundation is ordinary, descriptive language about the spatio-temporal world. Ramsey combines his two concerns, of course, in his account of models and qualifiers. The model is the element which bestows intelligibility (articulateness) -
cf. TG 88) on religious discourse, for the model-word standing alone is a piece of literal, descriptive, "empirical" language (cf. Review McPherson 111 - 112, TL 9, MM 4 - 5, ITR Owen 126). But the other element in a religious phrase, without which the phrase would not be religious, is the qualifier. It is qualifiers which "gear into models" and result in disclosures of the "more" (TL 9). And it is qualifiers which modify the literal, descriptive nature of model-language and make it "appropriate currency" for what is not observable and can never be literally described (cf. CPCF 59, TG 96). We must now turn to a fuller consideration of the nature and functions of these models and qualifiers.

3. Models and Qualifiers

(A) The Model

the word "model" in ordinary use specifies something easily understood, by which we try to understand something else which is not so straightforwardly understood. (U-FMG B 51/164; cf. TL 7, MMR 265, VM 99)

Ramsey uses the word "model" both of "the situation with which we are familiar" (RL 61; cf. MMR 264) and of the word which straightforwardly "specifies" this situation. It is therefore some times necessary to distinguish between "model-situations" and "model-words (language)".

Ramsey prefers to speak of "models", rather than of "images", "symbols", "myths", "parables" etc. He does so because the concept of the model is "logical rather than psychological" 10, and because it is already much used in scientific discourse and is there associated with a "partial yet reliable understanding of that about which it talks" (TTST 82).
By its very nature a model will/ultimately inadequate for a complete understanding of that which it models. As Ramsey puts it:

Models are models, and we should expect articulation from any model to generate inconsistency somewhere...A model by its very character will never give us the full story. (CD 44; cf. TRT33, TG88, U-TLIE 11, U-TLIE 9/49/156)

Because of this, "we...need to balance one model with its associated context against another model with its associated context"(TL 9; cf. CPCF 58). This "mixing", "piling up" or "jostling"of models (cf. RL 154, TL 10, MDA 42) results in "multi-model discourse" (TRT 53, MDA 9, MBR 266), enshrined in a "many-stranded" or "multiple" theology (H 225, CF 35, Sermon (5) 12; cf. Farrer (FI) 40).

Such a view of theology goes to the heart of Ramsey's interests as an applied theologian. For it enables him both to serve as an irenic mediator between opposing theological positions (a most valuable quality in a chairman of the Church of England Doctrine Commission!) and to be eclectic in his search for a contemporary theology among the most diverse traditions and schools of thought. He writes:

On the view I have been outlining, all theology begins from what we could call, do call, rightly call a given revelation, a given disclosure-situation. There is the authority, there is what is authoritative for all issues, theoretical or practical, there is what is authoritative for all assertions and all behaviour. But that revelation is not adequately interpreted in one single theological strand, still less in terms of a single deductive system. A given revelation does not result in a monolithic, single-stranded, simple theology. A given revelation results in a variegated, many stranded, multiple theology. (U-TM 3)
Ramsey contrasts this with a "feudal view of theology" (ibid.) as "a subject apart, monolithic, and determinative of conclusions in all other subjects" (TAE vi). It is Ramsey's approach to theology which serves to justify his "liberal" views on Education (cf. TE 141), Intercommunion (cf. U-Intercommunion 14 - 17) and theology in general (cf. Sermon (5), CF 25; Owen(PTR) 72). The alternative approach, which Ramsey speaks of pejoratively as "prescriptive", "apriori", or "deductive" theology (cf. CF 23, MM 67, TECF 214, U-TM 13, OBSR 88), was tied up with a belief in an inerrant propositional revelation which carried the full authority of God himself (cf. CF 23). Ramsey's account of the tentative and multiple character of theology, on the other hand, accords with his conviction that theology is essentially a human response to God's disclosure of himself. Such a theology is both "empirical" (i.e. arises from disclosure-situations and can be checked by "empirical fit" - cf. BP II 203) and "exploratory" (i.e. always searching for more adequate model-language - cf. OBSR 89, WT 14, RFT 36, PG 70); "the pioneering of a vision" (TE 147, cf. CSC 52). It is this sort of theology which is reflected, for example, in a Christian social policy which is "empirical-exploratory" rather than "linear-systematic" (cf. OBSR chII, U-UBMD passim). Here at last is a theology that does not "preside over a hierarchy of subjects,...prescribing the limits and the most general conclusions which might be reached" (MM 67). It will instead gratefully take up models supplied by other disciplines in order to hint at the "further dimension" in the world. A world that all disciplines attempt to map on their own, two dimensional, projections (MM 67 - 68).
In the multi-model discourse of theology God is spoken of by the use of a host of models - Tower, Rock, Father, King, Shepherd and so on (cf. TG passim, CP CF 58). Similarly traditional discourse about the Church has used the models of the Body and Bride of Christ, the new Jerusalem, the Remnant etc. (cf. TL 27 - 30). In cases like these we must never, if we are to be wise theologians, "remain content with any one model" (TG 84). That is the mistake of the heretic, who always ends up by pressing his favourite model too far (cf. RL 170 - 171, Enc. Brit. 595, U-WM 28). 11

However, a multi-model theology raises a problem: what Ramsey calls the problem of "preferences" (CD 57, TG 88). How do we express preferences between models? "Is it possible to fix on a 'best model'..?"(CD 57). This is a particular difficulty for Ramsey because he commits himself to the view that anything can be a model leading to a cosmic disclosure:

any word may be a "model" by means of which a characteristically religious situation can be evoked. All words, if suitably qualified, can lead to such a situation.(RL 80; cf. E 48, TG 87, 89)

We may note that Ramsey's position here is in accord with his general thesis that:

(i) disclosures are mediated through (situations in) the world, and such situations then serve as models for what is disclosed;

and (ii) cosmic disclosures, which reveal God, are all-inclusive: their media are representative of the world as a whole.

As God has the freedom to disclose himself as and when he sees fit, and as he is responsible for- and intimately related to- every aspect of his creation, then anything in the world can serve as a medium for the disclosure of God. Hence
anything can serve as a model for the God who is thus disclosed.

This rather extreme position has been widely criticized (cf. Harris (MQ) 87 - 89, Cohen (LRL) 154, Smart (PR) 225); the main criticism being that it is patently obvious that only certain models are used, or can be used, in theology. However much you qualify "dung" it serves neither to evoke a disclosure of God nor to help us understand the disclosed God. Ramsey himself considers the qualified-model "infinitely evil" and admits that this may evoke a disclosure-situation, but one in which the word "devil", and not the word "God", is posited (RL 80 - 81). However we would then have two "key words" - i.e. an ultimate metaphysical dualism. We must thus subordinate one of them by constructing a theodicy, if we are to be true to "our religious commitment expressed in terms of God "which is "a total loyalty to the whole universe" (RL 81).

But why not prefer "devil" as our single key word, remain true to our theistic commitment and seek an explanation of "the problem of good" instead? The answer must in part refer to the justificatory criterion of empirical fit (cf. below). But the whole problem would be greatly eased if we were to disallow Ramsey's close connection between the (empirical) medium of a disclosure and the model that is used to express what is disclosed. We could then agree that the creator - God may indeed disclose himself through the medium of dung, but argue that he does not disclose himself there - or anywhere - as the dung-like God. The television or telephone which serves as the medium by which I come to "see" or "hear" another person is not in any way like that person. We may argue that a medium is a medium, nothing
more, it is not the "message" nor does it have to serve as a model for the messenger. On such a view the medium tells us something about God, but only negatively and retrospectively. It tells us that God must be of such- and- such a nature consonant with his being disclosed through this particular medium. But this means only that God must be the sort of God who can be revealed through this world, and through every part of it; that there must be something about God that "relates" him to the world in all its expansive diversity, as another person is "related" to the medium of the 'phone or television, or as another mind is "related" to the medium of another body. A radically deistic God, apparently, will not do. A creator/sustainer-God, however, fits the bill quite adequately. But we can say little more about him by studying the media of his revelations alone. It is the revelations themselves that must be examined. I know that God is x and y because he discloses himself to me, because I discern him, as x and y; the medium of such disclosures may be more or less irrelevant. Such a position would contend that Ramsey's account both of the use of model-language of God, and of the nature of religious intuitions, is greatly flawed by his attempts to combine the two in one all-embracing theory of the origin of religious language and religious experience.

But this position is very much out of step with the usual accounts of mediated intuition (cf. Owen (CKG) ch.6, Ewing (VR) ch.6, J.E. Smith (EG) ch. III). John E. Smith writes:

It is the function of a medium of revelation to disclose God by bearing the divine presence but not by taking the place of God in the process. To perform its function, therefore, a medium
must recede in order to disclose the reality to which it points. And yet the medium is not merely an occasion externally related to the reality disclosed; if that were so, the nature of the medium would make no difference to its meaning. In short, the medium must not, through its own nature, become a substitute for its meaning, and yet that nature cannot be entirely irrelevant to its meaning.

(op.cit. 79 - 80)

Smith appeals to Christ the obedient servant as providing "the solving idea", for he is "a self-negating medium that reveals God in the very act of setting itself aside" (80).

In Christ:

the nature of the medium...becomes identical with God without ceasing to be the means whereby God is made known to man. (ibid.)

This would seem to mean that Christ is both the supreme medium for God's revelation and the supreme model for God's nature (as it is in relation to us). This is similar to the way in which, on a mediated intuitionist account of our knowledge of other selves, the self "expresses itself in and through the media" of actions, facial expressions, language etc. (ibid. 86; cf. Owen (CKG) 132 - 133).

Both in Christology and the theory of mind the connection between the medium and what it reveals is of central importance. Christ clearly reveals the nature of God because he chooses to do so: his will is obedient to his Father; or he reveals God because God is somehow present in him. And a body reveals a mind because man is a psychophysical unity. But the relationship between God and (a) the creation in general, or (b) human beings in particular, is surely not of the same kind. Not least this is because such a relationship is a universal one: God is related to the whole of creation by his creative act. It is therefore surely simply bizarre.
to suggest that any and every part of creation can serve as a model for its maker (particularly in the case of those parts of the human creation who are disobedient to his will). To extricate ourselves from this dilemma we shall have to admit:

Either (a) (as in the earlier argument against Ramsey) that a medium of God's revelation, like some other everyday "media", is no more than a medium - and does not necessarily serve as a model for what is revealed through it;

Or (b) that God reveals himself only through certain selected media; i.e. those media which by their very nature can express his nature by serving as appropriate models for him. Thus Smith argues that:

In principle, any reality may serve as a medium of the divine presence... (but) In fact, revelation... is selective and exclusive. (J.E. Smith (EG) 77).

It seems to me that there is something to be said for both positions: God does disclose himself (sometimes) through dung; but he more clearly (and more often) discloses himself through loving fathers. At any rate I find myself unable to accept Ramsey's contention that media always serve as models, whilst admitting that they may usually do so.

But we must return to the problem of preferences. One cluster of criteria that may be used to judge models is the formal and material justificatory criteria of simplicity, comprehensiveness, consistency, coherence and "empirical fit" (cf. TG 90, MDA 62). These will be discussed in the next chapter. The other criterion of preference that Ramsey suggests is a model's "relative dominance" in religious discourse (TG 90). Ramsey writes:

One model, for example, Protector, is better than
another, for example, Laundress, if its discourse is more widely ranging. A model like person is better than, say, shepherd or potter, because it can say all that these other models can say and more besides; in this way it can absorb the discourse from two or more models. (ibid.)

Such a model is called a "dominant model". It is a model in terms of which a particular brand of discourse is best articulated (cf. CD 58):

One model is more dominant than another when it presides over the greater language spread; when it enables us to be reliably articulate over a greater range of discourse. (CD 20)

These "major, dominant models" (cf. TL 28, MM 66, MDA 44) or "supermodels" (cf. TL 30, RL 85, CD 84) include within themselves the themes of various "minor models" (cf. TL 28) or "submodels" (cf. TL 30). "In each case a dominant model is more comprehensive than its subordinates and binds them together" (Evans (IRTG) 224). Ramsey remarks:

I would say that the "dominant models" were presupposed by the "lower" models in so far as a one-sided relation of entailment could be established between discourse originating from the one model and from the other. (MTR Evans 3)

A dominant model will combine the need for "minimal qualification... so as to indicate the transcendence of God", with "maximal richness of meaning" (Evans (IRTG) 224). Thus "Love" and "Person" come higher in the hierarchy of models than "King" or "Judge" or "Power" (cf. TL 9, TG 84 - 85).

It should be pointed out that Ramsey actually seems to allow another criterion for preference among models, although he does not describe it as such. In the context of a discussion of the problem of preferences he records his account of the construction of multi-model discourse so as to articulate the "X" revealed in a cosmic disclosure. This discourse fits "closer and closer to the language which a
believer uses about God" (TG 91 - 92). We can only conclude that "for X read God", when the models we use about X are seen to be the same (or very similar?) to the models already used - in Bible and Christian tradition - about God. Ramsey has noted here an important check on our theologizing. We must always ask ourselves, "Are my models, derived as they are from disclosures, actually in use already in the Church's talk about God?" If not then prima facie I have a problem, and I shall have to bring into play the other criteria of preference in order to discover whose theology (mine or the that of Church's - or, indeed, denomination A, B or C) is the best articulation. We should never underestimate the importance of the Church's tradition in our use of models for God. For no one can lightly disregard twenty centuries of other people's assessment of the relative importance of the different models of their religious discourse. On this cf. also Smart (SFT) 111 and passim, and K. Ward (CG) 78 - 79.

(B) Picturing models and Disclosure models

As indicated above, models are used as models because they serve as either the linguistic or the empirical media of disclosures (cf. TG 86, M&R 264): models are "born in disclosures" (TL 38). For Ramsey there is no independent access to that which the model models, and no way therefore of comparing the original with the model (TG 85 - 86, M&R 265). Ramsey expresses this by speaking of "disclosure models" (TG 89), "witnessing to the disclosure on the one hand and enabling us to be articulate on the other" (TL 28). The original is known only in a disclosure which provides us at the same time with the appropriate "disclosure model".
Ramsey acknowledges his indebtedness in his writings on the themes of metaphors and models to the work of Max Black and, to a lesser extent, I.A. Richards. Black took over from Richards an "interaction" view of metaphors: our thoughts about the metaphor and the literal expression interact producing a new meaning that is a resultant of that interaction (cf. Black (MM) 38 - 44, Richards chs. V & VI).

A metaphor, therefore, is no decorative substitute for a literal expression; nor is it a condensed or elliptical simile (Black (MM) 31 - 37). "Interaction" metaphors are "not expendable", for any equivalent literal expression will fail "to give the insight that the metaphor did" and there will be "a loss of cognitive content" (Black (MM) 46).

Ramsey accepts this interpretation and develops from it his own view "that metaphors, like models, are rooted in disclosures" (KM 50):

metaphorical expressions occur when two situations strike us in such a way as to reveal what includes them both. (ibid. 53)

When someone describes Cambridge University Library as a "powerhouse of learning" it may be because the metaphor was inspired by a disclosure (of isomorphism) between the architectural features of powerhouses and the library building (ibid. 51). There has been a "tangential meeting of two diverse contexts"; and the metaphorical expression "A is B" is a claim that:

(i) A and B in contact have generated a disclosure revealing some object; and
(ii) what it is that has been disclosed demands discourse which infiltrates B into A. (ibid. 52)

Ramsey means by the meeting of two "contexts" either that two "languages" meet (e.g. ibid. 52) or that two "pictures" meet
However both languages and pictures (images) must correspond to empirical situations if we are seeking to devise a metaphorical language that we can understand which is about objects or events that we know. If we are using metaphors of God, however, one of these situations will be known in a transcendent disclosure and not directly through the senses (cf. Jeffner (SRL) 53 - 54, and below).

Ramsey treats a model, as Black does, as "a sustained and systematic metaphor" (Black (MM) 236; quoted with approval by Ramsey-MM 50; cf. Hutten 289, 293, Barbour (MMP) 149). Black speaks of "scale models" - e.g. three-dimensional miniatures, more or less true to scale (Black (MM) 219). He uses the term to cover "all likenesses of material objects, systems and processes...that preserve relative properties" (ibid. 220); and distinguishes these from "analogue models":

An analogue model is some material object, system or process designed to reproduce as faithfully as possible in some new medium the structure or web of relationships in an original...

The crucial difference between the two types of models is in the corresponding methods of interpretation. Scale models...rely markedly upon identity: their aim is to imitate the original, except where the need for manipulatability enforces a departure from sheer reproduction. And when this happens the magnitudes in the original are still reproduced though with a constant change of ratio. On the other hand the making of analogue models is guided by the more abstract aim of reproducing the structure of the original. (Black (MM) 222; cf. Apostel 15 - 16, Hutten 285)

There is an "isomorphism", an identity of structure, between the analogue model and its original and "identity of structure, is compatible with the widest variety of content" (Black (MM) 223). Thus analogue models model an original in a different medium, as in the case of hydraulic models of economic systems. Black develops his view of analogue models in a discussion
of mathematical models and the theoretical models of science, arguing that "Those who see a model as a mere crutch are like those who consider metaphor a mere decoration or ornament" (ibid. 236). On the contrary, Black claims, models have an important role to play in scientific research and understanding. On this see Excursus I below.

Ramsey re-names Black's "scale models" as "picturing models" (ibid. 2) and remarks that they are even more limiting in theology than they are in science (ibid. 6 - 7). What is needed in both disciplines is the "analogue model", which Ramsey calls a "disclosure model" (ibid. 9 - 11). These models arise "not as pictorial replicas, but with structural echoes "between model and phenomena that lead to a disclosure (ibid. 10). It is worth quoting Ramsey in full here:

There must be something about the universe and man's experience in it which, for example, matches the behaviour of a loving father...; there must be something about certain cosmic situations which matches those situations in which men find themselves in the presence of a judge or a king. In other words, there are on the one hand certain situations in which we find ourselves, certain situations of a cosmic character, which in virtue of some feature or other echo, chime in with, are isomorphous with other situations in which we speak, for example, of strong towers, of kingship, of fathers and sons, and the two together, because of the common feature, generate insight. Likewise it is insight which originates a particular model such as that of personal affection or slave release in relation to the "facts" of the Christian life - a model which is then used for the better understanding and commending of doctrines of Grace and Atonement....Once again, as in the scientific case, a disclosure arises around and embraces the phenomena and the associated model. (MM 16)19

Despite Ramsey's concluding sentence, there is at least one element of disanalogy between the scientific
and the theological cases. Ramsey claims that the model (or "metaphor" in its undeveloped form) of the "flow" of electricity is derived from "tangential connexion between electricity and flowing water". Thus, presented diagrammatically:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Water} & \longrightarrow \text{Electrical} \\
\text{Phenomena} & \quad \text{Phenomena} \\
& \quad \text{when "seen together"} \\
\downarrow & \\
\text{C: a disclosure of isomorphism...} \\
\text{D: in which it is revealed} & \\
\text{that electricity "flows"} & \quad \text{(cf. Mm 11, 52 - 53)}
\end{align*}
\]

This is the scientific case. Let us, however, take a theological example - the disclosure which provides us with the model of "Father" for God. In this case A = "Father Phenomena" (e.g. fathers loving, and caring for, their children), and D = the revelation that God is "Father"-like. For the theological case to be a strict parallel to the scientific case, B must now = "God Phenomena" (e.g. God caring for his "children"). B cannot simply be "World Phenomena" (e.g. The Red Sea being blown back by the wind, the mist clearing when I am about to fall down the cliff). It must be World-Phenomena - interpreted - in - theistic - terms. And, on Ramsey's epistemology, this means that "context B" must itself be derived from a disclosure around such World Phenomena. It is not always clear that this is the case from Ramsey's own accounts (cf. Mm 16, MMR 266 - 267).
In "Talking about God" pp.80 - 83 (= TRT 50 - 52)

Ramsey analyses the situation rather differently. For there
the two "patterns" - human and cosmic - that match one
another, are treated entirely at the level of observable
"behaviour". To talk of a "father" (or "husband" or "friend")
is already to have gone beyond such an observable pattern
of human behaviour in a disclosure of what is "more".

Ramsey claims that then:

the human case acts as catalyst for the cosmic
case, to generate a cosmic disclosure. The
cosmic pattern chimes in with the human
pattern; the human pattern has already
led to a finite disclosure - of persons -
and their matching then evokes a cosmic
disclosure around natural events such as
seed-time and harvest. It is as and when
a cosmic disclosure is thereby evoked that
we are able to speak of God - what the cosmic
disclosure discloses - in terms of the models which the finite situations have supplied us (TG 81).

There are two disclosures here:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Medium of } & \beta \\
(\text{World} - & \text{Phenomena})
\end{align*}
\]

when seen together with the "catalyst" gives rise to
a disclosure of the activity of the "father-like" God

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Medium of } & \alpha \\
(\text{Human body/behaviour} - & \text{Phenomena})
\end{align*}
\]

when seen alone gives rise to
a disclosure of a father's activity

It appears that the disclosure of isomorphism between the two
patterns has in this account become absorbed into disclosure \(\beta\). Cosmic disclosure \(\beta\) could occur "on its own", but -

unless a real father appeared as part of the medium of \(\beta\) -

Ramsey does not seem to think that we would then have any
justification for talking of the disclosed God in terms of
a "father". The fact that it is a father-disclosure (disclosure $\alpha$) which is the necessary catalyst to evoke disclosure $\beta$ is sufficient justification in Ramsey's eyes for using father language of the object of disclosure $\beta$.

We may note that Ramsey is here offering a disclosure-based version of the argument from analogy:

(a) The human body is the expression of a human mind (personal);
(b) The world is analogous to a human body;
(c) . . . The world is the expression of a mind analogous to the human mind.

For Ramsey (b) is not a premise in an argument but a fact to be discerned in a disclosure, which then leads on to the "disclosed-conclusion"(c). For it is when we have a disclosure of the isomorphy between the world and a human body that we come to know the personal (human mind - like) God. The fact that Ramsey also interprets (a) as a fact known in a disclosure ensures that the whole argument from analogy is transposed into the key of a disclosure-epistemology. It should be said, however, that one could still treat (a) - (c) as an argument from analogy, even if (b) is known in a disclosure of isomorphism. It would then read:

(a) The human body is the expression of a human mind (we know this by a universalizing analogy from our own case, or by intuition across a number of cases);
(b) The world is analogous to a human body (this is known intuitively - the analogy is "just seen");
(c) . . . The world is the expression of a mind analogous to the human mind (known as the conclusion of an inference) $\triangleright$.
A great deal depends, of course, on how much of conclusion (c) is already implicit in premise (b). But I would argue that one could accept the recognition of analogy—similarity, isomorphism—between two sets of phenomena whilst viewing further assertions as inferences from such an analogy ("if the world is like a human body in respects x, y, z, then it is likely—arguing from analogy—that it is also the expression of a mind").

However, Ramsey's main purpose in the arguments outlined in this section is to present a view of theological models which indicates that they are not straightforward, literal descriptions of that which they model. Language about God is not equivalent in status to a scale model of a ship. It is no descriptive "picture" of God. Such language arises, rather, in a disclosure that takes us beyond all literal descriptions. This is the main burden of Ramsey's account of disclosure models.

(C) The Qualifier

Two points need to be made by way of introduction:

(i) Ramsey tends sometimes to speak of a model-qualifier complex as a "model" (meaning a qualified-model);
(ii) Ramsey's stress on the role of qualifiers is to be found most clearly expressed in his earlier writings. Later he tended to focus more attention on theological models as "disclosure models"—i.e. non-literal models—for God (cf. Schnetzer 280). However both analyses are presented in Models and Mystery and are treated in a complementary fashion. Ramsey recognizes three main ways in which models can give rise to a cosmic disclosure:
(a) when disclosures "just happen" around a model-situation: this is "religious experience";

(b) When disclosures are evoked by our "bringing together" a model-situation picture (or model-language) and an isomorphic world-situation picture (or world-language): this is the most usual context for Ramsey's use of the term "disclosure model";

(c) when the model-word is qualified in a certain way (direction) until a disclosure is evoked: this is the method discussed here.

The 'mixing' of models noted earlier is one way of qualifying a model (i.e., by adding another model to it — cf. TL 10, RL 40). There are other relatively unimportant ways of qualifying language so as to make it suitably "odd". Ramsey suggests, for example, the employment of such typographical devices as inverted commas, and the use of words in an unexplained, technical sense (RL 39). The latter method is exemplified in the technical terms of the Arts and Sciences: e.g. "force", "energy", "disposition", "sovereignty", "climate", "appreciation" etc. Ramsey claims that such words are "witnesses to mystery", for we only come to learn their meaning in a disclosure-situation (MM 62—63).

These technical terms "combine in themselves the possibility of models and qualifiers" (MM 62). But Ramsey focuses his main attention on the phrases which combine models and qualifiers as separate words, together with single words that have the logical structure of a (telescoped) qualifier + model phrase but in which the qualifier is reduced to a prefix (e.g. "(im)mutable"). The "qualifier" in such a phrase or word (e.g. "infinite", "perfect", "all", "
"heavenly", "im-", "only", "necessary" etc.) has two main functions:

(i) Like a mathematical operator, it "develops the model in a certain direction" (U-FMG B 52/165). Or - more precisely - it serves as a "stimulant and a directive" which "tells us to do something" (ibid.). The "something" that we have to do is to meditate on the model in a certain way, to "operate on [the] model with the qualifier" (PR 207), so as to produce in our imagination "an endless series of variants", "a family of models" (MM 60 - 61). Eventually "God is revealed in the cosmic disclosure which may occur at some stage as the pattern of models is developed without end" (MM 61; cf. FI 58, RL 68, 175).

(ii) The qualifier also has a "formal function":

It reminds us by the very strain it produces in the phrase which belongs of right to the evoked situation, that any language we wish to use about the situation which has then been evoked, will have to be [mundane model] language with a difference (U-FMG B53/166).

Qualifiers thus "indicate the special logical claims we are making for the word God" (U-TLIE 5; cf. RL 68, 176). The presence of the qualifier in a qualified-model phrase indicates that the model-word is to be taken analogically and not literally.

Qualifiers, like mathematical operators, have the "logic of imperatives" (CD 67, 75; cf. TL 8, 9, MDA 63). They are not pieces of "plain, flat, descriptive" language but examples of "language pointing in a certain direction telling you what to do" (U-NRL 3). Qualifiers are "inexpressible in descriptive language" (TL 9; cf. RL 165); they "describe nothing" (TG 95; cf. CD 75). Ramsey refers to qualifiers, or the phrases which include them, as "mnemonics" (cf. U-TLIE
5, PI 47, CD 71, 80), for they remind us to generate the sequence of sub-models in our imagination which results in the requisite disclosure. In an important sense, therefore, their role is broadly "psychological": they are part of the "technique for meditation" (RL 53; cf. E 44) that results in our having a disclosure. But the other aspect of their rôle is logical, for they qualify the model in the sense of changing its meaning, making it more "appropriate currency" for talking about God.

The sequence of "models with family resemblances" which are "created" by the operation of a qualifier on a particular model (MM 60 - 61), is in fact a series of models of increasing degree of qualification. Ramsey provides us with an example of such a series: that produced by the qualifier "infinite(ly)" acting on the model "goodness"

- hardly good, fairly good, just good, very good, very good indeed, intensely good (cf. RL 66 - 67). Ramsey writes of "implicit metaphors" occurring between any pair of such variants (MM60), but it is not clear what he means by this. Does he imply that speaking of someone as "just good" is to use a metaphor derived from "fairly good" (or from "good")? But such language is not usually viewed as metaphorical. We should rather treat the sequence, as Cohen suggests, as "one of qualified terms which are related to each other by the degree to which they modify" the model term (Cohen (LRL) 153).

There are a number of different types of qualifiers. In a note in "Fact, Metaphysics & God" (65/178b), Ramsey
distinguishes between "qualifiers which act best as generators" (i.e. whose main function is (i) above) and qualifiers which "are best at making a verbal claim" (i.e. function (ii) above). Examples of the latter include "indescribably", "really", "indeed", "only". These "remind us that something far-fetched is on its way". The former category of qualifier is sub-divided by Ramsey into:

(a) "comprehensive words" - e.g. "infinite", "supreme", "all", "fore", "absolute", "perfect"; and

(b) "exclusive words" - e.g. "un-", "ex nihilo".

Sub-category (b), which Evans calls "negating qualifiers" (Evans (IRTG) 221), would also include the qualifier most often used in negative theology, i.e. "im-" (in "impassible", "immutable" etc. - cf. RL 50 - 53). Such qualifiers render the model they qualify totally inapplicable to God; for "God is not possible" tells us nothing positive about the nature of God. Sub-category (a), on the other hand, embraces the qualifier "omni-" of the qualified models "omnipotent", "omniscient" etc. (cf. FO 265). Such qualifiers change the meaning of the model and thus enable us to speak positively, though analogically, of God. They direct "the selection of only certain elements out of the system of ideas which the model brings to mind" (Schnetzer 320). Thus the "eternal purpose" of God is analogous to human purpose but is different in a way that is appropriate to God ("cosmic-scope", "not limited by any contingency") - cf. RL 75 - 79, PR 208 - 209. This point is taken up more fully below.

In Freedom and Immortality Ramsey writes of "positive" (="comprehensive") and "negative" (="exclusive") qualifiers: "everlasting" being an example of the former and "im-" an
example of the latter (FI 95). The word "eternal", however, is said to operate on the model "life" both positively and negatively. Negatively it directs our attention away from such temporal, observable behaviour as life; positively it directs us to the recognition of what is life and more (FI 95 - 96). Similarly the qualifier "necessary" in the qualified-model "necessary being" has both a negative and a positive use. Necessary being is not contingent being, but positively it is presupposed by all contingent being (cf. TL 7 - 8).

Donald Evans has drawn a further distinction among the positive qualifiers, a distinction of which Ramsey has approved (Evans (IRTG) 217 - 219, U-ITR Evans 3). Evans distinguishes "universalising" qualifiers (e.g. "omni", "all", "ever", "universally") from "perfecting" qualifiers such as "infinitely". A perfecting qualifier acts on the model so as to produce a more which "is not inherently cosmic in scope" but is "an absolute perfection towards which the series points" (e.g. "infinite love"). A universalising qualifier, however, modifies the model so as to speak of a situation which is cosmic in scope but might be of quite a "low grade" quality: as in "all loving", "universal reliability" etc.

4. The Functions of Religious Discourse

(A) The Evocative Function

It is clear that Ramsey analyses religious language in the manner outlined above in order to indicate that a major function of such language is the evocation of a disclosure. Thus the attributes of negative theology are
"primarily evocative of the odd discernment" (RL 50); and Ramsey speaks frequently of "tales", "narratives" or "stories" evoking disclosures (e.g. RB 191, U-FMG B1/76, FI 85, CPL 249), the qualified-model being just a particular example of this general feature of language. Ramsey must have been speaking of the evocative power of qualifiers when he argued in a television discussion:

Theological words are like poetic words: they are tools for the most delicate of operations, not transmitting information but evoking a cosmic disclosure where God is discerned in wonder and silence. (U-BBCV, 1965)

Ramsey describes this function of religious language as a "performative" function, and regards theological statements more as performatives (having "performative force") than as statements (cf. ITR Owen 126, TEFC 220, Enc. Brit. 601). This clearly relates to J.L. Austin's account of performatives, to which Ramsey often makes passing reference (cf. BPI 34, TL 31). Austin's view was that we can do something by speaking, i.e. perform a "speech-act" of promising, ordering etc. This was initially developed in terms of a distinction between "constatives" (utterances which state something - and therefore are either true of false) and "performatives" (utterances which do something other than stating - and therefore cannot be either true or false, only "nappy" or "unhappy" etc.): cf. J.L. Austin (PP) 98 - 103, 233 - 241. However this distinction seemed to break down (cf. ibid. 246 - 252) and Austin began to see all speech as a speech-act. He then distinguished three elements within a speech-act (cf. Austin (HDTW) VIII and passim):-

(i) The locutionary act (locution): i.e. what one actually
(ii) The illocutionary act (illocution): i.e. what one does in saying it, the kind of speech-act it is (stating, promising etc.); and

(iii) The perlocutionary act (perlocution): i.e. what one does by saying it, the actual effect of the speech-act (frightening, persuading etc.).

Perlocutions are natural, they depend on causal processes; illocutions, on the other hand rely on conventions (cf. "I hereby warn you").

Ramsey tends to think in the older performative/constative terms and speaks of some assertions having performative force (CPCF 52, WG 11; cf. Tilley (Thesis) 52 - 53). However Ramsey is aware of the distinction between the "early" and the "later" Austin on this point, and seems to agree with his later position (cf. TECF 220, PA 183, 190). The essential feature to note, however, is that Ramsey recognised that theological assertions may have "performative" or "illocutionary" force.

I believe that Ramsey has touched on something very important in his account of the evocative function of religious language. However I also believe that he has developed his account in a most misleading way. I would agree that religious language can function in an evocative way - evoking not just emotions (cf. BPII 192), which no one would wish to deny, but also cognitive insight. Language is used as a "technique for meditation" in traditional mystical contemplation (cf. Evans (IRTG) 221), and there is no reason to deny that religious language - particularly
hymns, prayers and religious poetry - can serve this
"engineering" function (as Smart, rather disparagingly,
calls it; cf. Smart (ESC) 33, (PR) 224). Prayers, hymns,
poetry, even some forms of religious prose, can all "put us
into the position" to receive God's revelation of himself.
This may happen, as I have suggested above, partly because
such language can increase our "desire for God".

But having admitted that, I must confess to finding
little of value in Ramsey's interpretation of the way in which
the qualified-model acts as a piece of evocative language.
His contention that spotting the word "infinitely" in front
of the word "good" makes us meditate on a range of people
of increasing degrees of goodness until a disclosure occurs,
seems very strained. The qualifier changes the meaning of
love; its presence may "disclose" to us - we may grasp" in
a moment" - the concept of infinite love, or at least
something about the concept. But this does not occur by the
peculiar sort of technique that Ramsey suggests. It may be
that Ramsey wishes to claim no more than that, regarded as a
psychological account, this is what "could" happen, and,
more importantly, [what] must happen if we want to show
either the disbeliever, or the puzzledbeliever, what is the
logical structure of religious phrases (RL 74). But even
to claim this is to claim too much. For surely disclosures
never happen around a qualified-model complex in the way that
Ramsey outlines. Ramsey can only find convincing parallels
to his account in the field of mathematics, where of course
we could already have laid out before us a set of numbers
or circles or whatever. This may indeed be a most effective
technique for evoking the mathematical insight necessary for
understanding "Infinite Sum" or "π". But in these cases the imagination is not required to construct the series, it can be drawn on the blackboard and then literally "surveyed" until the disclosure comes. To suggest, however, either here or elsewhere, that reading a qualified-model phrase makes us construct the series in our minds and survey it "with the mind's eye" is unplausible. The series-disclosure analysis is a technique of artificial explanation; no one ordinarily comes to understand such terms by qualifying a model in the way that Ramsey suggests. And in any case, as I have already argued, the most that language can evoke is a disclosure of meaning - not the disclosure of an actual existent entity. When we come to know the meaning of infinite goodness, we may then come to know God. But the two revelations are not one and the same.35

Ramsey is concerned to keep together the evocative and the representative functions of religious discourse; for he wishes to indicate that God may be spoken of in a certain way, using certain models (appropriately qualified), because God has been disclosed in a situation evoked by this language. I have argued already, however, that the attempt to relate religious language too closely to the empirical medium of mediated religious intuition may be a mistake. I would now argue further that the fact that we can have an intuition with the help of a certain piece of language (a linguistic "medium") need not necessarily tell us anything about the language we ought to use to represent what is thus disclosed. Certainly Ramsey's theory does not present us with a very sound argument in the other direction. For if the evocative religious language which serves as our "technique
for meditation" can always be used in our attempts to describe
the God so disclosed, then the mystic who repeats his own name,
or some nonsense phrase, over and over again is being given
permission to describe his God in very peculiar terms! Not
all evocative language can serve as a representation of what
it evokes. If we discount Ramsey's analysis of the function
of the medium of a disclosure, he is then in need of a reason
for his claim that a piece of language can be both evocative
of, and representative of, God. Perhaps we might find such
a reason in my own suggestion that "having the concept of
God" (i.e. the correct representative language) can aid
the evocation of an intuition of God. But on this analysis
the representative status of religious language determines
its evocative rôle, and not vice-versa. It is not that
you believe that religious phrase A describes God/ A gives
a disclosure of God. It is rather that your belief that
religious phrase A describes God puts you in the appropriate
frame of mind to receive the disclosure of God. However
such a situation may only obtain for certain individuals and
in the case of certain pieces of religious language.

(B) The Representative Function

I feel considerably happier with Ramsey's discussion
of the representative function of religious language than with
his account of its rôle in evoking disclosures. However I
must first justify the claim that such a discussion can be
found in Ramsey's work. For many of his critics either deny
that he recognizes this representative function, or contend
that his account of it is totally inadequate (cf. Donovan
34, Smart (ICBC) 33, Cohen (LRL) 154 - 155, de Maulde 190
n.72, Helm (CE) 505).
And yet it should be clear to the most unsympathetic of readers that Ramsey does argue for a representative-descriptive, as well as for an evocative-performative, role for religious language. Thus he writes:

> I see theological assertions having a descriptive force, and in so far as they are grounded in a vision to which in one way or another they point, then they have, in being evocative, a performative force. (TECF 220; cf. Enc. Brit. 601, CE 183n19, CPL 249)

It is significant that Ramsey is willing on occasions to speak in this way of the descriptive force of religious language. Elsewhere, as we have seen, he restricts the adjective "descriptive" to plain, literal, language about observables. Ramsey may be saved from inconsistency here by arguing that he sees in the qualified-model a combination of:

(i) a (more or less purely) descriptive element ("force") which is a function of the model alone;
and
(ii) a (more or less purely) evocative element ("force") - a function of the qualifier alone.

Ramsey claims that he does not wish "to separate the descriptive and evocative functions" of religious language (ITRww):

> I do not intend to disavow description altogether, and on my view most theological assertions - unless they are altogether formal - will have some descriptive force in so far as they include or develop models. (ITR Owen 126)

But this does not seem altogether to be the explanation of Ramsey's use of the term "descriptive". It would seem that he is willing to retain the term and apply it to the whole qualified-model complex, recognizing, of course, that it is now used in a way that is only analogous to its use of literal, empirical language.

I shall speak here of the *representative* function of religious language, meaning by the term its function of
(figuratively) representing, portraying, symbolizing, or "standing for" God's nature and activities. Ramsey himself writes of language "representing" what is disclosed (CPL 339, FI 122, MM 12, 15, ITR Owen 126; cf. McClendon & Smith (IRM) 421), and I adopt the term to indicate that God is not "described" in such language in some literal, matter-of-fact, picturing manner, but "represented" by the language of qualified-models.

Ramsey provides yet another mathematical analogy for our discussion of this topic:

while no polygon no matter how many its number of sides would exactly "describe" a circle, nevertheless in a sort of way and as far as it went, what it represented would be a not entirely misleading account of what a circle "really is". (ITR Owen 126)

In carefully guarded terms such as these Ramsey indicates that a polygon with 1,008 sides, although not exactly a circle, is as good a representation of a circle as one can expect in the "language" of polygons (cf. TG 91, RL 70). Similarly, one is tempted to add, an "extremely good" being is a reasonable representation of an "infinitely good" God (at any rate in so far as its goodness is concerned). The term "good" will have a rather different meaning in the latter instance, but it will at least be analogous to the goodness of an extremely good man. "Infinitely good" is "appropriate currency" (cf. RL 92, OBSR 64 - 65) - appropriate enough to enable us to be articulate about the reality that is disclosed in a religious disclosure. Theological models and qualifiers therefore do not serve only to evoke a disclosure of God, they also function as theological "approximations" in our attempts to represent that God in human language (cf. MDA 23, CD 70 - 71, CPCF 57). "Infinite goodness" is not of the same logical order as "great goodness" or even "very great goodness" (RL 70). But human
goodness language may still serve us as a reasonable approximation to the transcendent goodness of God.

Or so, indeed, one would think. But Ramsey, when left to his own devices, often appears to slip off the narrow via media tightrope into the abyss of equivocity. This is most clearly seen in his treatment of the change wrought in the models used of God's moral attributes by certain theological qualifiers:

"Infinitely good" does not work at all like "intensely good", let alone "hardly good". (RL70) the qualifiers infinite, ex nihilo, beyond establish the logical difference. Grammatically, they may resemble exceedingly, from scratch and behind; but logically they are quite dissimilar...

"God is infinitely good" does not entail "God is good", though "Tom is exceedingly good" does entail "Tom is good". (U-HA: "The Problem of Evil T65", 1965, p.2; cf. U-PE 25)

Ramsey explicitly compares this with the mathematical example of an infinite sequence:

\[
\frac{1}{2}, \frac{2}{3}, \frac{3}{4}, \frac{4}{5}, \frac{5}{6}, \frac{6}{7}, \frac{7}{8}, \ldots, \frac{999}{1000}, \ldots
\]

Here "we may be said at any stage to be 'as far off' unity 'as ever' " (OBSR 17n.1). "Such a sequence suggests the integer 1, and 'points to' such an integer. But an integer is no fraction..." (U-PE 18). True enough; it has a very different mathematical "logic". But surely "in a sort of way and as far as it went" \(\frac{999}{1000}\) would be "a not entirely misleading" representation of the integer 1? If we are to use the analogy of a series at all, God may be a member of no series of increasingly good, powerful or wise men. But the series points towards the nature of the God who is outside the series; his"position" bears some relation to the direction in which the series is developed. Thus, (a) is an appropriate diagram, but (b) and (c) are not:-
Ramsey, however, would seemingly reject all three; preferring instead a model which represented the X ness series by a line or surface, with God placed on another dimension altogether. I would argue that just as \( \frac{22}{7} \) is a good approximation to 1, and \( \pi \approx 3.14159 \) is a good approximation to \( \pi \), and "a polygon with 1,008 sides" is a good approximation to a circle, so also "an exceedingly good man" gives us a good theological approximation to (or representation of) the moral nature of God 40.

The other alternative, the one that Ramsey seems to espouse in the quotations given above, is that some qualifiers rob the original model of all meaning (cf. Harris (MQ) 91). In that case "infinitely good" is not analogous to "good", but is used quite equivocally of God and of men. This would be one, rather radical, way of interpreting Ramsey's assertion that "'perfect', 'infinitely', 'all' are qualifiers directing us to continue such a series along the right lines: to think away any imperfect, finite, limited features of any and all terms in the series" (PR 208). For if one construes the meaning of "good" as inextricably bound up with the limitations of temptation, weakness of will, the struggle with evils that we cannot overcome etc., then only the finite and imperfect can be described as "good". Such a move in theodicy enables its proposer to deny the predication of "goodness"
of God either as a step towards atheism or (as with Ramsey) as an attempt to safeguard religion against the questions posed in the problem of evil. The central question, "How can a good God be morally justified in permitting evil?" is in Ramsey's eyes a confusion:

According to Ramsey this question confuses a logical oddity, namely goodness in God, with a logical commonplace, namely goodness in man. He evidently thinks it no contradiction to say that God is infinitely good and permits evil to occur, though it would be self-contradictory to say that God is very good and permits the occurrence of evils. (Hudson (PAR) 163)

But this move by Ramsey into the realms of equivocity is the death of theology. All discussion and all understanding—indeed all belief—must cease when we no longer have any idea at all of the meaning of the terms we are predicating of God.

I believe, however, that this aspect of Ramsey's thought is something of an aberration. The main thrust of his position allows for a representative-descriptive function for qualified models, and this function is very close to the traditional account of analogical predication. Ramsey strays away from an analogical account of religious language largely because of his strong determination not to mistake language about God for language about Tom, Dick and (even) St. Francis. He expresses this determination on occasions in rather illconsidered and extreme language which leads him off into the realms of agnosticism (cf. Schnetzer 271). But we should not judge Ramsey too harshly, by treating these exaggerated accounts of the distinctive meaning of religious language in isolation from the other parts of his discussion.

The need for Ramsey to understand his qualified models in terms of the doctrine of analogical predication
has been noted by Cohen (Cohen (LRL) 154 - 155). Others have seen, however, that Ramsey's work already goes some way towards meeting this need and provides us with an alternative terminology to that of Thomism for interpreting religious analogies (cf. Owen (CKG) 254 - 255, Gill (IR) 51, Mc Intyre (SC) 63, Swinburne (CD) 25 - 26, Evans (IRTG) 221). I shall consider in more detail later the ways in which Ramsey's approach differs from that of Thomism: cf. Emursus II below.

(C) The Formal Function

Ramsey distinguishes between "first stage discourse" and "wider interpretations" in the language we use about disclosures (FRFI 355); religious language is not therefore all at one level. The language of prayers, hymns and confessions already contains a large number of qualified-models (cf. UP 14 - 15, CD 73, TTST 84, RL 154). The problem of Christian doctrine, Ramsey claims, is "one of systematizing...the motley mixture of phrases which had characterized the Kerygma" (as well, we might add, as the Church's didache and worship): RL 156. This is a second-order activity, involving our reflecting on what has been called the "Primary religious language"41 that arises out of and evokes the cosmic disclosure-situation. The interplay of models and qualifiers is here transcended as we move to the more rarified levels of theological language - i.e. to doctrines and creeds.

As Evans has observed, "A great deal of theology is for Ramsey formal-mode discourse: it is not talk about God, but talk about talk about God" (Evans (IRTG) 222). Ramsey takes over Rudolf Carnap's distinction between the
material and formal modes of speech (5.2). Assertions in the material mode, e.g. "two is a number", are easily confused with similar grammatical forms, e.g. "St. Paul's is a cathedral". The result of such confusion can be that numbers are thought of as types of things. To clarify the situation the original sentence may be recast in the formal mode to read "'two' is a number word". Similarly "The grass is green" is a real object-sentence in the material mode of speech. Whereas the sentences "The word 'grass' is a thing word", and "The word 'green' is a colour word" are both syntactical sentences in the formal mode of speech. Thus sentences about words are said to be in the formal mode and sentences about entities, events etc. are in the material mode.

Ramsey writes of the application of this distinction to religious language:

Too often have men talked as if the way to solve theological problems was by great familiarity with God, when what was needed was a patient and thorough examination of the language being used about him. (H214)

Before judging whether some questions are answerable or not we might be well advised first to translate them into the formal mode when they would reveal their true character, and some might become no more, though no less, than logical questions of consistency and coherence. (ibid, z15).

Let us realise that we shall never be in a position to talk about God's intentions, and that in any case it is not what God can or cannot do, but rather what we can or cannot say about him. (ibid.)

These assertions appear at first sight to be rather sweeping, and Ramsey himself does not follow his own advice consistently. But he has made an important point: that much religious language provides us with "rules for consistent talking" about God, rather than straightforward descriptions of him (RL 84). This may be particularly useful, for example, in analysing God's negative attributes like immutability and
impassibility (cf. RL 50 - 53). According to Ramsey these complexes of models with negating qualifiers do not directly apply to God at all. They have an evocative function but no (positive) representative function - instead they provide us with rules for our consistent God-talk. For example, "they tell us that if anything is 'mutable' it will not be exact currency for God.." (RL 53).

H.P. Owen has questioned Ramsey's rejection of the use of the material mode in theology. As usual Ramsey's replies to direct criticism are illuminating:

Owen: Have our personal models actually a counterpart in God's nature?....Dr. Ramsey says that he would prefer not to speak in the material mode of God's "personality". Yet surely Christians intend their personal descriptions of God to have an objective reference....? (Owen (PTR) 73; cf. PG 70)

Ramsey: Personal descriptions of God have an objective reference:...but God is not merely a person nor yet one of ourselves. We must speak of him as infinitely personal or, as it is more customarily phrased, a "perfect person". But there is no doubt that we can speak of that activity which confronts us in a cosmic disclosure, i.e. God's activity, in terms of words like personality and love, and these as far as they go, will be reliable. (ITR Owen 126)

We may now embrace the preliminary conclusion that Ramsey's position is simply that:

(i) Religious language does not describe God in a straightforward (literal, pictorial) manner. Its "representative" function, however, is safeguarded because it includes metaphors and models which, when suitably qualified, represent God as adequately as any words can. Material mode talk about God will be misleading, however, if we forget its metaphorical function and assume that it is used as a literal description. We must always remember the "logical oddness" of religious language: and this may be made more clear by translation into the formal mode.
(ii) Some religious language, however, has as its main function
the formulation of rules for the religious language user,
"logical rules" for our consistent theological talking; and
such doctrines do not use representative models at all (cf.
MDA 46 - 47).

It may be helpful at this point to note some
particular examples of Ramsey's analysis of religious
language as formal language rules:
(a) Christology: Ramsey comments in his paper "Logical
Empiricism and Patristics", that "doctrines are not
rightly understood as descriptions of God; they provide
rules for, guides to, the best ways of theological talking
that we can devise" (LEP 542). He goes on to illustrate
this remark by reference to the doctrine of communicatio
idiomatum which, Ramsey claims, does not describe the
relation between the two natures of Christ, but tells
us how "two logically different languages can...be united...
by language of a different logical order altogether" (e.g.
"Person" language: ibid. 545; cf. RL 168, WG 3 - 9, PR 200 - 201).
(b) The Trinity: In a similar way Ramsey views the doctrine
of the Trinity as a "means of specifying in terms of models
for unity the logical relations between those three strands
of discourse (["Father"-language, "Son"-language and "Spirit"
language] to ensure that together they do all that the word
'God' goes for the theist or Jew, and much more besides" (TL 38;
cf. RL 174 - 179, Trinity ) Other related, "highly
stylized" doctrines, e.g. the concepts of hyparxis and
perichóresis, serve solely "as mnemonics - slogan reminders -
to suggest various logical rules... their purpose is to guide
our paths in Christian discourse which proceeds from a
multitude of models" (LDA 46; cf. also RL 157 - 158).

(c) God's attributes: Ramsey also invokes his formal mode analysis, as we have seen, with regard to God's personal (and impersonal) attributes. He argues that such predications are best understood as claims that personal (and impersonal) language may be used about God (PG 70). He makes a similar analysis of God's "negative attributes" (RL 53) and of such attributes as his "condescension" or "self limitation" (RL 84). Further, "To talk of God in terms of 'unity' means... that the word 'God' unities all the diversity of language which is used to talk about the world around us" (RL 59); "simplicity" and "perfection" have a similar function. Activities of God which are relevant to theodicy (treatment, "choice" etc.) are treated in comparable ways in Ramsey's article on Hell (pp. 213 - 214).

(d) Duty and God's Will: When theologians argue that God is the source of all duty they are expressing in the material mode the formal truth that "Duty" and "God's will" are alternative descriptions, but that the latter is contextually more comprehensive than the former (FI 55).

(e) Creeds: Ramsey extends his claims about particular doctrines to the Creeds themselves: "the Creeds are the first and classic essay in consistency and give us rules to guide all subsequent discourse... they may be roughly compared to the rules of the game..." (OBRS 87; cf. CPCF 57).

The Athanasian Creed, therefore, is "for the most part... purely formal", "It provides rules... it gives the symbol ['God'] an appropriate logical structure" (RL 179). Baptismal Creeds "were designed to incorporate... a number of theological strands as identified the figure of Jesus"; Conciliar Creeds "met problems which arose from the uneasy conjunction
of various strands, and...provide us with logical rules for the better ordering of Christian discourse" (U-Credo 5; cf. OBSR 52 - 54). But Ramsey also acknowledges that words in the Creeds (e.g. "uncreate") have, in addition to their formal function as rules for our God-talk, the evocative function of qualifiers which develop a model until the disclosure occurs (e.g. RL 176). I would add that they also have the more "material", representative function of standing for what is disclosed (cf. below).

We may now concentrate our attention on the examples of theological language (e.g. the doctrine of perichoresis) that Ramsey claims have no representative function whatsoever. Ramsey describes them as "mnemonics" or "slogan-reminders" which "suggest various logical rules" (MDA 46). He goes on in strident tones:

They are not, not models...They are of a different logical order altogether, for their purpose is to guide our paths in Christian discourse which proceeds from a multitude of models. (ibid)

Unlike model-based religious language, these doctrines or "highly stylized logical stories" (MDA 54) are justified not...primarily in terms of the empirical fit of the discourse to which they lead, but rather in terms of coherence and consistency and comprehensiveness and simplicity of the total Christian scheme..." (MDA 47). They are, in short, "rules for our consistent talking" (RL 84; emphasis added).

Ramsey clearly believes that even with regard to these examples, he is still only describing the function that these doctrines originally had for their authors (i.e. a Descriptive Analysis in Jeffner's terminology), although he would probably be willing to claim that his analysis does not fit the way
they thought that they were using such language (cf. Jeffner's Descriptive 2 analysis). But surely Ramsey is actually presenting here a "constructive" theory (again using Jeffner's terms) of how theologians should view (use) such language. For Ramsey believes that doctrinal language is widely misunderstood today by being treated as in some way descriptive. Some of us commit, he claims, "the grave error" of taking "these highly stylized logical stories, as pictures of God" (MDA 46 - 47).

What can we make of Ramsey's position here? We must first of all give Ramsey's "formal analysis" of religious discourse at least a qualified welcome. For it does provide us with a technique for rehabilitating a large number of doctrines from the pens of patristic, mediaeval, Reformation and post-Reformation theologians; as well, indeed, as certain "doctrines" of Biblical theology. We can continue to gain some value from these doctrines by interpreting them in the formal mode, as "talk about talk about God". Interpreted literally, on the other hand, many of them do rather sound like crude attempts at "super-scientific" descriptions of God's actions or working parts. This may be best illustrated by what we might call "mythological" religious language, of which language about "The Fall" affords a good example.

Many would claim that such language represents no actual event in the past - whether empirical or meta-empirical - whatever. In such a case we can only continue to use the language by reinterpreting it, and one way of doing so would be "reinterpreting the claim in terms of language" (RL 82). Ramsey argues that "the doctrine of the Fall is first and foremost consistency-language" (ibid.) the use of which,
especially if we are thinking of a "pre-mundane" Fall, enables us to overcome "incipient dualism" in our theology (U-HA: "The Problem of Evil T 65", 1965, p. 2; cf. U-PE 27–28). A similar analysis could presumably be applied to the doctrine of the Virgin Birth, although Ramsey does not invoke it in this case (cf. RL 131–133).

However two points must now be made:

(i) It is too much to claim that the theologians who originally propounded such doctrines treated them as rules for doing theology, and not (in some sense) as "descriptive" representations of God's nature and activities, or of other "heavenly" (or even "earthly") things and events.

(ii) Even rules need some justification, unless they are adopted entirely arbitrarily. Surely the ultimate justification of doctrinal rules is that they guide us in the production of a consistent systematic theology which does in fact adequately represent the nature and activity of God. Ramsey presumably would accept this point; but it can be taken further. For Ramsey does not provide us with any convincing examples of "rules" which cannot be treated—if properly understood as qualified, analogical language—as "representations" in some sense or another. Thus, for example, we have a rule instructing us to unite the "logical strands" of Father—, Son—, and Spirit—language when constructing our doctrine of God. But the justification for this rule is that a Trinitarian doctrine of God more adequately represents his nature than any other account which might be proposed. And as the "rule" comes to us couched in the material mode as a set of statements about God, rather than in imperative or formal-mode language, to treat it as a "rule" is to move the doctrine of the Trinity one place further back. It is to convert it from a doctrine
about God into a set of rules for constructing the doctrine of God. But our doctrine of God must itself be assessed in the material mode in terms of its adequacy as a representation of God. So this manoeuvre gains nothing in the long run, except in so far as it reminds us once again of the figurative nature of religious language.

There are, of course, very great dangers in taking a formal mode analysis of religious language too far. And Ramsey does seem on occasions to do just that. He berates John Hick and others for speaking in the material mode of God, claiming that "It is not what God can or cannot do, but rather what we can or cannot say about him" (H 215). But if we convert as much theology into the formal mode as Ramsey seems to wish we shall end up with plenty of language about religious language, but none that we are allowed to apply to God himself. Would this not be the "verbal idolatry" which Ramsey himself claims to abhor?

Significantly enough in a discussion in "Fact, Metaphysics & God" Ramsey stresses the necessity of "translating" language back into the material mode after analysing its use in the formal mode. He contends there that "even with the formal mode we have still some sort of existential reference to be elucidated" (U-F1G 1/30/32), and goes on:

after translation we have without doubt sentences about symbols, nevertheless these still imply some sort of talk about "things" albeit at a different level of abstraction ....It is not the case that there is no reference to fact once the translation has been made, but that the sort of fact which is then involved is curiously elusive one which somehow or other involves the subject as well. (U-F1G 1/32/34)

These remarks relate to Ramsey's views about metaphysical language, but they also indicate that even a formal mode
analysis of a piece of language does not rule out the
possibility of its having a representative function. It is
interesting to note that much of the material in U-FMG on this
topic derives from Ramsey's Cambridge manuscript on "Experience
and Personality". And in that paper he adds:

We might very properly think and talk about
numbers without thinking of cows or sheep...
But to talk about the word "God" is in some
very proper sense to talk about God himself.
(U-EP 21)

It is a great pity that Ramsey does not seem to have recognized
this in his later writings as clearly or as explicitly as
was necessary.

5. Complementary Language, Paradoxes and Religion

In discussing the problem of the application of
both personal and impersonal language to God, Ramsey writes:

It is rather as if a scientist of an older day
asked: "How can something - light - be both a wave
and a particle?" Instead of asking the much more
tractable question: "What is the logic of discourse
about light when wave mechanics models part of the
discourse, and particle mechanics the rest?". What
theologians have to do...is something like what
Bohm has done...in the wave-particle case by giving
a harmonious mathematical treatment to what seems
to be two disparate approaches. What theologians
must do is to give such an account of the word "God"
as makes it possible to model it in both personal
and impersonal terms, a task which at least in
principle is only like discovering (say) that
discourse both about straight lines and ellipses
can be harmonised within discourse about a cone.
(Review Naclagan 297 - 298)

Ramsey treats theological paradoxes in a similar fashion, as
propositions "about the use of words" (PR 209):

The basic problem in assessing and defending
religious paradox is how words can be both
united with yet distinguished from verifiably
descriptive words - however many sorts of
"description" there be; what logical behaviour
can we give to words which are to be united
with verifiably descriptive words, without
themselves being verifiably descriptive? (ibid.)
How, for example, can the word God both be united with words like "table", "human being" etc. (i.e. how can God be "immanent"), and also be "a word of unique logical status different in its logical behaviour from all other nouns" (i.e. how can God - also - be "transcendent").

Ramsey cites the parallel of the wave-particle (or "wavicle") paradox more than once in his discussion of theological language (cf. also PG 70). It provided him with an attractive justification from the realm of science for the use of two different, though complementary, languages about one entity or situation. This is a problem, as we have seen, not only with regard to our use of personal and impersonal, or immanent and transcendent, language about God; but also for our use of human language and divine language about Jesus (cf. LEP 545, RL 168 - 169), and our use of "Duty" and "God's will" as "two alternative descriptions" (PL 55) of a moral claim. In discussing such topics theologians, like scientists, "must be content to use at one and the same time, languages of different logical structure about similar situations" (RSP 80).

As W.H. Austin has noted, Ramsey does not press any further the analogy between theology and science in their complementary use of different models. Austin's own proposal is that in science and religion:

models are called complementary if both must be used in an investigation, but the use of each imposes limitations on the freedom and precision with which the other can be developed. Thus a "complementarist interpretation" of the paradox of love and justice in God would assert (1) that behind the paradox lie the models Merciful Father and Stern Judge, (2) that theologians need both models in their interpretation of experience,
but (3) that the need to preserve both restricts the way that each can be developed. (W.H. Austin (MP) 42; cf. ibid. 54)

However, in discussing religious paradoxes Ramsey concentrates on the evocative function and the formal function of religious language and largely ignores its representative, analogical use (cf. Barbour (MP) 63; Cohen (Thesis) 177). Ramsey seems to believe that religious paradox (i.e. "apparent contradiction") only arises when people interpret the different models in multi-model theological discourse as picturing models which all serve as literal descriptions of the same entity (cf. PO passim). Question: How can God be both a "Father" and a "Rock"? Clearly he cannot if both words are applied literally to God. Ramsey's answer to the question (Answer 1) is that God is both "Father" and "Rock" in the sense that the disclosure of God may be evoked by father-language and by Rock-language. Such a theological paradox dissolves, Ramsey claims, when both kinds of language are "harmonised by being tracked back to the same kind of situation" (PR 208; cf. RFT 35), when we read theology "backwards, back into the disclosure of God" (H 221; cf also FI 148, OBSR 16, PR 208, CD 55). The paradox of God's omnipotence and our free-will is therefore resolved in so far as we come to know the omnipotent God in a disclosure (reached by the qualification of "powerfulness" by "all") which is at the same time a self-disclosure in which we realise our freedom (cf. FI 59 - 60). Similarly, God can be both "loving" and "impassible" for "'God is impassible'...is to be understood by its ability to evoke in terms of 'passibility' stories...the characteristic theological situation" and "God is loving" (or rather, "God is infinitely loving") has a similar evocative function. Thus "Each assertion evokes the suitably odd situation" and
"each claims an odd positioning for the word 'God' " (RL 89; cf. PR 207 – 209).

The formal function of religious language also may be invoked to solve a religious paradox. Thus the Christological doctrine that Christ's person united his human and divine natures, which were nevertheless separate and distinct, is extremely paradoxical. It may be resolved, Ramsey claims, by being treated in the formal mode: "while words about 'human nature' and 'God' are logically diverse, yet they have to be mixed to talk about Jesus Christ"(PR 200). But this is a relatively minor feature in Ramsey's analysis of religious paradox, and he hints himself (cf. PR 201, 209, 216) that the paradoxical language involved must be traced back to a disclosure-situation for a completely satisfactory resolution. For Ramsey this means that an analysis in terms of the evocative function of religious language must be invoked at some stage or other.

But Answer 1, of course, is only half the story. We must also offer Answer 2: that both "Father" and "Rock" may be used to represent God if they are used analogically, and if the analogical development of each model is such that it becomes compatible with the analogy derived from the other. Thus God is "father-like" in the sense that he loves, cares and provides; he is also "rock-like" in the sense that he is dependable, permanent and a source of "shade" and "rest". God is not in every respect like a human father, even less is he in every respect like a rock. This answer is entirely in line with Ramsey's view of the representative function of models 47; he neglects to provide it himself
only because he has become "bemused by the evocative function of religious models (cf. Austin (MMP) 43, Smart (PR) 222 – 226; also CD 35 – 44).

In his paper "Paradox in Religion", Ramsey classifies paradoxes in the following manner:

(a) avoidable paradox "which spotlights some confusion or other" (PR 196). This is (obviously!) avoidable, and can be removed from our discourse. There are two types:–

(i) retrospectively negative paradoxes are cleared up by retracing our argument. They usually involve category mistakes; failures to distinguish between logically distinct types of discourse (e.g. confusing the meanings of "pre-existence" in Wisdom-language, Messiah-language, and Logos-language: PR 198 – 199). Here we have "utterly unrevealing paradox generating bogus questions"; the sort of paradox, Ramsey notes, which unfortunately "characterises not a little doctrinal speculation" (ibid. 199).

(ii) subsequently significant paradoxes are only avoided when we are led through the two assertions which give rise to the paradox to a new assertion, a sort of Hegelian synthesis. The wave-particle paradox offers a secular example, for the theories of Bohm and others seek to overcome the paradox in a more comprehensive hypothesis. In theology there is the paradox of the divine-human nature of Christ which theologians seek to resolve in terms of "hypostatic unity", "Person" etc. (200).

(b) Unavoidable paradox, however, is permanent and irreducible. It arises in our attempts "to describe what is both 'seen and unseen' in language primarily suited to observables" (203).
This may be construed in one of two ways:

(i) **logically inaccessible paradoxes**. This phrase serves to denote an empty class according to Ramsey. Others, however (Ramsey mentions Tertullian, Kierkegaard, Barth, McPherson and MacIntyre), would place all unavoidable paradoxes, perhaps all paradoxes, in this category. Such paradoxes, as the name implies, allow of no logical examination or assessment whatever.

(ii) **logically explorable paradoxes**, on the other hand, have "a discernable, if curious structure in virtue of which [they become] revealing" (196). Ramsey argues:

> Any unavoidable religious paradox will be defensible only in so far as it can be so structured as to be evocative of a disclosure situation comprising "what is seen and more" (216).

Ramsey thus allows for "genuine mystery in the sense that 'what there is' is not restricted to observables" and suggests "that it is as apt currency for such mystery that there arises 'mysterious paradox', which is then neither a vicious muddle nor an inaccessible incantation, but paradox whose structure can be investigated and explored" (218). And here we return to Ramsey's treatment of models and qualifiers and (particularly) their evocative role, as well as to his account of the logic of "I". For Ramsey also goes on to note that "'I' is the best ...clue to all genuine mystery, all sublime paradox, and all revealing impropriety" (ibid.; cf. BPEII 16). I, like God, "gives rise to unavoidable paradox in virtue of having to be both associated with verifiable descriptions, yet distinguished from any or all of them" (215). And this is true of I as it is true of God, because both are known in a situation of disclosure. Religious paradoxes are similar to the rest of religious language in
that they are rendered intelligible only by the unveiling of the religious disclosures behind them. But for Ramsey this involves focussing on the evocative and formal functions of disclosure-based language, whereas an analysis in terms of its representative function is surely more significant.
6. Ramsey's General Approach to Metaphysics

Ramsey recognizes that much of Christian theology has the logic of a metaphysical scheme; fortunately he believes that doing metaphysics is a real possibility, even for a contemporary empiricist (cf. CP CF 53, PPMT 173).

He concludes his paper on "Facts and Disclosures" with the claim that:

we can talk of "facts" in relation to religious discourse when such talk registers a claim for objectivity, and what is objectively disclosed, being more than the appearances in and through which it is disclosed, has the chance of being rightly called "metaphysical". (FD 133)

Ramsey regards the basic claim of both metaphysics and religion as the claim that situations exist that are empirical and more (cf. CE 181, CPL 246, Emp R 162, MRIC 308, FI 152, PPMT 174, RSCS 64 etc.).

We have already had occasion to note some aspects of the development of Ramsey's views on metaphysics from the time of his earliest writing on the subject. It would appear that this development continued along the same lines during Ramsey's time at Oxford and Durham. T.W. Tilley, who has carefully mapped the stages in Ramsey's intellectual journey, notes that he soon "stopped working as a metaphysician and began focussing on the philosophical problems of religious language and discovering the necessary and sufficient conditions for justifiable religious language" (Tilley (Thesis) 268). The reason for this, Tilley claims, is that Ramsey "saw that the task of staking a claim for faith did not entail articulating a metaphysical system, but only showing the metaphysical conditions for making such a claim" (ibid, 269).
We may readily agree with this interpretation. A survey of Ramsey's work from the time he took up his chair at Oxford (1931) to the date of his death (1972) reveals clearly a shift of emphasis. The attempt to construct a full-blown metaphysic, that dominated his thought at Cambridge, is still present in his inaugural lecture on "Miracles" in 1951. It is expressed also in his 1952 paper on "The Challenge of Contemporary Philosophy to Christianity". The typescript for "Fact, Metaphysics and God" (pre-1960) has a much more detailed - but, as we shall see, in the end rather different-understanding of metaphysics. But this treatise was never published and Ramsey's only other work on metaphysics, i.e. his essay "On the Possibility & Purpose of a Metaphysical Theology" (lecture delivered 1959) and chapter 3 of RSCS (lectures of 1960), are even more tentative and far less ambitious. Thereafter Ramsey's attention seems to have been diverted into more analytical channels, in particular towards the exposition and defence of his theories of the qualified-model and the disclosure-situation. Perhaps he sensed that his own metaphysical speculations were over-ambitious; or, at least, that the time was not ripe to pursue them.

It has been my intention in the body of this thesis to present, as far as is possible, an account of Ramsey's latest thoughts. I have tended, therefore, in my own study of Ramsey, to devote most attention to his last pieces of writing. Although I have drawn heavily on earlier works, I have always tried to ensure that the passages cited from these works were consonant with Ramsey's more mature position. In the case of Ramsey's work on metaphysics,
however, this task is particularly difficult because of the almost total lack of evidence about his views on such matters during the last ten years of his life. All I can attempt here is an exposition and critique of the various themes in Ramsey's metaphysical thinking as they appeared at different stages (and occasionally throughout) his "later period". But I am persuaded that much of the pre-1960 material is only of limited value for the understanding of the final stages of Ramsey's thought. By then his major interest was in religious language and its disclosure-basis. Metaphysics was, of course, still "possible"—indeed it was still necessary—but only as an "empirical metaphysics" 52. Indeed his interest in metaphysics seems to have shrunk to a concern to argue for (a) its disclosure-basis, and (b) its distinctive logic (which should never be confused with that of scientific language). In *Models for Divine Activity* (the Zenos lectures of 1966, subsequently revised and published posthumously), Ramsey wrote:

> I see models and disclosures as making possible the rehabilitation of a metaphysics. But this will never be a metaphysics of a super-scientific brand. It will be a metaphysics whose motifs are insight and tentativeness. (MDA 53; cf. PI 152)

It is convenient at this point to take up the more negative characterisation of metaphysics alluded to above. Ramsey always insisted that whatever metaphysics was, it was not a "super-science":

> The metaphysician is not a recluse shut off from human affairs whose intensive peering discerns a counter-part world. He is not engaged in a remarkable kind of scientific enquiry, remarkable not least in costing virtually nothing. (DCCD 10; cf. RL 171, TTST 76)
Ramsey himself espouses a "new approach to theology" which employs the methods and tools of logical empiricism "rather than classical meta-physics with its traditional categories and all too detailed ontologies" (Emp R 162 - 163). The danger of the latter type of philosophical approach was that it was couched in a language whose logical complexity was easily overlooked resulting in "ontological lumber" fit only as "fuel to warm up controversy":

No tears need be shed for those profound "objects" which have hitherto been thought to be open to inspection in the super-scientific laboratories of the metaphysicians—Substances, Accidents, Essences, Being, Potency.... Nothing. I do not say that such words as I have quoted are theologically worthless, but I do say that they must be given a logical placing very different from that which is traditionally read into them, when they become features of a countryside known only to ghosts who chance for the moment to inhabit machines. (ibid. 163; cf. RL 185, CSC 46)

The greatest danger in doing metaphysics is the danger of submitting to the same temptation that lures the user of religious language to disaster—i.e. treating what is logically odd and disclosure-based as if it were logically straightforward and derived only from sense experience. A predilection for flat, descriptive, "object" language is as disastrous in metaphysics as it is in theology.
7. "Descriptive" Metaphysics

Although Ramsey is primarily concerned to disabuse his fellow theologians of the mistaken idea that metaphysics is a highly esoteric and sophisticated skill by means of which we can "observe" and "describe" the nature and functions of God or the Absolute, in another context his treatment of metaphysics may appropriately be designated as "descriptive". P.F. Strawson has distinguished between "descriptive" and "revisionary" metaphysics along these lines:

Descriptive metaphysics is content to describe the actual structures of our thought about the world, revisionary metaphysics is concerned to produce a better structure. (Strawson (I) 9)

Ramsey remarks that Strawson does "take 'the world' (whatever that is) and particulars (whatever they are) rather too much for granted"; and he would wish to plead, in particular (in a reference to the thesis of Strawson's Individuals), that "there is more to persons and their significance than that the concept of a person is logically primitive" (CPCF 51; cf. DPI 44, M.I. 41). However, Ramsey remains sympathetic to Strawson's general approach to metaphysics and increasingly avoids the temptation to over indulge in "revisionary" metaphysics. He applauds the approach of a metaphysics which has "more concern for the concrete than for the abstract" (CPCF 50, cf. ibid. 53), a metaphysics that has its feet on the ground of actual situations and actual uses of language. However, such situations and uses of language are themselves often rather peculiar. "The metaphysician," Ramsey claims, "must both appeal to an odd experience and use odd language" (Review Wisdom 54).
6. Metaphysics as "Map-Making"

Ramsey was very fond of the metaphor of map-making and applied it to both theology and metaphysics, viewing the latter as "a form of cartography in which man attempts to plot his cosmic position" (Richmond 124). He took over from contemporary philosophical analysis the phrase "logical mapping", using it with reference to the task of analysing the informal logic of discourse (cf. p. 3 - 4, OE 183, Review Heinemann 200, MI 71). He saw the metaphysician's task as that of coming to an understanding of the distinctive logical structures of different types of discourse, by the construction of a metaphysical language that would serve to illuminate and unify all other languages. Thus the job of metaphysics is to "formulate some language scheme by which we can the better understand and find our way about in the language of commonsense" (U-ITR VPZ 2); "Metaphysics now becomes possible as language associated with some attitude to the Universe, with some novel viewpoint which spotlights features of the Universe which would be otherwise ignored" (U-CSCPT 1).

Ramsey views reality as "one territory" in relation to which we are faced with the problem "of sorting the different languages which endeavour to map it in the whole or part" (Review Macalagan 298). Such different languages - or different maps - "display different pictures of the countryside, each language, scientific or historical, for example, displays its own brand of 'facts' " (H 4). The main item on the metaphysicians agenda is to construct "one comprehensive language map which would link together, for example, the words of science and history" (Ibid.). Such a unifying role cannot be played by any of the languages...
of the different disciplines of knowledge, because of their restricted, specialized, viewpoints. Even the sciences cannot fulfill this function: "for what exceeds the language of science are the very disclosures which scientific method itself demands" (RSP 68).

Here Ramsey reveals his conviction that metaphysics is essentially a quest for unity:

belief in God - and, I would say, the holding of any metaphysical scheme - is...a positing of unity in a world view which is then subjected to empirical and logical criteria. (sic - U-ITR Evans 4; FI 109, E 43)

As this passage indicates, Ramsey recognized theism as "a typical metaphysics" in that it provided a large-scale map "by which to illuminate and organize the diverse assertions of ordinary language" (PFT 158). Belief in God is a map "which we bring to bear on the universe" a map "with which we explore the universe" (RFT 32). But Ramsey recognizes that there are a variety of "rival maps" to choose from within the general category of theology and theistic metaphysics. Such maps, for example, differ in their placing of the presence of evil in a created world (cf. U-HA: "The Problem of Evil T 65", 1965, p1.; U-FE 9).

Just as the maps provided by the particular disciplines are never to be regarded as final, for they are the result of an exploration of a mystery (MM 46), so the metaphysician's map-making must also be viewed as "ever tentative" (Review Watson 132). But although even a total language map cannot be an "exact fit" (CPL 337) this "does not mean that any map is as good as any other, still less that maps do not matter at all" (CD 26). On the contrary our rationality demands that
we seek the most comprehensive and unified understanding of reality - the most complete and large-scale map - that it is possible for us to find. But Ramsey warns us against *a priori* speculation as a source of such a map. It is essential that our map is constructed on the basis of the actual nature of the countryside, and not in any armchair fashion. It is the cardinal sin of the *a priori* theologian or metaphysician that he insists that his map "fits" the terrain "no matter what the country is like" (U-TM 14). Ramsey, as the descriptive metaphysician, is anxious to avoid such pitfalls.

In his essay "On the Possibility and Purpose of a Metaphysical Theology", Ramsey explains his concept of "maps" by means of three examples of non-metaphysical maps:

(i) the *mathematical* map, "which brought alongside common-sense language, can help to unite what is apparently diverse, can help us to attain wide sweeps of generalization" (PPMT 155). Thus, for example, we observe waves on the sea, the vibration of bridges and the phenomena of electromagnetic radiation and interpret them all with the help of some geometrical "map".

(ii) the *logical* map, "is a scheme, more or less complex, less or more unified, whose purpose is to illuminate, as and where it can, the connexions between assertions which occur in ordinary discourse" (ibid.). The logician devises a formal set of systematic rules which can be applied to ordinary language, although they never exactly "fit" such language - for ordinary language has no systematic logic of its own.
(iii) the **scientific** map is a theory which, when "brought alongside" ordinary language, illuminates and explains what was hitherto unexplained (157). Thus, for example, the theory of refraction resolves our puzzles about the "bent" stick half immersed in water.

Metaphysics, claims Ramsey, resembles such examples in that it is an "ancillary scheme" (157). But it is an ancillary scheme which has a larger scale - for "metaphysics is concerned with 'Reality' " (158). The metaphysical scheme also possesses a logical character which is different both from the logic of ordinary language and from the logics of other ancillary schemes. Metaphysics may use terms suggested, for example, by the sciences as "metaphysical integrators" (162) in its "venture after unity" - its "endeavour to provide a scheme of maximum interpretative power" (160).

Such concepts - e.g. substance, process, activity - are not, however, merely scientific concepts. They are "not native to any of the languages of science" but are disclosure-given (162 - 163). For metaphysics is not just the construction of (yet another) map; it is "the construction of a map in accordance with a vision of the unseen" (163) - i.e. with a disclosure-situation (174).

Ramsey is emphatic that such a total, over-all map can never be produced within the scientific languages themselves. The reason for this is that integration within the sciences can only take place by our replacing talk about logically diverse areas (light, heat, magnetism, electricity etc.) by talk at a more generalized level (e.g. mass, velocity, energy). Thus, in science, "any gain in comprehensiveness seems to be
at the expense of particularity”; it is achieved by "replacing diversity by more generalized and less diverse schemes" (161).

But "Each generalization, each theory, has its significance which is never wholly taken over by another" (RSP 88).

Scientific language is thus permanently incomplete:

The gain in scientific coverage, which comes from expansibility and convertibility, seems always to be at the expense of increased abstraction — saying less and less about that part of the concrete situation with and from which a beginning was made, in order to say more and more about the concrete totality of facts over which scientific language is farther and farther extended. (17)

Ramsey argues that there is only one way in which science can preserve its ideal of providing us with one language map of the universe:

It needs assertions which can interlock with scientific assertions and yet not be themselves scientific. (RSCS 7y; cf. 17, RSP 88).

He holds that "I exist" and "God exists" can provide such "an integrating centre for scientific assertions" (RSCS 7y n.2). For these assertions, as we have seen, are entailed by all sorts of scientific assertions but themselves entail none of them (RSP 69). "I" and "God" are metaphysical words with an odd — because more-than-scientific — logic; words which integrate, respectively, the diverse languages about the body and its behaviour and the diverse languages about the world. Armed with such words we now have the possibility of realizing our "unified map" (RSCS 81).
How valuable is Ramsey's map-making analogy? There is some point in using the map : world relationship as an analogy for the language : world relationship when we are analysing descriptive languages. For such language is an attempt to "portray" in a different medium entities in the world and the relations between them. There is that much truth at least in the Logical Atomism of Russell and the early Wittgenstein. Descriptive language, like a map, can help us to find our way about the world because there is this "picturing" relationship between language and the world. The metaphor may be appropriately extended so that we speak of different descriptive languages - the languages of the sciences and of some other disciplines - as different maps mapping the same world. Thus a certain area of countryside might be mapped by a geological map, a map of political/administrative boundaries, a population distribution map, a map of climate, a map showing historical sites etc. They all provide alternative and complementary descriptions of the same reality.

However, Ramsey develops the metaphor by asking, "How can these different maps be unified?". And his answer turns out to be "By a 'larger-scale' map". But here the cartographical metaphor begins to break down. For the only way in which we can "integrate" different maps is by producing one super-map (the actual "scale" is irrelevant) which includes all the information on those other maps. Such a map, like the sub-maps, operates as a straightforward "map description" of the territory under survey. No one map can by itself "integrate" all the other maps in any other fashion-
we can expect no more from map-integration. But Ramsey does appear to expect more, for the metaphysical "map" clearly has a different "logic" from all the other "maps" (whether viewed separately or in combination). Such a metaphysical "map", however, is outside the range of the map metaphor. For maps, like scientific languages, are essentially descriptive; whereas metaphysics in Ramsey's view includes reference to what is non-observable and cannot be described (FI 152 etc.). For this reason metaphysics cannot help us to "find our way about the world", except in a very attenuated understanding of that phrase. For the metaphysical "map" does not relate in any direct manner to the world. It serves rather to answer our own ultimate questions about the metaphysical status and "coherence" of the world, without enabling us to deduce anything from it about the empirical universe. That, after all, is the nature of metaphysics. Every metaphysical scheme must be compatible with all actual states of affairs in the world - for they must all have been taken into account in devising the scheme. Idealism and realism, theism and atheism, monism and dualism are all compatible with the empirical world of the descriptive sciences. The empirical world is compatible with each of them, and cannot be used to decide between them.

I feel, therefore, that Ramsey is rather straining the metaphor in speaking of a "metaphysical map". Super-maps do not integrate other maps in the way that a metaphysical scheme integrates other (descriptive) schemes. Metaphysical schemes cannot be tested against the world in the way that a super-map can be. It would appear that the integrative scheme of metaphysics is more analogous to the map-reader
than to any map before him. For it is the individual (or community) who is able most completely to integrate - i.e., unite and systematically relate - the data that the diverse maps portray. And he does this by his own intellectual understanding and without attempting to draw another map. Only the map-reader, and not another map, can sufficiently transcend the descriptive to do metaphysics: i.e. both to speak of the "metaphysical status" of the maps and to build on experiences of realities that are meta-empirical and therefore in principle unmappable.

9. The "Hierarchy of Language"

The map metaphor is essentially a metaphor of "areas". In his early explorations\(^5\), however, Ramsey seemed to prefer to speak of "strata" or "levels"\(^6\) of language, suggesting that there exists a hierarchy of language which has profound implications for theistic metaphysics. Ramsey observes:

A language map which aims at adequacy and comprehensiveness must contain words used at many different "levels". (CCP 259)

A sufficient, although not a necessary, condition for words \(w_1\) and \(w_2\) to be used at two different levels is that "a sentence which contains \(w_1\) and \(w_2\) should be nonsense of a particular kind" (ibid.): for example: "the exponential base of logarithms is green". Group words and member words are at different levels of the hierarchy of language, as are other units of language whose different "logics" result, on mixing, in a "category mistake" (ibid. 256). Similarly the languages of biology, mathematics, physics, ethics and poetry are all at different levels, for "each
language gives its own insight into the situation, and this is roughly what is meant by saying that each language represents a particular level" (U-TLIE 2).

In a draft for "Fact, Metaphysics, and God", Ramsey writes of the abstractive levels of language. "Travelling in a train" is a concrete situation which is a "function" of the constituent experiences of:

sitting in a compartment,
walking in a corridor etc.

Each of these situations may be analysed further, for example, into:

reading a newspaper, or
kicking a suitcase,

thus constructing a sequence of levels of increasing abstraction (U-FHG Draft 6/3 - 6/4). Such facts are not all "at the same level of concretion" (6/5). Rather they are of different logical types for they cannot be substituted for one another without the "level mixing" (6/8) of the category mistake (cf. U-FHG 3/9/47 - 3/14/52).

Ramsey's discussion begins to sound a little artificial at this point, for it is by no means clear that all such "level mixing" would be as disastrous as the "type trespass" that results in such nonsense as "Muscle = $\sqrt{\text{Tendon}}$" (cf. LEP 545). What Ramsey is attempting here is the incorporation of his earlier views on the significance of abstractive into a new explication of the nature of language and metaphysics. He claims that a total language map would consist of "subordinate languages" made up of words used at different levels (CCP 260; cf. M14,15). Such languages - mathematics, history, ethics, the sciences etc. - all have
their own distinctive logical structures. But Ramsey, qua metaphysician, seeks to unite them and thus produce one map which would have a hierarchically organized structure and which would reflect a "corresponding hierarchy of facts in the world", there being an appropriate brand of fact for each language level (CCP 260 - 261). Ramsey contends that although the subordinate languages of the hierarchy are infinite ("they can go on and on and be developed further and further"), the overall total language must be finite, since "fact is given" and "we cannot talk about anything we jolly well like" (CCP 261). Ramsey interprets this limitation as implying that "our language hierarchy shall have something like what Whitehead would call an apex" (ibid.). "God" is such an apex word "which effects the final closing of the linguistic hierarchy, that word which is the ultimate co-ordinating word to make our total language finite" (ibid. 264).

I have drawn the above argument mainly from Ramsey's paper, "The Challenge of Contemporary Philosophy to Christianity". There he traces his view of a language hierarchy back to Russell; indicating, however, that whereas Russell accepted a hierarchy of language he acknowledged only "one brand of fact" - i.e. sense-data (CCP 258; cf. ibid. 260). In "Fact, Metaphysics & God" Ramsey develops this argument in more detail, dealing first of all with Russell's notion of an "incomplete symbol": a concept deriving from Russell's Theory of Descriptions. Russell argued that expressions that are definite or indefinite descriptions do not need to denote anything in order to have a meaning. To describe such an expression as an "incomplete symbol" implies "that the meaning of any sentence in which it occurs can be spelled out in such
a way that the resulting sentence no longer contains the expression or any synonym for it" (Ayer (R) 54 - 55; cf. Russell (LA) 99 - 112, 120 - 121). Logical constructions - e.g. "the average man" - are incomplete symbols.

For Russell a physical object word, e.g. "table", was also an incomplete symbol - a logical construction out of sense-data: a "logical fiction" (Russell (LA) 111). Ramsey, however, denies both that any symbol is perfectly complete (or incomplete), and that there is any sacrosanct level of fact:

The conclusion of all this is then that we have two hierarchies - of language and of fact. The hierarchy of language displays degrees of completeness in the symbols that are used at its various levels, and there comes the idea of a series of complementary languages. But along side all this goes also (we would claim) a hierarchy of facts of which sense-data represent only one particular abstractive set. (U-FHG 1/14/16)

Ramsey explicitly parallels Russell's theory of incompleteness in relation to symbols with Bradley's degrees of truth, and the corresponding hierarchy of facts with Bradley's "degrees of reality" (ibid.). The phrase "abstractive set" also has a taste of Whitehead about it; and Ramsey does in fact develop his metaphysics in an ongoing debate with all three philosophers.

Bradley, Ramsey claims, is "very suggestive" about the construction of abstractive hierarchies proceeding from a "given" and "most concrete" fact - his "felt totality". All the facts of ordinary discourse are abstractions from this concrete datum (U-FHG B1/81); there is then in Bradley an "abstractive hierarchy of 'facts' " (ibid. B1/82). Ramsey goes on to claim that:
Bradley's view of an abstractive hierarchy of fact, though he never says this, demands an hierarchical view about language. At the top of this hierarchy of language would come for Bradley one word only, viz. "Absolute", and his general picture would be of a language hierarchy spread out from this word as vertex.

This word "covers everything...Its reference is most concrete; it is empirically rich; it is linguistically helpless; what might be called from another point of view, a parasite. Here is a term possessing zero generality and relating to fact at its most concrete" (ibid. B1/84 - B1/85). On the other hand, at "the bottom of the hierarchy will come words which cover very little indeed, whose reference is most abstract; which are empirically poor, linguistically mobile; ....These terms of great generality relate to facts of high abstraction." (ibid. B1/85). The claim is that Bradley's "degrees of truth" and "degrees of reality" can best be understood in relation to the concept of a double hierarchy of language and fact:

The hierarchy of language or of truth has, as a sort of apex word, "absolute" which presides over, and links together each and every assertion about the universe that is made in terms of the various languages constituting the hierarchy. Alongside this we have our hierarchy of facts or "reality". Here, at the top, is the "absolute unity", the empirical fact for whose occurrence Bradley would make his experimental appeal. (ibid.)

Bradley's "Absolute", which occupies the vertex of his linguistic hierarchy, is described by Ramsey as "the keystone of a total language" (B1/87) and as his "final option" (B1/88).

Whitehead's differences from Bradley have already been noted, in so far as they are significant for Ramsey's early thought. Whitehead also differs from Bradley in being far more explicit in his account of abstractive hierarchies
Whitehead begins from "actual occasions"......

By means of "abstraction" from any one such actual occasion, we reach some "eternal objects". Alternatively, any one concrete occasion - any specific happening - is a sort of concentration of these eternal objects and a positive exclusion of others. For example, if we happen to start with a red rubber ball in a nursery, then the "eternal objects" - red, elastic, spherical - are "together", but their togetherness is at the cost of an exclusion. For eternal objects such as green, hard, blue, square are plainly excluded and in contrast with the "togetherness" of red, elastic and spherical are "isolated".

Ramsey continues:

For Whitehead, anything is "abstract" if in this kind of way it transcends "particular concrete occasions of actual happening". (B2/98)

Thus from every "actual happening" an abstractive set may be constructed. At the "base" of this hierarchy will be a group of "simple eternal objects", such as a definite shade of colour (cf. B2/97).

A penny-situation, e.g., would give rise to certain "simple" categories such as "nigger brown" but would also necessitate various "complex" economic categories like "trade" and it may even be "State". To tell a full tale about any penny situation, words like this would be wanted. Whitehead's idea is that no matter how extensively these categories spread, they will all be anchored to "simple" categories as a "base": and from this base they will give an "abstractive hierarchy"......

......We might have supposed that there was no limit to the complexity which any abstractive hierarchy could manifest. But Whitehead visualizes the possibility of a finite abstractive hierarchy which should have a vertex. The abstractive field as it increased in complexity, in abstractive distance from the "simple" base, might narrow until presumably it reached one concept. Such a concept while having an exceedingly complex logical status would preside over the rest and have a finality about itself, being the point beyond which in that pattern of talking, our talk could never go. It would be for that particular hierarchy, an "end-point" for "explanations". It would be a "key-word" for the hierarchy over which it presided, and Whitehead calls it a "vertex", no doubt to portray something of its relation to what he has called the "base". Here would be a "finite" hierarchy. (B2/99; cf. Whitehead (SEW) 201 – 205)
Alternatively, however, a hierarchy might be "infinite" - for it may be impossible to complete the description of an actual occasion in terms of concepts (B2/100; cf. Whitehead (SMW) 204).

Thus:

An abstractive hierarchy is called "finite" if it stops at a finite grade of complexity. It is called "infinite" if it includes members belonging respectively to all degrees of complexity. (Whitehead (SMW) 202)

For Ramsey, the value of abstractions is that:

if we set out to describe some actual happening we shall do better justice to all its fulness when we are using language of a high grade of abstract complexity. In this way by highly complex abstract language we shall "approach to the full concreteness" of the actual occasion, as just what it is in its concrete setting. On the contrary we shall say least about it, and in this sense be least specific, when we use "a low grade" of complexity, when in fact we use only "simple eternal objects". So it is that in one sense we seem to be more specific and nearest to fact when we use a simple word like "green" pointing to a green object; but in another sense we are nearest to fact when we say as much as we can about the whole situation characterized as part of its givenness by the green object. (B2/100)

Ramsey goes on to speak of the "shear" - the "directionally opposed movement" - between hierarchies of language and fact:

Only the most complex abstract language becomes currency suited to the most concrete fact; with the most simple, unambiguous concrete language is associated the most abstract fact. The more precise and clear our language, the further is it from dealing fully and adequately with any particular situation. The more definitive our language the less definitive our situation; the more definitive the situation, the more complex and problematical becomes its description. (B2/101; cf. B1/s4)

It is not necessary here to attempt a detailed exegesis of what Whitehead intended by his account of "abstractive hierarchies" and the place within them of both "simple" and
"complex" "eternal objects". For it is Ramsey's use of Whitehead which is of interest to us. And there it is clear that Ramsey believes that "any 'appeal to the concrete' - whether sense-data or Absolute - is... to commend a total language scheme in relation to a certain situation" (B2/102). The concrete given fact is not to be labelled by a single "given" word, but can only be represented by the total complex language scheme. However, there can be no "given fact" unless the "total language scheme which involves is finite: limited by some vertex or apex word" (B2/104).

Ramsey views as of major importance Whitehead's suggestions about the finite hierarchy ("closed by one word which in some way closes all abstractive routes" (B2/102)) and his notion that "God" may function as such a vertex word (B2/103).

He concludes:

the appeal to fact as "concrete" is an appeal to a finite abstractive hierarchy elaborated in relation to it; and any such elaboration of a finite hierarchical pattern of language, commended in relation to some fact or other, becomes metaphysics...(B2/105).

Ramsey now moves on to a further study of Russell's theory of logical types and incomplete symbols. He explicitly broadens this notion (of a symbol that has no meaning in isolation but is only defined in certain contexts - i.e. "in use"), to suggest a sequence "of increasing 'incompleteness' ":-

- e.g. brown patch - penny - ... - money;
- or punctiform sense-data - point - line - area
- volume - space.

Ramsey notes:

the further the sequence develops, the more "incomplete" are the symbols, the vaguer, the more elusive their reference, the more complex the translation needful to reach indubitably clear assertions.(B3/108)
He has thus produced a logical hierarchy out of his reading of Russell's position, and he defends the reasonableness of this interpretation at some length (B3/108 - B5/118; cf. B7/120). The analysis has so far concentrated on the language hierarchy. Ramsey now attempts to show "the extent to which Russell's formulation presupposes - we may even say begs - a certain fact background" (B5/118). For:

Russell wishes to develop.....a pure hierarchy of language which at the end is based on some primitive protocol language relating directly to one basic brand of fact. That is the picture that colours all his exposition. (ibid.)

Ramsey, however, pleads for an alternative ontology and seeks to discover in Russell himself evidence for a less restrictive view of facts (B7/122 - B11/124). He thinks that he finds it, for example, in Russell's claim for universals - "a claim that we must have 'wholes' as 'given' as..... 'atomic' data. Atomic facts alone are insufficient for its epistemology" (B11/124).

Ramsey notes that both Russell and Bradley have "bounded" their language hierarchies - Russell at its lowest order (with protocol propositions) and Bradley at its highest order (with the Absolute). He concludes that:

Each believes that all language journeys, however long, will in the end finish at some incontrovertible fact. Each believes that we shall understand all assertions clearly when, and only when, we recognize their basis in what is thus "given". Russell would say perhaps that experiential wholes as well as atomic data are thus "given"; Bradley would make the same claim for his "whole of feeling". Only if language is somewhere and somehow bounded can it be securely anchored like this in "given fact"; only at some bound will language point beyond itself to what it is talking about.

From the other point of view, still taking Russell and Bradley as examples, we might say that each sponsors a bounded hierarchy in order to allow for the possibility of "explanation";
in order to justify the explanation game. There must somewhere be a "stop card"; the language hierarchy must in some direction or another be finite, if "explanation" is to be other than a wild-goose chase. (B12/125)

But at this point, having squeezed out of both Bradley and Russell as much as he can that seems to support the general notion of a language hierarchy, Ramsey makes something of a volte-face. He rejects the viewpoints of both philosophers:

We cannot be happy about Russell closing his hierarchy by a lowest order; neither has Bradley made his claim for closing the hierarchy with some special word like "absolute" very plausible. (B14/127)

Ramsey continues:

Hence, in my own exposition I shall urge that the appeal to "given fact" and the possibility of "explanation" demands a different sort of protocol language altogether - a language which has not itself either a "lowest" or a "highest" level. Whether it be a more ostensibly empirical appeal to given fact or a more ostensibly rationalistic appeal to explanation; both appeals, I shall suggest, demand words of a logical status different altogether from language of the orders into which language as a hierarchy falls. Firstly, and as might be expected, such words will relate to a "fact" correspondingly different and differently commended from the kind of "fact" to which any of the levels of the language hierarchy relate. (ibid.)

Ramsey's metaphysical language, therefore, is not after all a hierarchy of descriptive languages about the world. Rather it is a separate scheme which has an altogether different logic. This crucial point was not made clear in his earlier essay "The Challenge of Contemporary Philosophy to Christianity", nor even in "Miracles". But "Fact, Metaphysics & God" now proceeds with an account of metaphysics as an "ancillary scheme" (B15/128 - B19/132), an account which is very similar to the one given in
"On the Possibility and Purpose of a Metaphysical Theology" and outlined above. This is followed by an account of the sorts of situations that demand metaphysics: i.e. an account of disclosure-situations (B55/148 - B4/157).

In the later parts of the essay Ramsey writes of a hierarchical language as "some kind of precision language which a philosopher might bring alongside commonsense language to deal with the problems and puzzles which that commonsense language discloses" (B67/180). Such an explanatory scheme incorporates an "irreducible posit" or "final option" (B70/183) and attempts to "unify the various regions of language" by means of this feature (B72/185). We may judge between such metaphysical schemes by employing the criteria of simplicity, comprehensiveness and consistency:

one metaphysical scheme is better than another,
(1) The fewer metaphysical words it demands to complete the object languages and to unite them,
(2) The more comprehensive the whole map is in its survey of the universe, and
(3) The more coherent the map in relating the diverse features of the universe most concisely together. (B78/191)

To Ramsey, of course, theism appears as a metaphysics which possesses "relative simplicity and immense coherence and comprehensiveness" (B5/198 - B6/199).

I must stress again that Ramsey is arguing here for a view of metaphysics as an ancillary or supplementary language, a language which is able to give unity and coherence to all other languages only because it contains words of an entirely different logic. On this analysis the "hierarchy" is not to be found in the languages that describe the world: these languages cannot be related together by
being placed on different levels. Of course the ancillary language of metaphysics may be hierarchically structured and this may help it to serve as an explanatory scheme, to which the diverse languages of ordinary discourse can be related. But Ramsey's original position, to the effect that ordinary language itself contains different "levels", has been abandoned. In 1956 Ramsey wrote to W.F. Zuurdeeg:

I would not wish to say that we can somehow "discern" levels in the commonsense language we all use about everything, though I am aware that I talk as though this were the case, and indeed at one time in the past I believed it to be so. (U-ITR WfZ p. 1)

Ramsey's view now is that "the conception of hierarchical language belongs only to some kind of precision language which a philosopher might bring alongside commonsense language to deal with the problems and puzzles which that commonsense language discloses" (U-FHG B67/180). The metaphysical "map" can serve as a total map, unifying all others, only by being a very different sort of "map" from any of them. The structure of relationships within the metaphysical map cannot be discerned in the relationships that exist between the subordinate maps. Perhaps this is the point to stop talking of "maps" altogether?

Along with the abandonment of the hierarchical view of subordinate languages, there goes a rejection of Ramsey's original "Department store" analogy. In "Theology & Language: some illustrative examples" and "Science, Metaphysics & Religion", Ramsey had written of knowledge as "a department store without stairs or lift" - a series of logically isolated levels of language. These "floors" could only be connected by something
of the
"which can be part/floor at any level, yet is not itself any
floor" - i.e. a lift. Hence Ramsey spoke of "lift"-words (e.g.
"I", "person", "God") which performed the unification: "The
lift keeps the whole store actively united" (U-SMR 16). But
if ordinary, non-metaphysical, language is not itself
hierarchically structured, then this analogy has to be rejected.
And Ramsey must develop other analogies of integration that
are independent of a hierarchical analysis of everyday
languages. It is these that we must now survey.

10. The Kata-Language

Ramsey argues:

Just as people have spoken of a meta-language,
i.e. talk about a particular language,
presuppositions for its consistent use and so
on, and such meta-language happened to be
concerned with the structure of each specific
region, so we might now speak of Kata-language,
language according to which and down from which
the regions of object-language spread, and in
a way the very use of this objective language,
in so far as it bespeaks a certain option made,
will display these presiding words throughout
the whole of experience. We can see perhaps
how metaphysical words and those of the many
meta-languages are both similar and distinct.
They are similar in being outcrops, so to say,
of precision language. They are similar in
being a use of words which extend beyond that
of the precision languages themselves. They
are, however, distinct since their relations
to this object language are utterly different.
One is concerned with, for instance, the
conditions of consistency within each language
region. The other - metaphysics - is concerned
with the completing of the regions and their
uniting within one system with the possibility
of their being one key-word for the whole of
language. (U-FIG B76/189)

The important sense in which words are metaphysical is, for
Ramsey, that of being capable of being used "in all the
subordinate languages, though they belong to the logic of
none" (n 14). It is such words that make up a "Kata-language";
and a particular Kata-language is a particular metaphysical system (U22).

The words making up the Kata-language have been given various titles at various times in Ramsey's writings:

(a) "Marginal words": In "Miracles", Ramsey suggests that metaphysical words may be viewed as "marginal words" to any language map:

in some cases (and this resembles scientific language) these words are wholly written in the margins, e.g. "To Reading", "To Banbury", "To Ely", "To Norwich". In other cases (and this is more like the case of historical language which uses only part of a complete metaphysical matrix) part of a word, e.g. "BERK" may be written in the margin while the rest, e.g. "SHIRE", may be used in and occur on the map itself. (M13).

Thus metaphysical words "arise" from the map and are implied by it.

(b) "Boundary words": This is the name given to the words of the Kata-language when they serve to "round off some particular subordinate language (like a 'boundary')" (U14; or. CCP 261). Ramsey speaks in a similar vein of the number 2 completing or "presiding over", the sequence:

\[ 1 + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2^2} + \frac{1}{2^3} \ldots \] (U-FiiG B65/178)

He develops this notion - as we have seen - with regard to the metaphysical words of an odd logic that preside over (infinite) series. Again metaphysics on this analysis arises from, but is only "oddly" related to, ordinary language.

(c) "Index words": Ramsey sometimes writes of metaphysical words under this heading because they "assist in the matter of factual reference (like an 'index')" (U14). They are, he explains....

...words which are good clues to, and definitive of, the total language scheme, as is the index of a book to the words contained in its chapters... They are words which bring to a full level of
concretion what is being talked about - which indicates the abstract in its concrete setting. They point at full concretion\(^6\) (cp. "index" finger). (CCP 261 - 262)

Ramsey provides no examples of "marginal" words, but implies that all three categories ((a), (b) and (c)) are but different ways of designating the same thing. Thus "boundary" words are identified with "index" words; and Ramsey does provide examples of the latter:

"God", "I", "persons" (may) be all called index words\(^6\) as having a special and separated status in regard of all levels of language, and yet somehow used at them all, ... the use of this term "index" is sufficient to indicate a family resemblance between all three. (U-FIG (2) 10/70/177; cf. CCP 263 - 264)

All such words have a coordinating or linking function, they "supplement in various ways the infinite subordinate languages", they "link them together, and so... complete our language map as a finite structure" (CCP 262)\(^6\).

(a) "Integrator words" : As index words unite, coordinate or "integrate"\(^7\) the various subordinate languages (cf. U-1714, U-HA: "Omnipotence", etc.), Ramsey often refers to them as "integrator words" or "integrating categories". These phrases crop up particularly in his later writings - e.g. PFLT 161, RSCS 72, 79 n.2, OBSR 45, U-WM 16 etc. Integrator words enter into or are presupposed by every sort of discourse (cf. U-ITR WW), and this is precisely what is claimed for the index words "I" and "God" (cf. RSCS 75, PFLT 164 - 174, Evans (IRTG) 138 - 139).

(e) "Apex words" (or "Vertex" words; cf. U-FII Bz/104 etc.): "God" and "I" both have index status, but "God" has - for the theist - the additional function of being an "apex" word (cf. U-FIG (3) 11/14/206; cf. U-HA: "Problem of Freedom",...
During the early fifties Ramsey treated this concept very seriously indeed. He claimed, for example, that "belief in God disappears as soon as God ceases to be the apex. He then becomes one of ourselves" (U-HA: "God's Control of the Universe", c. 1952, p2). Originally Ramsey appeared to imply that this apex is the apex of the hierarchy of all language (cf. U-HA: "The Problem of Evil" A, c.1952, p1; Ditto B, c.1954, p2; U-HA "God & Purpose" A1, c.1952; CCP 267 etc.). In his later writings, however, it is best understood as the apex of the artificial Kata-language of metaphysics. An apex word is an "ultimate word", a "dominating category" (U-HA: "God & Purpose" A, c.1952, p1), an "ultimate of explanation" (U-HA: "God & Creation" B, c.1952, p1), a "primary word" (U-FLTG \(8/36/143\)), a "presiding word" (U-14), and an "ultimate presupposition" (U-CM \(8\)). Ramsey writes:

"God" as an apex word names, defines, presided over, characterizes...a total language map, and being a word with this status it relates ...to the most concrete level of fact... (CCP 267)

This quotation has as its context an exposition of the ontological argument, which Ramsey interprets as claiming "that at any rate one existential proposition will be necessary, in the sense that, to the apex word which completes our total language map, on which all other existential sentences are given a place, something must correspond..." (ibid.). This illustrates well the rather a priori nature of Ramsey's earliest attempts at metaphysics during his time at Oxford - despite his defence of its "empirical" foundations. For Ramsey, at this stage, doing metaphysics is very much a matter of constructing an appropriate language hierarchy as a metaphysical schema. He leaves us with the impression that the empirical (disclosure) basis for belief in God can be ignored in favour of the
argument for an apex word ("God") which will close the
linguistic hierarchy (cf. CCP 261, 419). Ramsey claims that
"The metaphysically minded" will always search for some
dominant category; and the use of Occam's razor, together with
the traditional metaphysical quest for unity, suggests that
"the word 'God' (should) predominate" (FI 48; cf. CCP 261).

In summary:

a metaphysical controversy would be the claim
that one apex rather than another, so placed
the language map as to give it the most
coherent and comprehensive character possible
in terms of the minimum number of index words,
basic concepts, or words of a curious logic.
The final defence of theism would be that
"God" and the index words associated with it,
give us at once the simplest yet most coherent
and comprehensive language map we can have
for understanding the universe. (U-FMG 11/15/207)

(f) "Key words": On occasions Ramsey uses this
phrase synonymously with "apex words" (cf. U-HA: "Foreknowledge"
A 1, c.1955, p1; U-FMG B1/86). In "Theology and Language
some Illustrative Examples", Ramsey describes the apex
words as "the keystone of the whole structure"(p.4; cf. U-FMG
B1/87); elsewhere he writes of "omnipotence" as claiming "a
key placing for the word 'God' " (U-HA "Omnipotence", c.1953;
cf. also U-FMG B2/99). In Religious Language we read of:

key words whose logic no doubt resembles that
of the words which characterize personal
loyalty as well as that of the axioms of
mathematics, and somehow combines features
of both, being what might be called "specially
resistant" posits, "final" endpoints of
explanation, key-words suited to the whole
job of living - "apex" words.(RL 37; cf. FI 49)

In Religious Language Ramsey retains the idea of the word
"God" in some way "presiding over and uniting [e.g.] all
causal explanations" (RL 64), and having indeed "a presidential
position over the whole language route" (66; cf. 59, 176).
However the designation, "apex word" largely disappears after the mid 1950s. Its place is taken by the phrase "key word" (as in U-NA: "Traditional Arguments", p5, FI 49); although "key word" may also be used more generally of any index/integrator word - e.g. "utility", "conscience", "love", "activity", "Process" (cf. FI 55, PHT 162, RSP 81, OBSR 30). Later still we find Ramsey taking up this latter usage even more generally, speaking of "key phrases" (CD 8, lDA 14), "key metaphors" (ILX66), "key ideas" (ML 391, JR 7), "key categories" (U-Intercommunion 7, U-UBRI2, U-TRI 3, CSC 50) etc. Now models and symbols are thought of as "key ideas" (cf. U-Credo 4, WT 2, U-Intercommunion 17, U-CF 15 [private script] etc.). And talk about a metaphysical index which has "God" at the apex has become transformed into discussions about the problem of preference between different models of God. Despite the complexity and apparent sophistication of Ramsey's metaphysical scheme of key and apex words, it did not really help to elucidate the relationship between metaphysical words such as "God" and "I" (cf. Evans (IRTG) 139 - 140, 213). It would appear that Ramsey therefore abandoned the attempt to relate such notions together along these lines (cf. Tilley (Thesis) 166), leaving himself only with his quasi-monistic scheme which viewed all disclosed "mores" as somehow being a "part" of God. The Kata-language proved to be somewhat opaque to Ramsey's analytical gaze, and he was unable to say very much about it that clarified, rather than obscured, the metaphysical task. However one final phrase in Ramsey's terminology may be mentioned as being more than usually illuminating:
(g)"Irreducible Posit" ("Final Option") : Ramsey describes the word "God" not only as "a unique and ultimate key-word dominating the whole of a theistic language scheme", but also as an "irreducible posit" (PR 208; cf. RL 37, 47). This phrase is used throughout Ramsey's later period (e.g. U-TLIE 3, RL passim, U-FMG B65/178c, TL 8, H 217). It is synonymous with "final option" (U-FMG B70/183, U-TLIE 16, RL 41 - 42, 110) and "stop card" ("something emphatic and final...a different logical move":RL 53), and may be expressed in a tautology (RL 40, 110).

The implication of these passages is that a word or phrase that is "posited" - i.e. proposed for use - might serve as an expression of a person's total commitment to self-satisfaction (I) or Duty or God (cf. RL 74, RE 404). "I'm I", "men are men", "Duty for Duty's sake", "I am that I am", each serves as an example of a "significant tautology labelling a commitment" (RL 46). Such tautologies often serve to "recommend" a metaphysical word (U-FMG 3/14/52c), and "express" an option (ibid. B 45/158). Ramsey notes that:

the request to someone for "an explanation" may express the desire to have disclosed what they are taking as a final option. The purpose of the question-answer game in explanation may be to make clear what is being taken as an irreducible posit in Quine's phrase, as an irreducible posit in relation to the language of the game. In this way if we query far enough we may arrive at axioms which he might have told us at the one time are "self-evident". (U-FMG B70/183)

Metaphysical words which are "intrinsic to no particular (language) region, represent 'irreducible posits of them all' ".

They serve to "unite the regions" and provide us with our unified metaphysical scheme (U-FMG B72/185). Ramsey notes, in a discussion of theodicy:
we only "explain" evil if and when we have incorporated it consistently into our discourse .......if we do that we have incorporated the evil of the universe within a total loyalty to God, within our religious commitment. (U-PE 54)

The theistic "stop-card" is what puts a stop to the search for explanations (U-FLG B12/125); it is this irreducible posit that makes explanation possible.

As we have noted, Ramsey explicitly refers to the use of the phrase "irreducible posit" by W.V.O. Quine (cf. also PR 208 n.22). For Quine an irreducible posit is an entity that has a reality of its own, and is not simply reducible to sense experience, but whose existence can only be "posited" by our linguistic and conceptual schemes.

Thus a physical object is an irreducible posit for Quine, as are the more abstract entities of science and the entities of mathematics. Quine writes:

we adopt, at least in so far as it is reasonable, the simplest conceptual scheme into which the disordered fragments of raw experience can be fitted and arranged. Our ontology is determined once we have fixed upon the overall conceptual scheme....Physical objects are postulated entities which round out and simplify our account of the flux of experience.... (Quine (FLPV) 17 - 18) As an empiricist I continue to think of the conceptual scheme of science as a tool, ultimately, for predicting future experience in the light of past experience. Physical objects are conceptually imported into the situation as convenient intermediaries - not by definition in terms of experience, but simply as irreducible posits comparable, epistemologically, to the gods of Homer....Both sorts of entities enter our conception only as cultural posits....Positing does not stop with macroscopic physical objects. Objects at the atomic level are posited to make the laws of macroscopic objects, and ultimately the laws of experience, simpler and more manageable.... Forces are another example.... Moreover, the abstract entities which are the substance of mathematics - ultimately classes and classes of classes and so on up - are another posit in the same spirit. Epistemologically these are myths on the same footing with physical objects and gods,
neither better nor worse except for differences in the degree to which they expedite our dealings with sense experiences. (ibid. 44 - 45)

Donald Evans' interpretation of what it is in Quine's thinking that attracts Ramsey has been accepted by Ramsey himself (U-ITR Evans 3). It is appropriate, therefore, to quote it at some length:

For Quine, a theoretical word can have a real reference which is not a reference to some particular sense-experiences or particular physical objects, while nevertheless we can talk about a sense-experience or a physical object in relation to the theoretical word if we widen the context and shift into the appropriate theoretical level of language. Thus for Ramsey "God" can have a real reference which is not any particular, yet we can talk about a particular in terms of God if we widen the context cosmically, and shift into religious language....where a Quinean theoretical term is remotely linked to sense-experiences, Ramsey's "God" is remotely linked to discernments of the "mores" of particular persons and things....The word "God" does not refer to any particular "more" or to any group of "mores" as an aggregate. Rather, in this strand of his thought, Ramsey seems to be suggesting the following analogy: The word "God" is related to the particular "mores" in a way that is somewhat analogous to the way in which a Quinean theoretical term is related to that which is experienced in sense-experience. (Evans (IRTG) 214)

Evans is here attempting to find an answer in Ramsey to the problem of the relationship between the disclosed "mores" - a question that Ramsey confesses that he has "not ....been too bothered about" (U-ITR Evans 3). I have interpreted this relationship in Ramsey as a hangover from his Bradley-like monistic tendency in metaphysics. As Evans notes, Quine's "irreducible posit" may provide another solution to the problem. But Evans goes on to point out the difficulties of interpreting God along these lines as a Quinean theoretical term. For then:
(a) there would be no disclosure experience of God, but only of particular "mores" (Evans (IRTG) 214);
and (b) God would be downgraded and depersonalized (ibid. 215). This particular flirtation with an apparently sympathetic category of interpretation from Quine ends up, like many of Ramsey's explorations in metaphysics, in a theological cul-de-sac. As Evans puts it:

To think of God as if he were an electron is virtually to reject any thought concerning him as being like an I - which is the thought from which we start in Ramsey. (ibid.)

11. Ian Ramsey as a metaphysician

Ramsey, like all metaphysicians, is concerned both to arrive at a general picture of the world (cf. Quinton (MT) 235; Hampshire (MS) 33) and to tackle some of the central questions of ontology (cf. E.A.O. Williams 55, Ryle (ML) 144). In particular Ramsey the metaphysician believes in the existence of meta-empirical entities such as I and God (cf. Kearney 188). Christian theism claims both that God exists and that his existence serves as a general explanation of the existence of everything else. In these ways theism - as Ramsey insists - is a paradigmatic metaphysical scheme (cf. also Dilley ch. III). The problems raised in justifying such a scheme will be our concern in the following chapter. We may conclude here, however, that Ramsey's attempts to analyse the nature of metaphysics in general, and theistic metaphysics in particular, are hardly very illuminating. The notions of metaphysical mapping, language hierarchies, apex words and so on, are, in the opinion of this writer, neither clear in themselves nor in any way essential for our understanding of the essence
of Ramsey's position. It may be that "Fact, Metaphysics and God" could have developed into a useful supplement to Ramsey's other works. But the fact remains that it did not; and that practically every one of Ramsey's attempts to deal in detail with the nature of metaphysics was quietly dropped by Ramsey himself. We may therefore be justified in moving on without further comment to more fruitful areas.
CHAPTER IV:

THE JUSTIFICATION OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF

I intend in this chapter to review Ramsey's account of the ways in which the use of religious language can be "justified" or vindicated (cf. \textit{iDA} 21, 54, AC 63, HG 213). Before focussing attention on this question, however, I shall briefly touch on the related issue of the meaning of religious discourse.

1. The Meaning of Religious Language

Ramsey's work is often presented in the context of the twentieth century debate about the meaningfulness of religious language (cf. Gill (IR) chs. 1 & 2, Schnetzer chs. 1 & 2). Such a presentation may lead the reader of Ramsey to expect many references to this debate, a debate which has usually centred on the Wisdom - Flew "Parable of the Gardener". But this expectation will not be fulfilled. For, although Ramsey is fundamentally concerned with the meaning of religious language, his discussion of the topic is only rarely couched in terms of a direct answer to the criticisms of those who espouse the verifiability or falsifiability criterion of meaning. However, his writings should certainly be related to such criticisms (cf. ITR Smart 109).

The essence of the challenge of verificationists and falsificationists is that religious language is
"without (factual) meaning". Ramsey strenuously denied this criticism:

I would point out that theistic statements in the end being developed from models and also containing qualifiers have both descriptive and performative force, and they gain their "meaning" in two ways:

(i) In the matter of "sense", because and in so far as they can form part of a consistent comprehensive, simple and coherent discourse which can be tested for empirical fit; and

(ii) In the matter of "reference", they are to be grounded in the end in the objective constituent of every cosmic disclosure, ....

(ITR Owen 126)

The reference of religious language is disclosure-given, it is a "more" disclosed through observables. We can, therefore, point to observables which serve as criteria (evidence) for the truth or falsity of an assertion about God, but these criteria on their own do not exhaust the reference of religious language:

We would agree that testable propositions must always refer to certain spatio temporal particulars called once "sense-data" or now "what is seen"... But it is an old story that what confirms a proposition need not be all that the proposition refers to, so that a proposition may well be testable without having to refer to nothing whatever beyond the testable particulars. It may be said at once that we are then doing no more than to differ on the old distinction between criteria and meaning. But not quite. I am not asserting that the meaning is "something altogether over and above" the "criteria". I am rather suggesting that meaning is something which includes the criteria, is that of which the criteria themselves are both evidence and part, is that which the criteria themselves demand. But the criteria are not criteria merely of themselves. I suppose I am only making the old distinction between "what makes you certain", and "what you are certain of". (U-FIG 3/18/56 - 3/19/57)

In another discussion of meaning Ramsey argues:

Suppose we ask someone: "What is the meaning of x?" The first point to notice is the possible diversity of the answers, which (as we shall see) enshrines a certain basic ambiguity.
Let us take three examples. First, suppose $x$ is a terrific commotion in an undergraduate's room - heat, noise, smoke, jostling. "What's the meaning of this?" we ask, and the reply comes: "It's Jim's twenty-first birthday party." The question in this first example is thus a request for a context, and given the context we are satisfied. Take now a second example. Presented with an integration sign, $\int$, or with $\int y \, dx$, we may ask: "What's the meaning of this?" and we may then be told how to use or operate the sign $\int$, or how to work out the expression. Alternatively we might be told: "It's the area under the curve $y = f(x)$".

Thirdly we may ask: "What's the meaning of ultramarine?" and this is normally a request to see the colour. The basic ambiguity, which the second example best illustrates in so far as it combines the kinds of answer given respectively in the first and third examples, is between context and reference, and when we speak of the meaning of a word we normally have both in mind. (OCR 62; cf. ESCS 40)

Ramsey is greatly concerned with elucidating the meaning of religious language in terms of its reference, and this is given in a disclosure-situation — what he calls the "empirical anchorage" of theology (cf. RL 89, 171, FI 44 - 45, 97, FRFI 348, TL 25, KDA 13): its "grounding" (cf. FMT 163, CE 183, CPL 246, CD 74) or "justification 'in fact' " (FI 125). But Ramsey is also fully aware — pace Phillips (FPE) 135 and Cohen (LRL) 148 - 150, (Thesis) 169 — of the importance of showing how religious language is used: its "meaning" as use (cf. WG γ - 11, U-FMG 1/26/26, CE 176 - 178). "It is specially important", he writes, "in the case of religious words to emphasize that the meaning of words is not primarily a picture which the word describes" (OCR 1; cf. FP 14, CE 178). His advice is:

Let us be on our guard against supposing names to stand for things. Rather, in order to see what is being talked about, consider words in the context of sentences, themselves in the context of discourse, which itself is given its concrete social setting. (TECF 220)
Much of Ramsey's work is devoted, therefore, to an analysis of the contextual settings of religious words and phrases. This "contextualization" results, on Ramsey's view, in a language about God structured in terms of a number of different models, all of which can only be understood in their appropriate contexts. And the use of such language is only justifiable if it is both consistent and "fits" the world. Ramsey writes:

the word "God" thus derives its meaning in use as and when it is contextualized in multi-model discourse, which is subject both to logical criteria and the criterion of "empirical fit". (TG 92)

A radical Wittgensteinian would endorse the former criterion, but would be liable to bridle at the latter. For such a person prefers to think of theological language games as being totally self-contained and internally justified without reference to empirical facts (cf. Phillips (CP) 9 – 23, (BPB) 118 – 119; Winch (ISS) 15, 100 – 101, (UPS) 13; Wittgenstein (LC) 70 etc.). But Ramsey is by no means a "Wittgensteinian Fideist".3

It is, of course, naïve to set the referential and the contextual ("use") theories of meaning one against the other. For one of the most important uses of language is to refer to extra-linguistic reality. This is the crucial element that seems to be omitted by the radical Wittgensteinian. Ramsey, however, recognizes how important it is to analyse the use of a piece of language - at least in part - in terms of its reference. Thus:

we might notice that "I" is only given its full - more than "objects" - use in a disclosure. If we ask "What does 'I' talk of?" we shall only know the answer when we come to ourselves, when we are aware of ourselves in a disclosure situation. (PR 215)
At some point or another, an answer to the question "What does that mean?" must include a reference to something that exists outside language. And the fact that meta-empirical entities cannot be "pointed to" as easily as spatio-temporal objects does not permit us to say that we can fully understand the language that is used about them without reference to any experience of the objects themselves. Religious experience is surely essential for any real understanding of that of which religious language speaks.

Perhaps the most significant criticism that can be made of the empiricist critique of religious language is that it confuses meaning with evidence, i.e. what a religious assertion actually means (its "truth conditions") with the (empirical) ways in which it can be shown to be true or false (its "checking conditions"); cf. Heimbeck ch.II.

As R.S. Heimbeck has put it:

having checking procedures (verification and falsification procedures) is a sufficient but not a necessary condition of cognitive significance, ... having semantical entailments and incompatibles (which also display the meaning of cognitively meaningful sentences) is both a necessary and sufficient criterion of cognitive significance. (ibid, 37)

Verificationists and falsificationists, in their attempts to develop a criterion of "meaninglessness" ended up with a criterion of "checkability" for truth. Furthermore, they worked with what was an inadequate paradigm of truth - for they interpreted it entirely in terms of empirical truth. Metaphysical, religious, even moral "truth" - they agreed - must be reduced to the level of truth about physical objects or (at the most) the theoretical entities of science; otherwise its claim to be truth would be rejected. Ramsey writes:
When a Christian says "Jesus was conceived by
the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary" it
is certainly true that part of what this implies,
 viz, partheno-genesis, is true or false in the
Lincoln and Napoleon senses respectively. (EP II 201)

However, he continues:

But Christians do not reject them (i.e. complex
Christian beliefs) as false - nor of course
accept them as true - on the supposition that
they conform to a class of beliefs, i.e.
scientific beliefs, which they could not from
the nature of the case do. (ibid. 202)

"The Truth" is wider than just empirical truths, and it is
only to be known in its fullness in a vision or disclosure
(cf. FI 73 - 75, CDOS 18).

We have already seen something of Ramsey's treatment
of the Verification Principle during his time at Cambridge.

In his later writings he regards it as no more than a
"nonsense jingle" useful for demarcating the territory of
scientific language:

Do not take it too seriously. Do not ask what
it means or how it is derived, or how it can be
defended. Suffice that it can create a whole
matrix of empirical examples by which the
language of science can be clarified and
illuminated. To use a popular contemporary
metaphor, the verification principle reveals
what is in the suitcase of scientific language
before it is unpacked. (U-FLIG 1/20/22, cf. CE 176)

To Ramsey - as to most philosophers in the latter half of
the twentieth century - verificationism appears as a "narrow
circumscribed view of significant, meaningful language"
(CPF 244). But he - like others - recognizes that "in a
way the basic problem raised by the Verification Principle
still remains - namely, how is sense experience relevant to
religious assertions" (ibid. 245). Ramsey's own answer,
of course, was twofold:

(a) religious experience - on which religious assertions are
based - is sense experience and more (cf. PFLT 176); and
(b) religious assertions are in part to be justified by the extent to which they "fit" the facts and features of the world (cf. NDA 62 - 63).

But "empirical fit", as we shall see shortly, is very different from the verification by means of empirical deductions that is such a feature of the scientific language game (cf. RSP 80, 90 etc.)

Other philosophers of religion have also felt it necessary to reckon with the "afterglow" of verificationism 7. Ramsey's position is close to the "Right Wing Response" 8 to the verificationists' challenge as it is presented by Hitchell, Hick, Ferré etc., although he opts for a broader conception of what constitutes empirical experience than empiricists usually assume (Gill (IR) 43). He refuses, therefore, to mount an apologetic for theism that would be completely acceptable to the verificationist at his own level. The verificationist must "come up higher" - to Ramsey's level: and allow the existence, and veridical nature, of disclosures.

Ramsey is not to be counted among the theologians who regard religious assertions as unfalsifiable in principle. As we shall see he contends that believers should accept the possibility of there being "critical contra-factors" to their faith (HG 213). But this assertion is to be found in a discussion of the justification of the truth, rather than the meaning, of religious language. He does also write of the "check" on discourse about God (its "fit with the universe") as a defence against the charge of meaninglessness (RFT 31). But his more usual position is that even those types of "verification" and "falsification"
which are appropriate in the area of religious knowledge are criteria of truth, rather than criteria of meaning. And this perhaps explains why his writings are not as directly relevant to the debate initiated by Antony Flew as are those of certain other philosophers of religion. He indubitably denies that the sort of empirical non-falsifiability of which Flew is talking presents an unsurmountable challenge to religious knowledge claims; "a devotion which is non-falsifiable, which can never be caught out, which can contain within itself this or that particular circumstance" is not necessarily "disingenuously vacuous and irrelevant" (FI 37). This point will be taken up again later.
2. Scientific and Theological "Verification"

In his inaugural lecture at Oxford, Ramsey remarked:

The importance of this falsification puzzle is surely to remind us that the word "God" does not work as a high-grade scientific word at all . . . . It is indeed this fundamental difference in the logical geography of scientific words and "God" which the falsification puzzle underlines, and the only lesson we have to learn is that the word "God" when introduced must be given some other sort of empirical justification. (ibid.; cf. CCP 258)

Ramsey stresses in several places the distinction between experimental verification in science and what he calls "empirical fit" in theology. He outlines the nature of scientific verification thus:

From a theory or a generalization, sharp, precise deductions must be able to be made in detail and subsequently verified. If they are not verified the theory or generalization falls, or (more accurately) is greatly weakened. Here is scientific reasoning: crisp, clear, precise, and appealing in the end to observable fact. (RSCS 67)

He then asks, "Why have religious people been scandalized over this experimental method?". He suggests, by way of an answer, two bad reasons, and one rather better one (RSCS 67-75):

(i) because the experimental method "panders to man's selfish desire for human mastery".
Ramsey replies, however, that "Pride is no peculiarly scientific vice";

(ii) because the experimental method is fundamentally irreligious in that it puts nature to the test (cf. Foster 58).
Ramsey replies:
The scientist puts his questions to nature all right, but what he tests is not nature, but his own insight and this can be a very humiliating experience - not for nature, but for the scientist! (RSCS 68)

(iii) because...

Scientific method, in formulating verifiable deductions, has a procedure to which there is no theological parallel and which is quite unlike the theologians attitude to nature. There are nothing like verifiable deductions in theological method. (ibid. 69)
We do not seek verification of our prayers or of our assertions about God in the way that a scientist searches for verification (or falsification) of his hypotheses. Even in the contest on Mt. Carmel, "Elijah is not verifying deductions," he is yielding himself in prayer, and trusting God for some — no matter what — visible answer" (ibid. 71). And, in any case, Ramsey argues:

In many ways Elijah...might have had his religion enriched, if God had not displayed himself so vigorously and so verifiably on that afternoon,(ibid. 71)

But why cannot theology provide us with verifiable deductions, in the way that science does? Why is it that ...

...a theological model is not judged for its success or failure by reference to the possibility of verifiable deductions. It is rather judged by its stability over the widest possible range of phenomena, by its ability to incorporate the most diverse phenomena not inconsistently. A particular model in theology, by contrast with the scientific case, is not now used to generate deductions which may or may not be experimentally verified. As a model in theology is developed, it rather stands or falls according to its success (or otherwise) in harmonizing whatever events are to hand. There are in theology, as opposed to science, no deductive derivations, emerging one by one, to confirm or falsify the theory which is on our lips. (MH 16–17; cf. TRT 54, TST 78)

Ramsey seems to be offering us two reasons for this distinction between science and theology:

REASON (i) The subject matter of theology, i.e. God, is unlike a scientific invariant in that God serves to integrate and explain a far greater range of spatio-temporal events, and to do so in a very different way. For "God" — like "I" — is a metaphysical category. Thus (a) "God exists", and (b) "I exist", are presupposed by all the scientific facts about (a) the universe, and (b) my body and its behaviour, respectively. But just as "from such assertions as 'I'm I',
'I exist', 'I am alive'...we can make no precisely verifiable deductions. Whatever fact you describe about me now might have been otherwise" (RSCS 73; cf. CPL 246); so "From 'God exists' nothing verifiable can be logically deduced" (ibid. 74). Ramsey offers an explanatory diagram (p. 72):-

```
GOD
    c
  personality

"mass"  "force"  "particle"  etc.

  a.  b.  a.  b.  a.  b.
  \  / \  / \  /  \\
spatio - temporal events

\  /  \\
a : words as arising in relation to a disclosure;
and b : words as giving rise to verifiable deductions;
c : personality as the integrating category which may provide some sort of logical clue to the behaviour of the word "God".
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It remains true, of course, that "God" is not just posited as a useful integrating category in our metaphysical mapping. He is also known in a cosmic disclosure "when the whole universe is gathered together" (ibid. 73). But Ramsey's main point here is that words like "God" and "I" operate very differently from "mass", "particle", "gene" or "electron", for one of their main tasks is to integrate in a more abstract way a wider range of events.

The "scientific method" involves in essence the construction of a hypothesis on the basis of empirical evidence, followed by the testing of that hypothesis - i.e. making deductions from the hypothesis and seeing whether
they are verified by empirical test. This is the hypothetico-deductive method:

Scientific knowledge... is not arrived at by applying some inductive inference procedure to antecedently collected data, but rather by... "the method of hypothesis"; i.e. by inventing hypotheses as tentative answers to a problem under study, and then subjecting these to empirical test. It will be part of such a test to see whether the hypothesis is borne out by whatever relevant findings may have been gathered before its formulation; an acceptable hypothesis will have to fit the available relevant data. Another part of the test will consist in deriving some test implications from the hypothesis and checking these by suitable observations and experiments. (Hempel 17 - 18)

Philosophers of science commonly deny that scientific methodology is "inductive in the narrow sense" (Hempel 18), i.e. that it is "a method that leads, by means of mechanically applicable rules, from observed facts to corresponding general principles" (ibid. 14, cf. Toulmin 39 n.1, Harré ch.2, Losee ch.10, Popper (CR) ch1, Kuhn (CD) 12). On the contrary:

The transition from data to theory requires creative imagination. Scientific hypotheses and theories are not derived from observed facts, but invented in order to account for them. They constitute guesses....(Hempel 15)

Such an account places great stress on the role of the imagination in scientific method (cf. Popper (RSR) 78, (LSO) 32). Although, as Toulmin reminds us, it is not an "untutored imagination" and it must be combined with "trained skill" (Toulmin 39 - 40). Peter Medawar has spoken of the generative act in scientific discovery as a non-logical act of intuition (cf. Medawar 46, 55 - 57). These accounts have at least something in common with the intuition of which Ramsey speaks and the place he gives to imagination in scientific method (cf. U-SIR 6, 15, 57).
But how does "metaphysical methodology" differ from scientific methodology? We should note, first of all, that the hypothetico-deductive scheme must be given a logical, rather than merely a temporal-genetic, significance. For it claims that a hypothesis integrates a certain range of facts, some of which provide the "evidence" from which the initial act of insight arises, and some of which serve as the "new evidence" that confirms the hypothesis (i.e. verifies the deductions from the hypothesis).

As Hempel puts it:

from a logical point of view, the strength of the support that a hypothesis receives from a given body of data should depend only on what the hypothesis asserts and what the data are: the question of whether the hypothesis or the data were presented first, being a purely historical matter, should not count as affecting the confirmation of the hypothesis. (Hempel 38)

A scientific hypothesis or postulated entity serves, therefore, as the best "scientific explanation" for a limited range of empirical facts: thus, e.g., "gene" explains the facts about inheritance, and "electron" explains certain physical and chemical properties of matter. In the case of metaphysics, however, the range of phenomena "explained" by "God" or "I" is very much wider - i.e. all the facts about the Universe, or all the facts about this human being's behaviour, respectively. Partly because of this, metaphysical "hypotheses" are much more abstract, much more remote from the world, than their scientific counterparts. They serve as very general explanations, and not as restricted, particularized explanations. And they often "explain" by reference to meta-empirical entities whose relation to empirical facts is seen as clearly different from that of other empirical entities. Metaphysical explanation\(^1\) is, therefore, different
from scientific explanation; and the two disciplines have rather different checking techniques (cf. BP II 203). Such an analysis would tie in with accounts of metaphysical assertions as "world hypotheses" or generalized "co-ordinating analogies" (cf. Pepper 369 and Emmet (Mct. 215).

The theist claims that the "God-hypothesis" integrates across the entire Universe. "God" is therefore a metaphysical category and in constructing this category the metaphysician must take into account all the empirical evidence there is. Ramsey has argued that the whole world may somehow be treated as the medium of a "cosmic disclosure". This may be his way of recognizing that everything is already taken into account when the theist posits "God" as his explanatory concept. On this model, nothing can serve to conclusively verify or falsify the God-hypothesis. For unlike highly specific scientific hypotheses, which integrate over a relatively narrow range of facts and which may be falsified by other relevant facts which they do not integrate, general metaphysical explanations are at a very remove level and integrate and explain all facts (cf. Dilley 121, 127 - 128 & ch. 4; Kearney 258).

Thus C.B. Daly argues:

No statement about reality as a whole could be empirically verifiable, in the sense of its "being possible to describe in observational terms two different states of the universe - one that takes place when the statement is true and another when it is not". A statement about reality as a whole must be compatible with all states of the Universe, or "neutral in respect of matters of fact"...All metaphysical statements are of this kind.... (Daly 202)
Similarly F. Ferre writes:

a [metaphysical] model which is taken to include, in principle, all real or possible events, cannot be disproved by any real or possible events that come to pass. It has already, in germ, accounted for anything that might occur. (Ferre (JILL) 81; cf. Black (JII) 242)

Thus the concept of God has already been constructed so as to integrate across the universe. It contains within itself, e.g., some more or less consistent explanations of the evil in the world. Therefore it is not possible to point to the existence of evil as evidence sufficient to falsify the hypothesis of God's existence. The God-hypothesis does explain all that it should explain because theologians have constructed it so that it will. A scientific hypothesis may fail (i.e. be falsified) when scientists are no longer able to adjust the hypothesis to cover apparently conflicting evidence (cf. Popper (LSD) ch.IV, (CR) chs.1 & 3). But this is because the scientific hypothesis is less wide-ranging, less remote from empirical facts and less adaptable, than the theological hypothesis. Furthermore, God cannot be isolated experimentally for further empirical investigation. Nor can we compare the world that he creates with a "control" world that he doesn't create. For these reasons "theological verification" is likely to be very different from scientific verification. Ramsey writes:

There is, in truth, no empirical situation which would lead the theist to say that God does not exist....it is bound to be admitted that belief in God is a specially important brand of dominating belief which only has the most curious and distant empirical relevance. It is not at all a "scientific attitude." (CCP 257)

All that non-falsification suggests is that "God" does not work like a word in an observation sentence, that theological assertions are not scientific assertions, and what we have tried to do ....has been to show that the word "God" has a
different sort of empirical relevance altogether. It is a metaphysical apex which has, with the associated index, an altogether different empirical justification from the words of subordinate languages......

If we are asked what would be different if God did not exist, this is really to ask what would be different if we ceased to have the word "God" as a metaphysical index..... The answer is... everything.... The word "God" (if we have constructed our theistic map correctly) is necessarily bound up with the whole totality of facts as they are. (ibid. 268 - 269)

The above analysis is somewhat at odds with the view that God is disclosed to us as having a certain nature - i.e. that the concept of God is disclosure-given and not simply constructed by us so as to accord with these metaphysical criteria. It is surely necessary, however, to view the concept of God, both as (primarily) discovered in religious experience and as (partly) reconstructed ("adapted", "qualified" etc.) to serve as a more effective explanatory (integrative) category. Thus the man who has an experience of God may say, "I am aware of an infinitely loving, omnicompetent God". But as he is also aware of the existence of evil in the world, he will adapt his concept of God accordingly (e.g. "This God must be unable to prevent natural evil", or "this God must have a morally sufficient reason for allowing moral evil" etc.). In this way the "discoveries" of religious experience and those of metaphysical construction may conflict. The God we encounter in worship may seem to be "all-powerful" (cf. Hick (EGL) 35 - 36, Findlay 51 - 52); but our reflection on the evil in the world may lead us to regard this attribution as no more than a "metaphysical compliment" (cf. Whitehead (SMM) 214). We might then modify our view of God accordingly (e.g. "God is extremely powerful, but not powerful enough to abolish evil").
REASON (ii) Answer (i), then, is essentially a metaphysical answer, and has been illustrated in the section on metaphysics above. But Ramsey has another reason to offer for the difference between theology and deductively verifiable science:

the problem of religion, or more accurately of theology, is, starting from this vision, to get empirical relevance. No verifiable deductions can be made. Not that this is specially distressing - it is merely indicative of what religious loyalty is, and let us recognize in parenthesis that the difficulty recurs, as we might well expect it to recur, in morality. We may recognize duty with a capital D, we may well be aware of an obligation, but very often it is an obligation which defies any exact empirical formulation. (RSCS 83)

Here Ramsey is hinting at something which he developed in more detail later:

From "a loves b" nothing can be rigorously deduced which permits of appeal to experiment and consequent verification or falsification. For instance, someone might allege that if "a loves b" there will be some occasion when a will be found planning for b's happiness; but a might some day plan for b's happiness simply in the hope of favours to come - and apparent experimental verification would be wholly deceptive. Alternatively, from "a loves b" someone might suppose that a would never be seen for example in any sort of way which might cause b even momentary unhappiness. But this would be a far too shallow view of human relationships; love indeed is "deepenèd", through tensions lived through and redeemed. In brief, "a loves b" will only be verified in terms of ...........

"empirical fit" and the test will be how stable the assertion is as an overall characterization of a complex multi-varied pattern of behaviour which it is impossible in a particular case to specify deductively beforehand. (LII 38)

Love, Ramsey argues, is not tested by means of verifiable deductions....

we only check it by seeing how well it harmonizes many diverse patterns of behaviour, and its justification will only be found by
looking back on these patterns of behaviour extending over many years. (BP II 203)

Love, then, can only be tested by the criterion of "empirical fit" (cf. Kellenberger (MFC) 243 - 245). The notion of empirical fit will be discussed in more detail later; but I shall argue here that this apparently "empirical" justificatory criterion is not that far removed from the "metaphysical answer" given above under (i). I shall also explore in more depth Ramsey's use of the category of "love" with reference to the distinction between science and theology. And again I shall argue that the distinction is best understood as a distinction between non-metaphysical and metaphysical categories.

Ramsey asks about....

the disclosure which occurs when the Christian discerns the grace of God in Christ and responds to it with the commitment of the Apostle Thomas, can it be aptly modelled in terms of the characteristically personal disclosure which can be called "love", or in terms of the trust we are prepared to place in some man? (EG 211 - 212)

He develops this point at some length in the same essay:

Suppose we now ask....but is that a genuine "falling in love" or not? Is that man "really" trustworthy? What can we say about the pattern of reliable discourse which meets these questions? It will concern itself, I suggest, with at least five points:

(a) There must be some pro-factors which we recognize as grounds of making the presupposition of love or trustworthiness at all,....

(b) There must be the possibility that this presupposition of love or trustworthiness harmonises with a vast area of X's behaviour towards me.

(c) On the other hand, while there may be some contra-factors, the existence of these will not, by itself invalidate our presumption.

(d) Even so, there must certainly be the logical possibility of rejecting our presupposition if too many contra-factors come to light. Further, this logical possibility will remain even though the exact point when the presupposition will be rejected cannot be specified beforehand. Incidentally, in this connection it seems to me that, in what contemporary philosophers call the falsification
controversy, religious people have been far too inclined to grant their opponents' interpretations of such phrases as "I will trust God though he slay me", as though religious belief could never entertain the possibility of critical contra-factors.

(e) Here, a curious point. It may well be that as our perspective is broadened, what we supposed to be a pro-factor at the start, indeed that in which our judgment of love or trustworthiness originated, may turn out to be mistaken or itself ambiguous. But that, by itself, will not weaken our judgment of love or trustworthiness if, by that time, our wider perspective is sufficiently stable to incorporate it. (HG 212 - 213)

Here, we may note, Christian belief is viewed as falsifiable in principle, although - as we have seen - Ramsey views it as highly resistant to falsification in practice (cf. CCP 257). Ramsey's whole discussion is less useful than it might be because of his reluctance to specify the sort of "contra-factors" that might unite to falsify a religious assertion. However his claim that "we have no need to specify a point of rejection beforehand" (HG 213) seems to indicate that he is not concerned over much with the logical checking conditions of religious assertions, but more with the (psychological) conditions under which a religious conviction will in fact still be retained. This does seem to be the implication of this (rather infelicitous) passage:

Christian faith might reasonably remain if some one event or other proved false as a historical fact. But not all the events must be proved false without our being converted to infidelity. (HG 214)

Thus, for Ramsey, religious belief is falsifiable in principle (logically falsifiable), and psychologically it will be "falsified" if all the empirical tests turn out negatively. It should be noted here that the passage in CCP is concerned with the existence of God, whereas the quotation just given from HG is to be found in the context of an analysis of
the question, "Did the Resurrection occur?". The occurrence of the Resurrection may be treated as a small scale "hypothesis" which is much less resistant to falsification (logically and psychologically) than what we might describe as the larger scale "theory" of the existence of God. However, it is not always clear in "History and the Gospels" whether Ramsey is speaking of small scale religious hypotheses or of larger, all embracing, theistic theories. It is often argued that a key difference between science and religion is that the latter enterprise does not propose tentative hypotheses - or theories - at all (cf. McPherson (PRB) 110 - 111, Kellenberger (RDPK) 131, MacIntyre (LSRB) 171 - 172, 184 - 187 etc.,). Theology cannot "get along without appeal to authority" (McPherson (PRB) 112, cf. MacIntyre (LSRB) 189 - 192), whereas in science - at least on a Popperian account - conjecture/refutation are far more important. This distinction may be presented as the distinction between "commitment" and "objectivity", or between the self-involving assertions of religion and the neutral assertions of science (cf. MacIntyre (LSRB) loc.cit., Evans (DSRA) 112 - 117, 125 - 128). But such demarcations are far too clear cut (cf. W.H. Austin (RNS) 93 - 113; Coulson 66 - 69, 72; Schilling (TPH) passim, ibid. (SR) ch.IX). Certainly it is not the case that all scientific hypotheses, postulates and theories are held equally tentatively. Rather we must distinguish between the tentative commitment to "auxiliary hypotheses" and the scientist's much stronger commitment to the hard-core doctrines of a "research programme" (cf. Lakatos passim, Kuhn (SSR) & (LDPR), Hagee 41; also RSP 85 - 86, 118). Yet although
such a commitment to central postulates is very strong (cf. Quine (LPV) 43), it need not be unconditional. Even "research programmes" and "paradigms" are from time to time overthrown in "scientific revolutions" (cf. again Lakatos and Kuhn, also W.H. Austin (RNS) 112 - 113, Barbour (RP) ch.6).

Such concepts in the philosophy of science have recently received attention from philosophers of religion (cf. Barbour (RP), Mitchell (JRB)). Barbour proposes a spectrum of falsifiability, viewing scientific laws as less resistant to falsification than theories, theories as less resistant than research programmes, and research programmes as less resistant than metaphysical assumptions (op.cit. 114). On this spectrum "religious paradigms" would be seen as more resistant to falsification than scientific paradigms - both being less resistant than metaphysical systems (132 - 133). And if Christian theism is "a special case of metaphysical reasoning...[attempting] to provide an account of everything there is in accordance with intelligible principles" (Mitchell (JRB) 60), it will be strongly resistant to falsification (cf. ibid. ch.7). This is not least because a metaphysical system itself decides what is to count as "real", and therefore as "evidence" either for or against itself (cf. ibid. 71 - 74, 85; Ferré (LM) 81, Ayer (CP) 21, 27). Thus metaphysical systems cannot simply be judged against the facts because the system itself determines what the "facts" are (Welsh 178). Yet there are criteria for testing such metaphysical schemes. We might ask, for example, Does this particular scheme really cover all the facts, or is it less adequate in important areas than other schemes? (cf. Walsh (M) 179).
Is it "illuminating" and "fertile", helping us to see what we did not see before? (cf. ibid. 180 - 183; Wisdom (PD) ch.XI).

Is it a system of practical importance, one "in relation to which [a man] lives his life"? (cf. Mitchell (JRB) 122).

However we assess them, the overall theories or conceptual schemes that metaphysics provide are of central importance in Christian belief. For, as Mitchell has put it:

It is only in the light of some overall theory that the man in the garden could be entitled to claim that what he experienced really was (amounted to) being in the presence of and hearing the voice of the gardener. (ibid. 114 - 115)

Metaphysical schemes do not just conceptually integrate "all that is", they also determine what we believe "there is" - and could possibly be - in the first place.

But let us now turn with Ramsey to the question, "Did the Resurrection occur?". He develops his answer along the lines that he has already traced (EG 213 - 214).

Here again there is the five-fold pattern:

(a) pro-factors: which include the empty tomb and the "appearances" to the disciples;

(b) harmonisation: does the resurrection - presupposition harmonise with the existence of the Christian Church and the observance of Sunday?;

(c) contra - factors: e.g. the rumour of the body being stolen, the problem of miracles in general;

(d) falsification: "We must be prepared to reject the Resurrection if too many contra-factors appear. But we have no need to specify a point of rejection beforehand" (ibid. 213)

(e) the shifting of the grounds for the assertion: Ramsey argues that, in the case of falling in love: "It may be that the look of the eyes
which first evoked the love only occurred because of the skilful use of eye-shadow. Even so, the loyalty... may remain, and reasonably remain, even though... the original event from which it took its rise proves bogus" (ibid. 214)

And the situation is the same with regard to the Resurrection. (This, presumably, is only an underlining of the general distinction between the genesis and the justification of beliefs.)

Ramsey proceeds from this application of the analogy of the justification of love-assertions in a particular religious case, to a more general use of the analogy. "If a religion takes 'love' as its key concept, " he asserts, "its cosmic claims are much more likely to be reasonably sustained" (HC 214). For:

the test of whether our "falling in love" is or is not reasonable, will be... whether the resulting loyalty and pro-attitude can remain when confronted with a larger and larger picture, and when the empirical canvas broadens. (ibid.)

Ramsey goes on to add the complication that "it is 'love' which of all personal activities is the one most able of itself to convert contra-considerations into pro-attitudes" (ibid.). This addition casts doubt on the prima facie most likely interpretation of the previous quotation as an analysis of logical rather than psychological conditions (cf. "reasonable"). The ambiguity is, however, unavoidable if we follow Ramsey's main line of thought and view a religious conviction as analogous to "falling in love" and "trusting someone". For, as Mitchell has made clear (Mitchell (TF) 103 - 105), the "falsification" of a trusting commitment is a matter both of psychology and of logic (cf. also Mooney 11, Helm (VB) 168). There can be no such thing as a neutral, objective account of what falsifies an ("impersonal") religious belief; for religious beliefs are held by religious believers, and they
are the people who decide what **in fact** counts as falsifying evidence. And their decisions on such matters are likely to conflict with those of non-believers.

This aspect of Ramsey's analysis is a most valuable reminder, therefore, of the nature of religious believing. But I feel that it can be pressed further, taking up the assertion that religious belief is in part a recognition of God's love for us, as well as being a loving response on our part to God. And the point I would want to make here is that love is essentially a **personal** activity (cf. McCluskey 155, RB 192, GS 4, RL 86 - 87, U-PE 47 - 48). Thus part of the difficulty in verifying or falsifying love-assertions (in this case assertions about another person's love) is the fundamental general difficulty of verifying assertions about persons. For persons are more than what is observable. They are more than what can be verified (cf. HG 216 - 217). Persons are, on the one hand, free centres of activity; on the other hand, they possess an essentially private mental life. As Ramsey has argued as stridently as anyone, persons transcend verifiable criteria. Thus the justification of our belief in I and our belief in God must be problematic, for I and God are meta-empirical agents and centres of consciousness. There is a parallel to this problem in psychical research, where the claim that (for example) "there is another - unobservable - agent in this room" is so difficult to verify partly because agents cannot be "compelled" to conform to the experimental method, and because no one can guarantee "repeatable results" with "experiments" on agents. Similarly the psychological and social sciences are often denied "scientific" status because their subject matter -
man - escapes the net of verificatory techniques. What a person really thinks or feels is difficult for us to know; what he will do next is difficult for us to predict. By comparison genes and electrons are child's play!

I would argue, then, that God, as a meta-empirical agent and a transcendent mind - the sort of being of whom it is appropriate to say that he "loves", can be no more open to verificatory techniques than a person is. And if God is not only transcendent but infinitely transcendent, and if - unlike people - he is a noncorporeal being, then he will be even more elusive than other people. Theology is as different from science as its subject matter (God) is different from empirical - and even from theoretical scientific entities.
3. The Criteria of Justification

As we have seen, Ramsey - unlike some other religious intuitionists - does not treat the religious language that represents the God of religious intuition as guaranteed by its origin in such an intuition. He believes that we can be certain that religious intuitions have a real object, but argues that the language we use to describe such an object must be used tentatively. This religious language - and the religious beliefs expressed by it - stand therefore in need of justification. Ramsey offers two main sets of justificatory criteria:

How do we decide between two articulations from cosmic disclosures, between two areas of multi-model discourse? I answer: we shall reasonably prefer that discourse which (a) formally is the most simple, coherent, comprehensive and consistent; (b) materially establishes the best empirical fit. ...(MBA 62)

We must consider both of these sets of criteria in turn.

(A) The Formal Criteria

The philosopher of religion "tries primarily...to justify men's language about God and to make it as consistent, comprehensive, simple and coherent - in other words as reliable-as possible" (U-PE 1). These logical criteria are viewed by Ramsey, as we have seen, as the decisive criteria for the justification of those types of religious language that are essentially formal in nature (cf. MBA 54). But any metaphysical scheme, or any piece of multi-model religious discourse, must also fulfil these same criteria. I have already quoted MBA 62 and ITR Owen 126, which indicate Ramsey's application of such criteria to religious discourse
The defence of theism as a metaphysical scheme using these criteria is to be found in U-FMG B78/191; CL 338; U-HA "Creation ex nihilo", C, c1955; etc. Although this application of the formal criteria to theism as a metaphysical scheme was gradually replaced by its application to multi-model religious discourse, Ramsey was able to write the following as late as 1965:

religious experience inevitably leaves us with competing key-words, e.g. "God", and "Absolute", and to judge between these rivals we can only appeal, in the last resort, to the simplicity, consistency, comprehensiveness and coherence of the total language over which our key-word presides - the language map which we have as an interpretation of all experience whether specifically religious or not. (U-HA: "The Traditional Arguments for the Existence of God (Contd)" H 65, 1965, p.5)

We may now examine each of the formal criteria in turn; for Ramsey notes that they represent "very different claims" (CL 338).

(i) Simplicity

In metaphysics, we search for one comprehensive language map and one unifying, ultimate category (cf. M4, 24). One metaphysical scheme will be better than another "the fewer metaphysical words it demands to complete the object languages and to unite them" (U-FMG B78/191). A similar criterion is used in science. At one level this is simply a matter of "aesthetic considerations", i.e. "neatness or simplicity" (BP II 202; cf. RSCS 16 - 21). At another level it involves an appeal to "Occam's razor" - the principle that entities should not be unnecessarily multiplied. We have already met with this in Ramsey's espousal of monotheism, which involves an appeal "to the criterion of simplicity - if
a cosmic disclosure is genuinely 'cosmic' why should we suppose that it has more than one objective reference in toto? This search for "simplicity" or "economy" (cf. TG 90) was, for Ramsey, a search for a monistic metaphysic as well as a search for a monotheistic theology. In its application to the different areas of religious discourse, however, it is expressed in the fact that Ramsey prefers discourse containing a single "dominant model" to that using a number of sub-models - provided, that is, that the former species of discourse actually does contain all that is said by the latter about God.

(ii) Comprehensiveness

Ramsey contends that "The more comprehensive the whole [metaphysical] map is in its survey of the universe" the better it is as a map (U-FLG B78/191). A metaphysic must be all embracing, it must integrate all the phenomena there are; thus the theistic metaphysic of the religious believer must strive to "leave nothing out" in its explanation of the world. In religious discourse the demand for comprehensiveness is expressed in the way that religious (multi-model) discourse attempts a fully comprehensive survey of all aspects of God's nature.

(iii) Coherence

A metaphysical map should not only be simple and comprehensive, it must also be "coherent... in relating the diverse features of the universe most concisely together" (U-FLG B78/191). Coherence may be distinguished from comprehensiveness in that the latter refers to the range of phenomena that are to be integrated and explained, whereas the former refers to the integration itself. "Coherence", of
course, fulfilled a very important function at one time as the Idealists' criterion of truth (cf. White (T) ch.6).

Bearing in mind Ramsey's intellectual background we should expect him to give it some significance as one of his own justificatory criterion. Coherence is often a problem in theological discourse. Ramsey notes, for example, that doctrines of the atonement can easily be developed in such a manner that they are difficult to fit together with other Christian doctrines (e.g. doctrines of the person of Christ, or the nature of God) and with ethical beliefs (cf. CD 43).

Clearly this criterion may be expressed in terms of the next one on our list:

(iv) Consistency

In judging a metaphysical system we must note, Ramsey avers, that:

That metaphysical system will be better than another if, with regard to the object language which the system contains, all these languages are most thoroughly broken down into distinguishable logical areas. (ibid.)

He goes on:

This, it seems to me, is the point behind the old emphasis of consistency within a metaphysical system. For a map will not display consistency if there are still logical regions to be separated. (ibid.)

In other words, a metaphysical system should include no "category mixing" or "type transfer".

However we interpret those remarks, the demand for consistency in theological discourse is presumably to be interpreted as a demand that the different strands of the multi-model discourse should be both internally consistent and mutually consistent (i.e. that they should cohere one
with another). It would also include the demand that the "mixing of models" should not lead to the "utterly unrevealing paradoxes generating bogus questions" (FR 199), in which there is a confusion between logically different areas of discourse. But Ramsey specifically notes that the criterion of consistency is not alone sufficient for justifying a theology (H 223 - 224).

In his use of these criteria Ramsey has clearly taken over the "great tests of truth" of the "older idealists" (CL 338); arguing that "any person, positivist, materialist, Christian or what-not, ought to agree that he who has the most comprehensively coherent language map has prima facie the 'best' basic attitude" (ibid.). But such criteria on their own will not suffice for judging a belief (cf. Ewing (VR) 52 - 54). Alchemy and the Ptolemaic theory were both presented as consistent, coherent, comprehensive and (to some extent) simple schemes in their heyday. Nevertheless they are both false and were shown to be false when it was discovered that they did not correspond with the facts. Despite some attempts to construe the correspondence criterion as a criterion of coherence (cf., e.g., Blanshard and Cleobury (RMT) 42 - 47; cf. White (T) 115 - 122), it is generally accepted that a belief may be justified only if it is both coherent and corresponds with what is in fact the case. But what of metaphysical and theological beliefs? Do they correspond with the facts? Ramsey argues that theism at least does correspond with the facts. And he means by this not only that it corresponds with the "meta-empirical" or "theological facts" - for example
that there is a transcendent, loving being who creates the world. He means also that such a belief may be justified in so far as it fits the empirical facts, recognizing that theology has, in addition to purely formal criteria of justification, an empirical criterion as well. Whereas "fitting the meta-empirical facts" is not a very practicable criterion of truth (for where is the unambiguous, agreed evidence about the meta-empirical facts?), "fitting the empirical facts" appears to be a much more practicable criterion.

(B) The Material (Empirical) Criterion of "Empirical Fit"

Theological models and "hypotheses", unlike scientific ones, do not give rise to verifiable (or falsifiable) deductions. But Ramsey argues that this does not mean that there is no way in which they can be tested:

The theological model works more like the fitting of a boot or a shoe than like the "yes" or "no" of a roll call. In other words, we have a particular doctrine which, like a preferred and selected shoe, starts by appearing to meet our empirical needs. But on closer fitting to the phenomena the shoe may pinch. When tested against future slush and rain it may be proven to be not altogether water-tight or it may be comfortable -- yet it must not be too comfortable. In this way, the test of a shoe is measured by its ability to match a wide range of phenomena, by its overall success in meeting a variety of needs. Here is what I might call the method of empirical fit which is displayed by theological theorizing... (17)

The test of "a loves b" is a "test by empirical fit" (38; cf. HG 214). So also is the test of the assertions, "this patient is a mild depressive" and "this crime was committed by X" (cf. 38 - 40, TG 90, MHR 267). "Empirical fit" is in no sense an "exact fit", but it is of considerable importance all the same:

Exact fits are what no apologist will ever provide; his models will never be that.
Nor are shoes. But it is possible and so much more important to distinguish between shoes that are comfortable and shoes that pinch and let in the slush. It is likewise possible to distinguish between more useful models and less useful models. (CPCE 50)

Ramsey stressed the formal criteria in the early years of his time at Oxford, during which he was still very largely concerned with the justification of metaphysical schemes. The criterion of empirical fit, however, comes into its own in the period (post 1962) when the topic of religious language is highest on Ramsey's agenda. Empirical fit is the way in which, according to Ramsey, religious phrases "touch down on the world around us" (HDA 20). He provides us with a number of examples of what he means by this "empirical fit":

In "Talking about God" he writes of the necessity of there being...

specific situations which can be legitimately "interpreted by love" if the model of love has any initial justification at all. There must be a pattern of empirical circumstances which fit "loving" discourse when used of God. Such a fit is pragmatic in the widest sense; but it is not given by experimental verification in a strict scientific sense. (TG 90)

Ramsey contends that such an empirical fit may be exemplified in the illustrations that he gives earlier in the same paper: i.e. seed time and harvest, a moorland walk, national events or a monarchical constitution. He may take up two of these examples:

on occasion circumstances all "go our way", as it is often said. On these occasions, the world displays predominantly favourable features, features which give rise to a sense of dependence, but dependence on what is reliable and secure. Such features are those, for example, which characterize the changing seasons in such a way that the farmer ploughs hopefully and harvests
thankfully. Or it may happen that when we are faced with some major problem as to vocation, or emigration, or the suffering of an aged relative, or marriage, there occurs a complex set of circumstances, too complex and too diversified to be the result of any one man's design, which helps us to resolve the problem as well for those around us as for ourselves. Or it may be that we are walking in remote, mountainous country, and as night comes on we are filled with all kinds of uncertainties and anxieties. But then we refresh ourselves at a mountain stream, look up to the stars as symbols of stability, and find our path illuminated by the moon. A sense of kinship with nature strikes us; the Universe is reliable after all. (TG 79 - 80)

Ramsey's examples often focus on certain Christian hymns which "ring true to experience" (LDA 20):

It must be the case:

that blessings undeserved have marked my erring track, that care and trial have seemed at last through memory's sunset air like mountain ranges over-past, in purple distance fair that more and more a providence of love is understood making the springs of time and sense - all that belongs to our transitoriness and decay - sweet with eternal good.

It must be the case that the clouds we so much dreaded have been filled with unexpected blessings. Experience must have enabled us to decide how blest are they and only they who in his love confide. It must be the case that taking a long perspective on the events of our lives, on the fortunes of humanity generally, patterns of the kind which an "economy" displays, patterns appropriate to the running of a household... shall be able to be delineated. If the empirical circumstances were such that some threatening frowning state of affairs could rarely, if ever, be seen in the perspective of a world smiling upon us; if Whittier's counsel to take a long look back never showed cares and trials like mountain ranges overpast, never traced undeserved blessings, then providential discourse would be unjustified, and the model of economy virtually useless as a guide to the logic of Christian or theistic discourse...

(LDA 20; cf. ibid. 62 - 63)
I argued above that Ramsey treats empirical fit as something that is known in a disclosure - a disclosure of the similarity in structure between a model-situation and a particular empirical situation (cf. W: 39 - 40). And a similar disclosure, I claimed, served as Ramsey's basis for the initial use of both scientific and theological models. Ramsey's discussions seem to indicate that he is treating the theological case as a parallel to the scientific case, whilst recognizing its greater degree of abstraction from empirical events and the wider ranging nature of theological "hypotheses".

In both cases insight is evoked by a "tangential meeting" of the "model-context" and one part of the world (Events 1), and the hypothesis thus produced is seen to fit other parts of the world (Events 2). Thus, for example, when the father-context and the (religiously interpreted) world "meet" in the mind of the theologian, there is a disclosure of isomorphy on the basis of which he speaks of God as "father". Similarly the phenomena of flowing water and electric currents "combine" to disclose to the scientist the appropriateness of the former as a model for the latter.

As in the scientific situation, the two groups of events in the theological situation, (1 and 2) are interchangeable; and in both cases the "fit" of the model to the world ("Events 2") is revealed in another disclosure of isomorphy. The only difference, indeed, between the scientific and the theological cases is the difference between the strict experimental verifiability which is possible in the scientific case and the "looser kind of empirical fit" (WR 267) possessed by theological hypotheses. The distinction is somewhat blurred, however, by Ramsey's claims: (i) that the justification of the use of models in certain sciences - e.g. psychology - is also by the method of empirical fit (cf. W: 38 - 40); and
(ii) that empirical fit, rather than experimental verifiability, is the criterion to be used in the justification of certain scientific hypotheses - e.g. in archaeology and anthropology - where by the nature of the case conclusive verification is impossible, and yet theories are said to "fit" what evidence there is (cf. LJR 267). I would contend, however, that these exceptions only serve to emphasize the fact that the difference between "experimental verification" and "empirical fit" is simply a function of (a) the generality and wide-ranging nature of the assertion being tested (which in theology is so general as to be "metaphysical") and (b) the extent to which the object being modelled transcends the empirical world (i.e. the degree to which it is a "meta-empirical" entity);26

As we have had occasion to consider already, the wide-ranging nature of theological assertions constitutes one of their great strengths - but is also their greatest weakness. Of course a (mono) theistic metaphysics "fits" the whole world, for the whole world has been taken into account in the construction of such a metaphysical scheme. And it is a "constructed" (or "reconstructed") metaphysical scheme, and not simply a bare unqualified intuited datum, that is said to fit the facts of the universe. In a similar manner, an atheistic metaphysic may also be constructed so as to "fit" the cosmos. And the same may be said of polytheistic or naturalistic metaphysics, and so on. They all "fit" in different ways, but the empirical facts they fit do not bear their metaphysical interpretations on their sleeves. They are ambiguous enough (or neutral enough) to permit widely different metaphysical schemes to be constructed
around them. How then are we to decide between all these
different "fits"? The answer to that question is likely
to be a highly personal one, dependent on the answers to
questions like: "Which facts do you think it is most important
that a metaphysical scheme should fit well?". The answer might
be "the facts of evil", or "the facts of goodness", or "my
personal autobiography", or "the history of Israel", or
"the person of Jesus". But this is all a matter of
personal choice, as is our choice of a "good" shoe.
For we all have different feet (differently "shaped" worlds -
i.e. different perceptions of what is significant in the
world), and therefore the same shoe will fit different people
to different extents. This aspect of the fit of a shoe or
a theory is prior to its being tested more widely against
the slush and rain of the world; a theory that fails this
(personal) test is never "adopted" and therefore never
tested further.

I would argue that the empirical fit of a theological
assertion, like that of any other metaphysical claim, necessarily
involves a considerable personal and subjective element.
All metaphysical schemes will appear to those who espouse
them to "fit" the world. Where there are areas which do not
seem to fit well, the disciple of a particular metaphysic
will adapt his scheme appropriately so as to explain the
apparent exceptions. This is similar to the way in which
scientific theories are modified so as to cover apparently
falsifying evidence (cf. Kuhn (SSR) ch.VIII, (LDPR) 13 - 19,
Lakatos passim). In the case of a metaphysical scheme - which
is of a higher order of abstraction and generality - it is
even more marked. I conclude, therefore, that "empirical
fit" cannot be a crucial (and neutral) criterion of metaphysical and theological truth. I would also contend: (a) that any well-constructed metaphysic worthy of the name will be coherent, comprehensive and consistent; and (b) that it is difficult both to apply and to justify a preference for "simplicity" as a criterion of truth in metaphysics. I conclude, therefore, that neither Ramsey's formal nor his material criteria can serve us as crucial tests for the truth of Christian theism.

4. The Justification of Religious Intuition

However, it does seem to me that there are two possible ways out of the impasse into which Ramsey has led us. Both of them are suggested by the writings of John Hick. (i) I have argued that "all the facts" have already been taken into account in the construction of a metaphysical scheme. But "all the facts" here must mean all the mundane facts, all the facts of the spatio-temporal world experienced by men in this life. I see no reason to deny, however, that there may be other crucial facts that will enable us to decide in favour of one particular metaphysical scheme (theism) and against some others; these facts may be "experienced" in some post-mortem existence. This is the basis of Hick's hypothesis of "eschatological verification":

Surely our participation in an eschatological situation in which the reality of God's loving purpose for us is confirmed by its fulfilment in a heavenly world, and in which the authority of Jesus, and thus of his teaching, is confirmed by his exalted place in that world, would properly count as confirmatory. It would not
...amount to logical demonstration, but it would constitute a situation in which the grounds for rational doubt which obtain in the present life would have been decisively removed, (Hick (FK) 199; cf. ch.8 passim, & vii - viii, (FR) 100 - 103; cf. also Price (B) ch.10, Crombie)

Unlike Kick, I would treat the possibility of eschatological verification as relevant only to the truth of theism, and not as the justification of its meaningfulness. In via we shall not be able to decide between different world-views or metaphysics on the empirical evidence alone (although the transempirical evidence of religious experience may be decisive for us). But in patria we may be provided with new - and decisive - evidence of a quasi-empirical nature (cf. Hick (FK) 177 - 178).

(ii) In via, therefore, theists must rely on their religious experience alone. Hick argues that it is indeed "reasonable" for a man who has a powerful religious experience to trust its veridicality:

The apostle, prophet or saint may be so vividly aware of God that he can no more doubt the veracity of his religious awareness than of his sense experience....(Hick (AEG) 114)

Hick interprets a rational belief as "a belief which it is rational for the one who holds it to hold, given the data available to him" ((AEG) 115; cf.109, also Slote 199 & n.3). He examines the analogy of our "natural belief" in the existence of an external world, which we regard as "rational" on the grounds of its involuntary character and the fact that we can and do act successfully in terms of it:

That is to say, being built and circumstanced as we are we cannot help initially believing as we do, and our belief is not contradicted, but on the contrary continuously confirmed, by our continuing experience. ((AEG) 110)
And the same situation obtains, Hick argues, with regard to vivid religious experience:

The sense of the presence of God reported by the great religious figures has a similar involuntary and compelling quality; and as they proceed to live on the basis of it they are sustained and confirmed by their further experiences in the conviction that they are living in relation, not to illusion, but to reality. It therefore seems prima facie, that the religious man is entitled to trust his religious experience and to proceed to conduct his life in terms of it. (ibid. 112; cf. 116)

"It seems", Hick concludes, "that a sufficiently vivid religious experience would entitle a man to claim to know that God is real" ((FK) 210).

I am in complete agreement with Hick's position here, provided that the "further experiences" are interpreted - as seems most reasonable - in terms of further religious experiences. As I have hinted more than once already, I hold that it is the strength of our religious intuition which is alone decisive. Nor do I believe that such a position necessarily opens the door to each and every religious (or secular) fanatic. For we do have some tests for discovering delusion even in the field of religion (cf. K. Ward (EC) 129)29. Having"passed" such tests, we may reasonably trust our religious intuitions if they are sufficiently compelling.

But here we must return to Ramsey. For he offers hints in more than one place that part of his empirical criterion for the justification of religious belief is something which is much more practical. The relevant passages
are as follows:

My second point illustrates how with discourse about the Spirit, when it is rightly constructed, there can be empirical criteria for its appraisal. When we are articulate about the Spirit from models such as we have suggested, empirical fit becomes possible; and it is not a pseudo-scientific verification which the fluid context for Spirit might lead us to suppose. Rather does it arise like this. Those who are filled with the Spirit, those who act "spiritually", those who fulfil themselves because of the active influence of God, are those who display genuine wisdom, "humane behaviour" as distinct from routine, impersonal behaviour, a moral stature which is more than rectitude. (MDA 13)

....the final test of our talk about the Ascension will lie in the extent to which the discourse to which the model leads can find empirical relevance in our life and behaviour. We are reliably articulate about the Ascension when our discourse points through the model to the disclosure in one direction and informs our vocations in the other. (TL 25)

the...claim for an"objective" element in the Atonement will only be substantiated if the story has an empirical fit in our own day - the kind of empirical fit we spoke of in the first lecture and by reference to Butler.... In the model of love has secured its cosmic setting by being embedded, for example, within a Remnant story, then the claim for an "objective" element in the Atonement will be the more reliably made, the more the Church has proved itself in its life and works to be an inclusive fellowship of the Spirit, the new Israel, the redeemed of God. (CD 59 - 60)

In this last passage, Ramsey is referring back to an earlier argument in Christian Discourse:

to recall Butler...suggests at least one test for the reasonableness of our Christian convictions which are founded in a disclosure which arises around historical uncertainties, and so admittedly embody a historical risk. The test is this: if we have "seen" with the eye of faith, it must presumably have some particular bearing on our behaviour, so that we may expect there to be some relevant feature of that behaviour to which we may significantly point. Our behaviour must in some way witness to the transcendent disclosure to which it is a response.....It is as and when we show distinctive behaviour - such as going the second mile - that we may hope both to commend our Christian convictions in which such behaviour is rooted, and to have criteria to justify a claim to a cosmic disclosure;.... (CD 24 - 25; cf. ibid. 46 - 47)
Ramsey's point seems to be that one test of whether or not we have in fact seen the loving, fulfilling and empowering God is whether or not we respond to that (putative) disclosure with an appropriate love, personal fulfilment and spiritual power. Certainly there is a considerable stress in the literature on spirituality on the quality of the Christian's life as the criterion by which we judge his spirituality: we know them by their fruits (Matthew 7 v. 20). As Martin Thornton puts it, "only moral theology provides a certain test for spiritual progress"; "Whatever our prayer, in whatever elementary stage it remains, we are making progress if we commit fewer sins" (Thornton (ES) 41, 22). However if, as I have argued above, commitment is a free response to a disclosure and does not necessarily follow from it, then it could be that a person might have a religious disclosure but not respond with an (appropriate) commitment. Conversely, such a commitment might arise without being related to a disclosure of God at all.

All the same, Ramsey is on to an important point here. For we do not just "know them by their fruits", we do also tend to judge what they claim to know, "by their fruits". Those who have the religious insights on which theology is founded may be appropriately tested by their behaviour. A person who claims to have an intuition of a God of love and behaves inappropriately, may expect to have his claim challenged. Again Hick's writings are relevant:

Suppose someone professes to be magically immune to fire so that he can walk unharmed through flames and pick up hot coals. If he does confidently pick up burning coals or walk without hesitation into a blazing fire we should say that he really does believe that fire cannot hurt him. But if he shrinks back from the flames...we know then that he really believes that fire will hurt him. The test of his belief is found in his actions. A
real belief inevitably makes its appropriate difference to the way we behave.
What then does it mean to believe in the reality of God as the heavenly Father whose nature was taught and shown by Jesus?...it involves being in a dispositional state to act on the basis that God, so conceived, is real, and the extent to which a person really believes in God is precisely the extent to which he or she lives on that basis. (Hick (CC) 71; cf. (FK) 247 - 250, also H.E. Austin (RNS) 46).

But how far does this get us? Unfortunately it gets us no further than saying "I can see from X's behaviour that X probably believes that p" or "X's behaviour is consistent with his believing that p". But it cannot take us back behind the belief to assess whether or not p is true, i.e. whether or not X's intuition is veridical.

However, Ramsey seems from time to time to link up behaviour (commitment) with disclosure in another way.
Disclosure gives rise to behaviour, but there is also a type of behaviour which leads to, evokes, or "puts us in the right position for", further disclosures. Thus Ramsey speaks of "Trinitarian behaviour" or "Trinitarian living":

we only know, we only understand, Trinitarian theology as we retrace our steps, as we return from the Mount of Vision to which Trinitarian discourse should have led us, and prove our Trinitarian theology, in Trinitarian living... Trinitarian belief is knowledge of mystery displayed and "verified", like all knowledge of a mystery, in the action to which it leads. (TL 39)

But this Trinitarian "behaviour" is in fact treated by Ramsey as a matter of discerning God as Father, Son and Spirit in different aspects of our lives:

First, we shall be led to God as Father when we discern God in our very lives and human existence..... When we see the whole creation groaning and travelling together in pain.....we know a mysterious
confrontation with God the Son....And as when we find depth and mystery in human fellowship ....then we know God as the Holy Spirit who binds us together in the Church.

Trinitarian behaviour finds God in this way as Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier, and while all our talking about the Trinity will always be inadequate, faith and belief in the Trinity has its most assured expression in Trinitarian behaviour. For there we know and discern more than will ever be adequately talked about: it is by our fruits that men know us, and by our behaviour that we make our beliefs most evident. ("The Trinity" - no page numbers: cf. TL 39).

Thus our "behaviour" does not only make our beliefs more evident. It leads us back to the disclosures from which such beliefs arise. "Trinitarian behaviour" in such a context involves our becoming involved in and actively getting to know and beginning to meditate on The Creation, The Human Race in need of Redemption, and The fellowship of the Church. This is presumably the dimension that Ramsey is really seeking by using the language of behaviour, and it enables us to see religious disclosure as leading to "the 'form of life' known as Christian worship and behaviour" (Gill (IR) 123) which in their turn evoke the religious disclosure once again.

Here, then, we have indeed come full circle. We start with disclosure and - through religious commitment, worship and service - we come back to disclosure. In Ramsey's religious epistemology the individual's religious intuition is both Alpha and Omega. I believe that this emphasis on intuition is essentially correct; in the end it is far more important than the search for appropriate criteria for the justification of religious belief. As Schedler has put it:
While our systems may be checked by "empirical fit" they are ultimately checked by repetition of the insight which gave them birth. (Schedler (Thesis) 220; cf. Baillie (SPG) 67)

It is Ramsey's overriding concern with religious intuition that seems to the present writer to be the most significant element in his thought. Perhaps it is also the key to a proper understanding of his whole life.
POSTSCRIPT:

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF IAN RAMSEY'S RELIGIOUS EPISTEMOLOGY

At the time of writing (1978), only six years after Ramsey's death, it must be said that his reputation as a religious thinker does not stand very high, and that his influence in contemporary philosophy of religion is negligible. He is usually seen as a man who had one, not very original, idea and rather "ran it to death" - without being either precise enough or self-critical enough for his work to merit much study.

I have attempted to show in this thesis something of the range of Ramsey's thought, to discuss the problems that it raises, and to relate it to the general questions which must face every religious epistemology. I have endeavoured to indicate the centrality of the notion of religious intuition to the understanding of Ramsey's position. And I have argued further that this concept must be central to any viable analysis of religious knowing. Although Ramsey's discussion of disclosure-discernment contains many flaws it does highlight those features of religious intuitionism that deserve further critical study: in particular the problems of objectivity and certainty, the nature of "mediated" intuition, and the variety of types of intuition in religion. I have tried to indicate/the appropriate places throughout this thesis ways in which some of these problems might be resolved. Ramsey's treatment of religious language and the justification of religious belief similarly serve to focus our attention on important issues - in particular the
functions of religious language and the criteria that may be used in its evaluation. Here again his work is open to a number of criticisms and I have suggested possible developments of Ramsey's position that might make it more acceptable. I have found less of value, however, in his treatment of metaphysics, although I have stressed the importance of his recognition of the metaphysical status of theistic assertions in the debate on the justification of religious belief.

I regard the main value of Ramsey's thought, therefore, as lying essentially in four areas:--

(1) the way in which it focusses our attention on the central problems of religious epistemology, and reveals the fundamental importance of that topic for theology;

(2) his proposal that the category of discernment, or intuition, is to be taken as the foundation-stone of religious epistemology;

(3) his general approach to religious language: in particular his concern to produce a descriptive analysis of how such language actually functions and his willingness to take a serious and positive view of all types of religious language, from hymns to patristic technicalities;

(4) his recognition of the need to produce some sort of "empirical" justification of religious language, whilst taking into account its metaphysical status and its difference from (together with its similarities to) scientific language.

I would not claim that Ramsey's contributions in any of these
fields were particularly original, although his terminology of "disclosures" and "qualified-models" made his writings distinctive. But I would claim that the problems he tackled are of major importance and that at least one of the tools he used to solve such problems — the category of religious intuition — possesses considerable power.

Thus the study of Ian Ramsey's thought does not only provide "a first-rate education in the difficulties and benefits of both" philosophy and theology (Gill (IR) preface); it can also serve as a sign post indicated some of the paths that religious epistemology might profitably explore in the future.
A number of philosophers of religion have stressed the similarity between science and religion with regard to the status and function of the models that they use (cf. particularly Ferre (ISR), (LII); and Barbour (ISR) chs.6,8, (LNP) passim). There is a considerable literature on the rôle of models in scientific thought and I shall make no attempt to give a comprehensive survey of the field. But it is important for our topic to look briefly at one or two issues which are raised in the literature.

Some philosophers of science have tended to be rather disparaging about models, claiming that they have a useful heuristic function in the construction of theories, but are without any important explanatory rôles (cf. Kuipers, Gruenewold, Jeans 9-16, 174-176). Pierre Duhem is even more negative, arguing that the use of models is usually misleading and not always even heuristically valuable:

The share of booty it has poured into the bulk of our knowledge seems quite meagre when we compare it with the opulent conquests of abstract theories. (Duhem 99; cf. ch. IV passim)

Duhem espouses a form of instrumentalism, viewing scientific laws and theories as instruments for predicting observable phenomena. They are to be judged by their usefulness alone and not as "descriptions" or explanations of reality (cf. J. H. Austin (RNS) ch.2, Losee 133-135). On this view the models of science do not represent real entities in the world at all (cf. also Ryle (CH) 269-275, Toulmin chs.3,4). As Ernest Nagel puts it:
proponents of this view supply no uniform account of
the various "scientific objects" (such as electrons
or light waves) which are ostensibly postulated by
microscopic theories. But ..... it is far from
clear how, on this view, such "scientific objects"
can be said to be physically existing things. For
if a theory is just a leading principle - a technique
for drawing inferences based upon a method of
representing phenomena - terms like "electron" and
"light wave" presumably function only as conceptual
links in rules of representation and inference.
(Nagel 140)

Other philosophers of science have argued that models are
"utterly essential parts of theories" (H. R. Campbell, Physics
the Elements (1920), p126, quoted in Hesse (LAS) 5) as well as
being a fruitful source of scientific theories (cf. Hesse (LP),
Nagel 107-114). Norman Campbell in particular has stressed the
important rôle of models/analogies in scientific explanation
arguing that "the explanation offered by a theory ... is always
based on an analogy, and the system with which an analogy is
traced is always one of which the laws are known" (H. R.
Campbell 96; cf. Losee 137-138). Many have questioned the
satisfactoriness of instrumentalism in science. "Why", they
ask, "do some theories work while others do not? Is it not the
case that the usefulness of theories depends on the objective
features of the world; that theories are either true or false?".
Such critics often take a realistic view of scientific theories:
treating them, and the models they contain, as representations of
the real world. Thus Grover Maxwell writes:

The only reasonable explanation for the success of
theories of which I am aware is that well-confirmed
theories are conjunctions of well-confirmed, genuine
statements, and that the entities to which they refer,
in all probability, exist. (Maxwell 13; cf. Popper (CR)
111-119, Quinton (NT) 297-299, Kearney 159)

Ian Barbour comments: "The lesson to be learned from the mistakes
of nineteenth century physics is not that models must be discarded
but that they must not be interpreted literally" (Barbour (1983) 161). A naïve realism is as unacceptable in the philosophy of science as it is in the philosophy of perception; but a position of "critical realism" is still possible in both areas (cf. Barbour ibid. 172). On this view scientific models are accepted as analogical representations, rather than literal descriptions, of the "real world". A realist is however faced by the necessity of defining what exactly he means by "physical reality/existence" in relation to subatomic particles and the other "theoretical entities" of the sciences. Various criteria have been suggested (cf. Nagel 146–152); and we may note that for many realists intelligibility rather than observability seems to be the most important criterion. Thus Campbell writes that a man calls things "real" "because they are necessary to make the world intelligible to him". He continues:

Theories are also designed to make the world intelligible to us, and they play quite as important a part as do laws in rendering it intelligible. And if anything is real that renders the world intelligible, then surely the ideas of theories - molecules and extinct animals and all the rest of it - have just as much claim to reality as the ideas of laws. (N. R. Campbell 105–106)

But Maxwell has argued that we must be careful not to confuse meaning with evidence in our discussion of the "existence" of theoretical entities; for the evidence for the existence or reality of such entities is not the same as the defining characteristics of existence. He goes on:

I submit that in "ordinary language" the most usual uses of these terms (i.e. "real", exists) are such that

\[ \phi \text{ are real} = \text{df. } \phi \text{ exist} \]

and that

\[ \phi \text{ exist} = \text{df. there are } \phi \]

and that the meanings of these definiens are clear enough so that no further explanation is seriously needed. (Maxwell 21)
At any rate, many philosophers of science seem to be agreed that "reality" need not be restricted to what is observable and straightforwardly describable in the language of observables:

... in so far as scientific language is understood in its own proper context, the structures about which it speaks do exist in external nature, and exist just as surely as chairs and tables and scientists and philosophers exist ...

Not only that, but there seems also to be a kind of continuity between our perception of ordinary objects and our inference to such scientific concepts as the fundamental particles. We do not doubt the object-like-ness of viruses and large organic molecules which just come into view in highly magnifying microscopes, and it is natural to extrapolate to a hierarchy of particles of decreasing size and increasing unlikeness to ordinary objects: atoms, nuclei, protons, electrons. It is difficult to see how a rigid ontological distinction can be made anywhere in the hierarchy, that is, we cannot find grounds for saying the particles greater than, say, two Ångstroms in diameter are objects in the external world, and those less than two Ångstroms are only mathematical constructions. (Hesse (SHX) 150-151; cf. also Maxwell 7-11, 26-27, Theobald 124-124)

We may then accept critical realism as a viable position to adopt in the philosophy of science, arguing that the theoretical models of the sciences "are neither pictures of reality nor useful fictions; they are partial and inadequate ways of imagining what is not observable" (Barbour (LIP) 48).

In Barbour's view:

Critical realism acknowledges the indirectness of reference and the realistic intent of language as used in the scientific community ... It recognises that no theory is an exact description of the world, and that the world is such as to bear interpretation in some ways and not in others. It affirms the rôle of mental construction and imaginative activity in the formation of theories, and it asserts that some constructs agree with observations better than others only because events have an objective pattern. (Barbour (ISR) 172; cf. Quinton (NT) 290-291)
At the very least one might be willing to agree with philosophers of science who contend that: "To propose something as a model of (an) \( x \) is to suggest it as a way of representing \( x \) which provides at least some approximation of the actual situation; moreover, it is to admit the possibility of alternative representations useful for different purposes" (Achinstein (TI) 105; cf. Spector passim). 6

Ian Barbour's views are particularly relevant to our discussion because he argues further that a critical realist position should be adopted by theologians in their analysis of theological models (Barbour (ISR) 216-218, (LAP) 50-69; cf. Ferré (LNM) 74-78, (IMR) 344). Our religious models are partial and approximate "representations" of the nature and activity of God; they are by no means exact, literal descriptions of him. In religion, as in science, "The price of the employment of models is eternal vigilance" (Braithwaite (SE) 93). But the question to which we must now turn is whether Ian Ramsey is a critical realist in science and religion. It seems clear to me that he is; and I propose now to argue for this thesis.

Students of religious language have referred to the writings of such authors as R. B. Braithwaite (e.g. (BN)), J. T. Stace and Paul van Buren (e.g. (SG), (CE)) as examples of "instrumentalism in religion" (cf. W. H. Austin (RNS) ch.13, Brown 90-96, Fawcett 88). At first sight it might appear that Ramsey stands close to a position suggested by Stace that: "religious doctrines are ... theories about how religious experiences can be evoked", "that they have their use in the evocation of mystical experiences" (W. H. Austin (RNS) 47, 31-32). But I have argued that Ramsey
regards religious models as having a representative function in addition to their function in evoking religious disclosure.

And we have seen that Ramsey rejects the views of Braithwaite and van Buren on the non-cognitive status of religious language (cf. CPL 248-249, TTST 78, RE pessim, DCCD pessim).

Tilley has described Ramsey as "an instrumentalist with a minimum ontological commitment" (Tilley (Thesis) 275; cf. 138). It seems to me, however, that Ramsey must be placed very firmly on the realist side of the divide. For he has written:

Those who, like Clerk Maxwell, have displayed an ontological commitment are more to be admired for their inconsistency than for their later caution. Models are neither mnemonics nor jingles; neither black sheep nor skeletons in the cupboard. The English physicists of the nineteenth century were right in wanting some "ontological commitment": some "real existence"; they were wrong, but badly wrong, in thinking this could be given descriptively. It is this error which the contemporary use of models makes evident and spotlights and is determined to avoid. The ontological commitment arises in a disclosure, and the model, whether in science or theology, provides us with its own understanding of, and its own inroad into, what the disclosure discloses. (L3U 20; cf. PPLIT 162)

For Ramsey, then, models do have some sort of "ontological reference"; however:

it is another question altogether as to how these or any models secure such ontological reference as they have. Undoubtedly Kelvin and others believed that their scientific models referred as a picture refers, and this is philosophically untenable: how could two different and it may be incompatible pictures "picture" one world? By alternative suggestion is that the reference is disclosure - given through any and all models - the reference being that "world" or "Universe", or in a Berkeleyan sense that "God", which all discourse from the models with less or more reliability tries to understand. (LMR 268; cf. ECS 22-23, RL 56-57)

Thus Ramsey seems to reject the view that scientific theories have merely a heuristic function, whilst accepting that they
are very far from simply being literal "descriptions" of reality (cf. RSCS 10-12, 72, 81-82, BSP 82-85):

Models, whether in theology or science, are not descriptive miniatures, they are not picture enlargements; in each case they point to mystery. (M 21)

What Ramsey is attempting to do is to "salvage something from the older labelling view" of scientific models, so that we can "say that these invariants of science, in some way or another, are clues to the real world" (RSCS 12). And it is in his epistemology of disclosures that Ramsey finds the "distinctive reference" for scientific invariants (ibid).

It would appear, then, that Ramsey should also be counted among those who would draw a close parallel between scientific and religious models. A great deal of Ramsey's earlier work, reflecting as it does his search for a Christian metaphysics, tends to view the scientific endeavour in the context of the construction of an overall metaphysical scheme (cf. U-0CP 16-17, U-EP 40-46, SRCP passim, M passim, U-NLG B16/B19/132, FPMT passim, RSP passim). This approach to the language of the sciences has been reviewed above. It may be summarised by noting Ramsey's claim that "God" is an "effective key idea to unify all languages, not only scientific language, but all the languages which together express discursive knowledge" (U-SLR 25). Something of this approach is still to be found in Ramsey's later work, especially in his view that "God" - like "I" - is an integrating category. This suggests that:

theology has a logic peculiar enough to unite the fragmentary languages of science ... and ... thus ... to provide for a fragmentary science the one cosmic map which remains the scientific ideal. (RSCS xiii; cf. ibid. 75-83)
But in Models and Mystery, which is Ramsey’s most thorough and most important contribution to the Religion/Science debate, all the emphasis is laid on comparing scientific and theological models. And he concludes there that there is “a far-reaching parallel between models in science and models in theology” (ibid. 14). For both disciplines use “disclosure models”, rather than “picturing models”, in directing us towards a fuller understanding of their subject matter – in enabling us “to be reliably articulate” (ibid. 15). Scientific and theological models, therefore, have a similar logical status and arise in a similar way – i.e. in a disclosure-situation.

In fine it should be noted that Ramsey’s earlier work on the relationship between science and theology, which stressed that the union of the two disciplines was essentially a part of the metaphysical task – the provision of a key category (“God”) that is able to unite all languages, speaks of a unity which is achieved at the end of the road. It tells of a unity that is given to us by the metaphysical map-maker. But in his more recent writings, concentrating as they do on disclosures rather than the second order activity of metaphysical map-making, the union of science and religion may be seen from the start. It stems directly from the common origin of both disciplines in a shared disclosure. Both scientist and theologian have to do with a mystery which is “more than” and “beyond” what is immediately observable, a mystery that can only be known in an act of intuitive discernment. And all such acts are the raw material of religious worship:

the union of disciplines is to be found in a wonder and insight and worship, which all may share and for whose understanding they all offer their own particular clues. (LL 70; cf. OGS II 17, Sermon (8) 17-20)
Ian Ramsey was not a Thomist: his language, presuppositions and method (both philosophical and theological) were very different from those usually employed by Thomists. But he was sympathetic to the work of these neo-Thomists - e.g. Maritain, Mascall, Trethowan and Daly - who attempted an "exploration of metaphysics ... by way of intuition, rather than by a grasping of essences" (Cohen (Thesis) 7; cf. Prospect for Metaphysics: Editor's Introduction, CCPF 47, 54, 60-61, U-FG B60/193, LDA 32-34, E 44, Schedler (Thesis) 134, 167, Evans (IRTG) 220-221).

In particular Ramsey has described his own work on religious language as "a possible generalization of Thomism", claiming that "in principle we are only doing what ... St. Thomas Aquinas was doing, though we are not thereby committed (for better or worse) to his ontology and system" (RL 185). E. P. Owen recognises "a marked similarity between his theory of models and qualifiers and the Thomistic doctrine of analogy", claiming that Ramsey offers us "a wholly novel restatement of the doctrine" (Owen (PTR) 69; cf. (CKG) 254-255). Another commentator, Donald Evans, has described Ramsey's perfecting and negating qualifiers as "twentieth-century descendants of Aquinas' 'way of eminence' and 'way of negation'" (Evans (IRTG) 221).

Ramsey's thesis is that we can have a doctrine of analogical predication without the need to accept St. Thomas' ontological system; that a theory of models can provide - in the words of another philosopher of religion - "a new form of analogical thinking which is not dependent on the metaphysical
assumptions of the scholastic doctrine of analogy" (Barbour (LIIJ?) 179). However, a number of commentators on Ramsey have challenged him on this point: claiming that the doctrine of analogy can stand only with the support of those "metaphysical assumptions" (Lebblethwaite 643; Owen (CKG) 255, (CD) 37; Cohen (Thesis) 263, 213).

Ramsey's views on analogical predication are stated most clearly in a secondary source - his interview with Ved Lehta, recounted in The New Theologian. Ramsey argues:

I see my theory as a more generalised form of Aquinas's doctrine of analogy, but it depends less than his did on a kind of background metaphysics. For instance, you couldn't justify St. Thomas's doctrine of analogy unless, as part of your metaphysical background, you adopted his theory of the Creation, which is, roughly, that since God created the world of man, there is a kind of common background between them. So that words used by men, of men, must have some kind of relation to God, because the Creation has given God and man a kind of common link. But I myself simply try to describe the Creation in terms of these models. I would say the Creation is the way of understanding a certain kind of cosmic disclosure, which can come to us when we ask ourselves the question "Why is there anything at all?". This question brings up certain patterns, which we reflect on, and then at some point or other we get a feeling of cosmological dependence. That would be my basis for adopting a theory of the Creation. But I wouldn't put this theory in a sacrosanct position. I think it would have to be justified in relation to a disclosure reached in a particular way. (VM 100-101)

The so-called "analogy of being", the analogia entis, between God and the world (and particularly between God and men - his "spiritual creatures") is justified by the unique relationship of creator to creature:

this very relation means that the creature bears a likeness to God within the limits of its creaturehood. Creatures ... pre-exist in their entirety as "ideas" in [God's] mind, and are brought into being solely by his will. (Owen (CKG) 213)
On this view there is, as Ramsey puts it, an "ontological continuity" between the world and God. A continuity with which "can go linguistic continuity", so that "words used of determinate Existents can have an 'analogical' reference beyond them" (U-CCF 15). In this way Thomism "grounds epistemology in ontology" (Gwen (CKG) 255).

It is this "grounding" that Ramsey rejects, apparently arguing that ontology must itself be justified by epistemology - and that the doctrine of creation can have no privileged position in the vocabulary of Christian theology. In Ramsey's eyes "creation ex nihilo" is to be treated as a qualified-model which is itself adopted only because it arises in a disclosure. The doctrine of creation does not give us the sort of precise and unambiguous description of the relationship between God and the world which could justify a claim for there being an analogia entis between them.²

But in his very last writings Ramsey does seem to point to the need for some kind of "link" in order to justify his own theory of analogy. In 1970 he wrote in a letter to Donald Evans:

I went so far in the ... Zeno's lectures in Chicago, to suggest that for my own position activity was the one word which could be used literally of God and ourselves - that here was the kind of bridge forged for St. Thomas by a doctrine of creativity, and which I certainly need if I am to give any answer whatever to those who would question whether I can really argue that I am saying anything reliable about what is objectively disclosed or (not). For me, activity provides the one firm link in fact and language. (U-ITR Evans 1)

And in his "Personal Credo" written in 1972, Ramsey confessed:

for me activity is a word which I (use not) equivocally nor even analogically, but univocally about God and man. This for me takes the place of the relation of Creator - Creature in Thomism, which I find
unsatisfactory because I think that the doctrine of creation incorporates a model as much as any other theological doctrine. **Activity**, on the contrary, is that concept which provides me with the one necessary example of a word used of man and God in the same sense. This it is which makes sure in the last resort we are talking of God in a way that is **reliable**, and not just engaging in talk of our own making. (U-Credo 3)

Activity, then "is the very bond of explicit, literal understanding between God and ourselves" (RFT 30).

I should like to focus on two sets of questions which seem to me to be raised by these remarks:

(1) Does a doctrine of analogical predication require a belief in the analogy of being as a basis? And does Ramsey's analysis of the doctrine of creation undermine this foundation?

(2) Without the support of the analogy of being does Ramsey's treatment of religious language require the view that one word (e.g. "activity") must be univocally predicated of God and man?

In order to answer these questions some attempt must be made to sample the considerable literature on the use of analogy in religious language. However, a detailed study of the subject is impossible in the space available here.

(1) The role of the **analogia entis** in the doctrine of analogical predication

It may be profitable to begin this discussion with a summary of the orthodox Thomistic position. For this purpose I shall refer to J. F. Anderson's systematic treatment in The Bond of Being. Anderson, we may note, is one of those who views Cajetan,
St. Thomas' sixteenth century commentator, as a faithful interpreter of his master.

"'Analogy'", Anderson writes, "signifies a certain likeness in difference ... a mean between [the] extremes" of univocity and pure equivocity (Anderson 19; cf. ibid. 30). Like St. Thomas ((ST) 1a, 13, 5), Anderson rejects both univocity and pure equivocity as accounts of the relation between the meaning of words when applied to men and their meaning when applied to God. The espousal of pure equivocity as a theory of religious language — i.e., the view that words applied to God bear a completely different meaning from the meaning they have when predicated of men — can only lead to complete agnosticism about the nature of God. For similar reasons Anderson also rejects any theological via negativa (way of negation; cf. Aquinas (ST) 1a, 13, 2, p55) that is applied to all God's attributes without exception. Such an approach, which construes positive affirmations about God as negations-in-disguise, is equally fatal to theology. Anderson writes:

if nothing we say about God truly and positively signifies that which He is, then we would have absolutely no positive or affirmative knowledge of Him. Consequently there would be no grounds for any negative attribution .... (ibid. 223; cf. (ST) 1a, 13, 2, Kayner 859)

The so-called "Analogy of inequality" (or generic predication) is also rejected by Anderson. He defines it as "that kind of imperfect likeness which arises from the unequal participation of things in a common generic character" (30). On this view the same word is used with the same meaning when attributed to both man and God, although God possesses the quality specified to a different (i.e., higher) degree. Anderson rejects this as
"pseudo-analogy", "only a sort of univocity", and "a potent source of intellectual evils in philosophy and even in theology" (90).

A more promising candidate for the religious language user is Symbolic Analogy or the "Analogy of Metaphor". Surely we can treat religious language as essentially metaphorical in status? Thomists, however, tend to draw a distinction between metaphor (which is of limited usefulness in theology) and real analogy (whose scope is much wider). According to Anderson the use of metaphor is based on a real likeness but one which is only "in the dynamic order, in the order of effects produced or actions done" (171); metaphor does not speak of a similarity of essence. It is a relation between relations: God's action (effect) on me is similar to an angry man's action (effect) on me, and this is the basis for my saying that God is "angry" with me. This is improper proportionality "because it operates with a concept which is univocal in itself and which is merely employed analogically" (174):

since whatever is denominated metaphorically from some other thing is not said to be that thing but to be like it, it is clear that things said metaphorically do not retain the same concept at all ... but only the same name. (174-175)

Aquinas himself treats such words as "rock" and "lion" as metaphors when applied to God. He writes:

Some words that signify what has come forth from God to creatures do so in such a way that part of the meaning of the word is the imperfect way in which the creature shares in the divine perfection. Thus it is part of the meaning of "rock" that it has its being in a merely material way. Such words can be used of God only metaphorically. There are other words, however, that simply mean certain perfections without any indication of how these perfections are possessed - words, for example, like "being", "good", "living" and so on. These words can be used literally of God. ((ST) 1a, 13, 3, p59)
It would appear from this that the distinction between (a) metaphorical language, and (b) literal language, about God lies in the distinction between (a) words which have imperfection or limitation as it were "built in"—where limitation is a necessary part of their meaning, and (b) words where this is not the case. As Aquinas puts it:

> These words [i.e. the ones that can be used literally] have a bodily context not in what they mean but in the way in which they signify it; the ones that are used metaphorically have bodily conditions as part of what they mean. (ibid.)

Despite Anderson's remarks quoted above, the distinction between metaphorical and literal language about God cannot really depend—for a Thomist—on a distinction between describing the operations/effects of God and describing his essence. For the Thomist believes that we cannot know God's essence: we know that God is, but not what God is (cf. (ST) la, 12, passim; la, 13, articles 1, 2, 8).

But Thomas' belief that "being", "good", "living" etc. may be used non-metaphorically (although analogically) of God, in contrast with "rock" and "lion" which are metaphors, may be challenged. It would appear that "being" and "good" ("one", "exists" etc.) do seem to be applied to God non-metaphorically. Indeed these words do not seem to possess any metaphorical usage at all. But it does not seem to be so clear that "living" is applied non-metaphorically to God. Some recent writers appear willing to blur the distinction made by Aquinas between metaphor and analogy. Thus Hesse writes that in metaphor as opposed to real analogy "there is generally no implication of a real similarity," and that a metaphor tends to be more
"dispensable" (Hesse (SH) 145). The distinction between analogy and metaphor is surely not a hard and fast distinction (cf. Burrell ch.10, Kearney 74-79); they are probably best treated as occupying different points on a continuous spectrum.

Anderson describes the "analogy of metaphor" as "a kind of 'mean' between analogy of attribution and analogy of proper proportionality" (180; cf. Lascall (EA) 103-104). It is these two latter types of analogy which are of most concern to the Thomist.

Analogy of proportion or attribution is "a case of comparing many things to one thing as to an efficient principle or cause" (Anderson 95). Thus God is ("virtually") wise because he is the cause of wisdom in men (who are "actually" wise). In a similar way diets and climates are described as "healthy", in the sense that they contribute to the health of men. But as St. Thomas himself notes: "When a man speaks of the 'living God' he does not simply want to say that God is the cause of our life ...". Rather "such words do say what God is; they are predicated of him in the category of substance but fail to represent adequately what he is" ((ST) 1a, 13, 2, pp54-55; cf. 1a, 13, 6). The justification for this claim, according to Thomas, is that an effect necessarily resembles its cause:

... a creature is not like to God as it is like to another member of its species or genus, but resembles him as an effect may in some way resemble a transcendent cause (i.e. imperfectly) ... ((ST) 1a, 13, 2, p55)

Any perfection found in an effect must be found also in the cause of that effect ... and ... in a more perfect manner when cause and effect are not of the same sort. This is because effects obviously pre-exist potentially in their causes. Now to pre-exist potentially in a cause is to pre-exist in a more perfect ... manner ... Since God then is the primary
operative cause of all things, the perfection of 
everything must pre-exist in him in a higher manner. 
((ST) 1a, 4, 2, p53; cf. 1a, 4, 3)

Therefore:

Any creature, in so far as it possesses any 
perfection, represents God and is like to him, for 
he, being simply and universally perfect, has pre-
existing in himself the perfections of all his 
creatures. ((ST) 1a, 13, 2, p55)

For Thomas, then, the word "wise" is used primarily and more 
properly of God the cause, then of man whose wisdom is the 
effect of God. But this is only in terms of the res significata 
(reality signified) and not in terms of the modus significandi 
(the way of signifying); in terms of the latter "wise" primarily 
applies to man and is applicable to God only secondarily and 
improperly ((ST) lc, 13, 3; lc, 13, 6; cf. A. 126-128).

But our main concern must be with the claim that effects 
necessarily resemble causes. This principle has been acclaimed 
as "metaphysically self-evident" (Kelly 17; cf. F. 15); but I share the view of those who regard it as a mistake - no 
more than "mere superstition" (Emmet 183; cf. Kearney 71, 
Owen 214). In any case if God is the creator of all 
creatures and their attributes, the principle is in danger of 
proving too much (cf. Ferré 74-75, Lewis 215-217, 
cf. Owen 269). Anderson himself expresses considerable 
unease with this form of analogy, believing that it reduces to 
univocality (122) and suffers from other inadequacies (128). But 
its main defect, in his view, is that "in the order of being 
[it remains] only virtual ... it has no actual status in the 
nature of things" (162; cf. Hayner 857).

Before we leave the analogy of attribution we should note 
the crucial part played in its justification by the doctrine of
creation. Creatures resemble their Creator because he is their Creator. For Thomists the likeness between effect and divine cause is a likeness or analogy of esse (existing) — for all things have existence in common, and all created things derive their existence from God:

While the cause is never exhausted in the effect ... it is also true — and presumed to be so of God, if man is to understand him at all — that cause produces like effect, in that agere sequitur esse: it is from God's created effects that we may come, invoking the analogy of being, to some understanding of his uncreated nature. (Stacpoole 6)

In Anderson's view, however, the only valid way of speaking of God is by "the analogy of proper proportionality". This is essentially a similitude of two proportions and derives from mathematics. Thus the model is a four term relationship — a : b :: c : d, "a is to b as c is to d", which is based on relationships such as 1 : 2 :: 3 : 6 — the relationship of the proportion 1/2 to the proportion 3/6 being a "proportionality".

Anderson claims that analogy of proportionality is "the only metaphysical analogy because it is the only analogy that is intrinsically analogical" (245; cf. 252-253). He contends that the basis of the analogy is the analogy between the different acts of existing of different entities. Thus there is a proportion —

this match : its act of existing :: that match : its act of existing (278-279)

But where the entities differ in essence (essentia) as well as in individual acts of existence (esse) (e.g. when a man is compared with a dog, as opposed to simply comparing two entities which have the same nature) the analogy must be modified accordingly. So most Thomists speak of an analogy of proportionality based on
the different natures (essences) of God and man - e.g.:

life of man : essence of man :: life of God : essence of God

(cf. Lascall (Ed) 109)

This, however, immediately raises a problem for the Thomist - for God's essence is unknown. Thus the equation,

\[
\frac{\text{life of man}}{\text{essence of man}} = \frac{\text{life of God (X)}}{\text{essence of God (Y)}}
\]

appears to contain two "unknowns" (X and Y): cf. Perre (LIG) 72-73, Palmer (A) ch.V, Geach (A) 123, etc. Lascall reviews the arguments in favour of the view that term Y is known: as essence and existence are identical in God and God's esse is known (Mascall (Ed) 110-112). But Lascall himself recognises the need to fall back on the relation of creation "which thus, as it were, cuts horizontally across the analogy of proportionality with an analogy of attribution" (ibid. 112). He concludes that:

in order to make the doctrine of analogy really satisfactory, we must see the analogical relation between God and the world as combining in a tightly interlocked union both analogy of attribution and analogy of proportionality. Without analogy of proportionality it is very doubtful whether the attributes which we predicate of God can be ascribed to him in more than a merely virtual sense; without analogy of attribution it hardly seems possible to avoid agnosticism. (Ibid. 113; cf. Farrer (HP) 66-67, Copleston (HF 2 II) 76)

Anderson also stresses the importance of the doctrine of creation in his own account of analogy of proportionality. The relations in which the essences of Man and God stand to their respective acts of existing are related in an analogy of proportionality. John McIntyre comments on Anderson:

when he comes to deal with the statement that "human essence is to human existence as Divine essence is to Divine existence", Anderson holds that the relation of essence to act of existing is that of potency to act, and that this distinction is the result of Creation ..., in which God's effects are linked to him as Agent by real relations of analogical similarity. (McIntyre (A) 10)
Anderson himself declares:

the act of creation is the positing in existence of analogues of the Author of that act. Since the existence of every being is given to it by Him who is Existence, every existent is a created analogue of its Author; and, as such, it participates in Him and imitates Him existentially. (Anderson 309-310)

* * * *

It would appear then that the traditional doctrine of analogical predication is very closely related to the metaphysical notion of an analogy of being between God and the world, and hence to the doctrine of creation. But this basis may be questioned on a number of different grounds:–

(a) It does appear that the concept of an analogia entis is most at home in an Aristotelian-Thomistic metaphysics with its analysis of entities in terms of essence/existence and potency/act (Aquinas (ST) 1a, 3, 1; 1a, 3, 2; cf. Copleston (A) ch.2, (HP II) chs33, 35). Those who are unable to make much sense of this analysis find themselves ill at ease with the doctrine (e.g. K. Ward (Co) 157-158; cf. (EC) 172, 174. But cf. Geach (A) 88-97, Burrell 238).

(b) One may question whether the doctrine of creation can justify our use of mundane language in speaking of the transcendent God. It has been argued that:

the supposition that any identity of characteristic can hold between God and man is incompatible with the fundamental theistic assumption that God is infinite. (Ferre (LIG) 76)

And the doctrine of creation does seem to widen the distinction between God and the world at the same time as it connects them. God is intimately related to the world as the continuing cause of its existence. He is therefore immanent in the world, or, rather, "present to" it "as an agent is present to that in which its action is taking place" (Aquinas (ST) 1a, 18, 1). But God is
also transcendent; and there is a profound ontological difference between Creator and creature. And of course it is precisely the transcendence of God that is the reason for our having to use analogical language about him (Farrer (RF) 65). It might be argued that this radical transcendence is put at risk by the doctrine of analogia entis. But John McIntyre has defended analogy of attribution against the charge that it leads to the idea of an "ontological continuity between God and man":

> It is God's act of creation which establishes the analogia entis so that there can be no question of the analogia entis involving any denial of the fundamental distinction between Creator and creatures. In Anderson's words ..., "God and the world are essentially diverse". (McIntyre (A) 12; cf. Anderson 369)

Thus pace Ferre (LLG 76), the analogia entis does not speak of identity, but of "identity-in-difference", between God and man (cf. Owen (CKG) 212, McIntyre (A) 11-12). The extent to which this identity-in-difference impugns the notion of the transcendence of God is open to debate. It seems fair to conclude that the doctrine of creation (and the notion of transcendence that it entails) might be compatible with the analogia entis.

But it is another matter altogether when the Thomist claims that the doctrine of creation implies an analogy of being between God and the world. I cannot see how this claim can be justified without accepting the principle that effects are like causes and/or the Thomistic analysis of entities in terms of essence and existence. Certainly recent defences of the claim do not seem to me to be very convincing (cf. Owen (CKG) 213-214; (CD) 46). Why should the world be necessarily like its Creator except in the minimal sense that both "exist" (although in
very different ways)? As H. D. Lewis has put it, it is one thing to claim that:

there can be nothing which is truly alien to God or outside his control as the unconditioned source of things. But it is very misleading to present this particular truth about the ultimate relation of God to creatures in the form of a general principle about an alleged community of nature of cause and effect. That is a distortion ... (Lewis (Pii) 217)

(c) Some have criticized the analogia entis on the grounds that if the causal relationship between God and the world is to be used to support a theory of analogy, then that relationship must be treated univocally and not analogically:

If God is to be spoken of as "first cause" of the world, that attribution must be proposed in some univocal sense. Thus, even if an analogy of attribution can be shown to hold inforrnatively among objects in the world, it appears to flounder helplessly in an infinite regress of equivocating on its key word "cause", when applied in hopes of gaining knowledge of God. (Pérré (At) 96; cf. Emmet (NMT) 173, 181, 188)

The infinite regress into equivocation is certainly one ever-present danger in building one analogy on the foundation of another.

d) In any case, and this must be the really important point in any consideration of Ramsey's views, Ian Ramsey is surely right in refusing to treat the doctrine of creation as separable from the rest of the language we use about God. The Creation doctrine cannot justify analogical predication, for it stands itself - like our analogical language - in need of the justification that can only come from religious experience. Ramsey forces us to ask the prior question, "how do we know that the world is created?". Classically the belief that man is made in the image of God was derived from the Bible, coupled with a natural theology that claimed to show that "everything that is must have been caused by God" and that "it is exclusively for God to create" (Aquinas
Today we - with Ramsey - need to go behind and beyond the Bible and ground such a belief in a "natural theology" of religious experience. For "in the final analysis our judgements concerning religious truths are intimately linked to the quality of experiences which we have enjoyed" (Badham 13-14).

It may be that Ramsey's detailed interpretation of creation ex nihilo as a qualified-model leaves much to be desired. When it was first proposed, in an unpublished paper, Austin Farrer wrote to criticize Ramsey for taking "'Creation' in the sense of 'creature!'" and reducing the whole phrase "to something about the mysteriousness of everything" (Farrer (Letter) 2, 1956).

One might prefer to say that creation-ex-nihilo ("theological creation") is a notion that can only be applied properly to God - a notion that may then be analogically applied to human acts. In this case the word "creation" would not be a human model which is then used of God. But Ramsey's insistence that the doctrine derives from a disclosure of "creaturely dependence" (Gr 73; cf. ibid. 71-75, Wb 161, WSC ch 4, etc.) surely cannot be questioned. The creative activity of God, like his "fatherly" activity, is discerned in and through religious experience.

Ramsey, then, may be said to believe in a discovered "affinity" (cf. Macquarrie (GT) 220) between God and man: an affinity that is discovered in our discovery of God. We use certain human analogies of God because we find in our religious experience that they are appropriate to his discerned nature. He seems to us to be "just", "loving", "wise" and so on. It is this discerned identity-in-difference which is the basic
justification for our use of analogies. If one wants to call this an "analogy of being" then I suppose one may (cf. Schedler (Thesis) 209); but it is not necessarily to be understood in Thomistic terms, nor is it to be treated — as Thomists do — as an a priori justification of analogy.¹⁵ It is, rather, very much a posteriori; being discovered in our religious experiencing. The religious experience, as always, is fundamental. As Baelz has expressed it:

the point of reference [for our language about God] may be given in and with religious experience. If this is so, then we may claim to know what we are talking about when we are using our analogies. If it is not so, we may find ourselves committed to an ultimate agnosticism ... or to a virtual atheism ... (Baelz (CTL) 99-106)

(2) Does Ramsey need a univocal predicate?

Despite his reservations about the analogia entis Ramsey appears to feel that the doctrine of creation does provide the Thomist with a necessary link between language about God and language about the world. Ramsey prefers, however, to provide the "missing link" himself by treating activity as univocally predictable of both man and God. We may recall that Aquinas boldly asserts that "it is impossible to predicate anything univocally of God and creatures" ((ST) 1a, 13, 5, p63);¹⁶ thus he does not see the necessity of a univocal attribute in order to make theological analogy viable. Why then does Ramsey?

I believe that the appeal to the univocal status of "activity" reveals a (rather belated) recognition on Ramsey's part of that strand in his own thought that comes dangerously near to espousing pure equivocity in theological language (cf. U-PE 25, Cohen...
Certainly Ramsey is sometimes in danger of slipping off the via media into the abyss of agnosticism. His appeal to the fact that at least one word is applied to God univocally therefore acts as a safeguard. For if we know that "God is active as we are active" — that he too is an agent — then we do understand a little bit better what we mean by calling him "loving", "wise"; and so on.

I would argue, however, that:

(a) this particular ploy is doomed. For the activity of God cannot mean the same as human activity, and must be treated analogically. Further, Ramsey's evidence for his claim — i.e. that we become aware of God's activity in becoming aware of our own — is no evidence at all. It tells us nothing about the meaning of the word "activity" when predicated of God.

(b) the ploy is in any case unnecessary. For we can predicate all our language of God analogically without failing to predicate meaningfully. The secret, which Ramsey does not appear always to remember, is to make some attempt to specify the extent and direction of the shift in meaning which occurs when we apply terms to God. Despite his pleas that religious language has a representative function, Ramsey's God sometimes does appear to be too mysterious — a completely unknowable "X". Too often Ramsey has, in Cohen's words, "made religious language so extraordinary that it has lost all connection with ordinary language" (Cohen (LH) 144; cf. (Thesis) 177).

This second point is perhaps worthy of amplification. The doctrine of analogical predication has frequently been criticized on the grounds that we cannot use analogies in making inferences.
If God is only "good" and "powerful", but not "good" and "powerful", we cannot make reliable inferences about the way in which he will act. As J. S. Mill put it:

one of the commonest forms of fallacious reasoning arising from ambiguity, is that of arguing from a metaphorical expression as if it were literal. (Mill, _System of Logic_, Tenth edition, Vol. I, p48; Longmans, Green & Co: London (1879))

Mill's words have been echoed by a number of recent writers on analogy — cf. McCloskey 220-222, Hepburn (CP) 36-39. Humphrey Palmer's book, _Analogy_, is essentially a set of variations on the theme of the uselessness of the doctrine of analogical predication to the theologian. He writes:

All it says is that the theological meaning, when grasped, will be found to stand to the ordinary meaning in the way God stands to man ... But like this the theory of analogy simply restates the original point that God is so different from man that our language must also become different when applied to him. But it does not say how different ... It says that no one can know what he is saying when talking about God. (Palmer (A) 42-43)

In particular, Palmer argues, analogy is disastrous in theological argument. He believes that "all theological argument is ... void for uncertainty" (ibid. 84, cf. 99). For (a) we have no way in religion (as we have in science) of checking the appropriateness of theological analogies (94-95), and (b) the ambiguity of analogy makes inferential argument impossible:

the conclusion reached — that every theological statement is liable to qualification to an unspecifiable degree — destroys the whole subject. For propositions regarded as true only if appropriately (and incalculably) modified cannot usefully be constructed into arguments.(97)

The force of an argument depends upon the statements within it sharing the same terms: ... And it must be the same term in both (conclusion and premisses): not the same word meaning something different. (98; cf. 106)

analogy is almost as bad for arguments, as is outright ambiguity. If a term means something partly different
when applied to God, and if we cannot say how different its meaning then becomes, then any argument in which it plays a part is unreliable for us. Then ... as terms are applied to God here below only by analogy, argumentative theology cannot exist as a descriptive science. (141)

But can we not argue that the "ambiguity" of theological analogy is a matter of degree, and open to clarification? There is surely some truth in Swinburne's remarks (in a review of Christian Discourse):

What the theologian ... has to do is to show in detail that by his use of analogy, a highly coherent and comprehensible picture of the universe emerges. And what his opponent has to do is to show that the analogies break down too quickly, lead to too many apparent contradictions and yield no coherent picture. If the user of analogy is successful in his task, then talk about the objects referred to by the analogy is recognised as description and statements about them as true or false. (Swinburne (CD) 25-26)

I should like now to turn to one very thorough attempt to outline the ways in which an analogy can be explained and its meaning made more determinate. I refer to an unpublished thesis on Analogical Predication by J. J. Kearney (1974). Kearney provides a spirited defence of the necessity of analogical predication, particularly in the natural sciences, psychology, ethics, politics, metaphysics and theology (cf. Kearney 142, 155-168, 259). He discusses the use of what he calls "univocal explanation" and "supplementary analogical predication" in our understanding of analogy. Under the former heading he proposes the Principle of Maximum Univocity:

Except to the extent that the contrary is stated or otherwise evident, a word is always to be understood as having its full primary meaning. (ibid. 212)

It is the task of the user of analogy, bearing in mind this principle, to specify which of the predicates entailed by the predication of a word in its primary sense are not to be affirmed
in its secondary meaning and which predicates may be affirmed univocally - i.e. to point out its univocal affirmations and denials. This clearly is one way of explicating an analogy.

For the remaining "irreducible" elements of the analogy Kearney suggests that supplementary analogical predication can help. He discusses:

(a) Subsidiary analogical entailments:

A secondary meaning of a word may be better understood by determining which, if any, of the predicates entailed by the predication of that word in its primary sense are themselves now entailed only in a secondary sense. The statement "God is a person", for example, may be better understood in the light of the explanation that it entails the statement "God has intelligence", even if it has to be pointed out that in this statement the predicate "has intelligence" - no less than the predicate "person" in the original statement - is to be understood only analogically in relation to its meaning when used of subjects other than God. (219)

(b) Additional analogical entailments: In a word's secondary meaning there may be a further predicate entailed that is not entailed in its primary meaning: this secondary predicate being analogical. Thus in "disembodied person", "person" no longer entails "having a body" but "aptitude to have a body" - and this can be explained analogically (cf. the foetus in the womb, the acorn in the ground, etc.).

(c) Complementary analogical predication: Here the "understanding of one analogical predication is made more determinate by its conjunction with an alternative one" (223). Thus if God is called both "father" and "judge", then the meaning of "father" is modified in the light of the use of "judge". This is clearly crucial in the "multi-model discourse" of theology.

(d) Parallel analogical predication: Here one compares one predication with a similar analogical use of the same predicate.
word concerning a different subject. Kearney quotes Shelley's line: "make me thy lyre even as the forest is" ("Ode to the West Wind", 57).

Understanding analogy, then, is largely a matter of "determining the manner in which the entailments of the primary meaning are either discarded, retained or transformed" in its analogical predication (227). In chapter XIV of his thesis, Kearney turns to the problem of inference. He admits:

To the extent ... that a secondary meaning is not further determined - beyond the minimum comprehension that what is predicated is a partial resemblance to the properties signified in the primary meaning of the word - no specific inference at all is justified. (227-228)

Without this further determination nothing can be inferred from an analogy - and this is true even if the inferred predicate is to be affirmed analogically rather than univocally.

Kearney adopts as an illustration an argument of St. Thomas ((ST) la, 26, 1), stating it in syllogistic form:

Whatever can will, can love;  
But God can will (in the analogical sense proper to predication concerning God);  
Therefore God can love (in the analogical sense proper to predication concerning God). (Kearney 229)

If "will" and "love" in the first premiss are to be understood in the sense proper to man, then the argument is clearly invalid. In Kearney's view the only way in which the argument can be made valid is by incorporating the Principle of Maximum Univocality into the body of the argument. The resulting argument is "patently valid":

Whatever is entailed by the primary predication of a word is also entailed by a secondary predication, as far as this is compatible with the total denials that are constitutive of the analogicality (Principle of
Llarimuni Ifeivocity); But the predication of "will" in its primary sense entails the predication of "love";
Therefore the predication of "will" in a secondary sense entails the predication of "love" as far as this is compatible with the total denials that are constitutive of the analogicality;
But "will" is predicated of God in a secondary sense, with the analogicality constituted by the total denial of any materiality or imperfection;
Therefore "love" is to be predicated of God, as far as this is compatible with the total denial of any materiality or imperfection;
But predication of "love", analogically, is compatible with the total denial of any materiality or imperfection;
Therefore "love" is to be predicated of God, analogically.

Kearney concludes:

Although it remains true that from a completely unspecified analogical predication no inference is valid, from an analogical predication that is specified only partially and negatively inferences can be made in virtue of the principle of Maximum Univocity. (238)

Thus, if a theologian can adequately — although partially — specify the meaning of the analogy he applies to God, he may incorporate it into a valid argument. But the predication remains an analogy; this partial specification does not reduce it to, nor replace it by, a univocal term. If Ramsey's doctrine of analogy were to allow for a sufficient specification of the representative meaning of religious analogies, then he could be satisfied with a situation in which all the language he used about God was analogical (contra Leintyre (A) 20, Blackstone (ibid)66-67, etc.). I believe that Ramsey's theory of religious language does allow for this. I contend, therefore, that there is no need for him to seek a univocal safety net; the analogical tightrope can be made sufficiently strong to hold the weight of the theologian.
CHAPTER I

1. H.H. Farmer, whom Ramsey later referred to as his "revered teacher" (PG59), was Stanton Lecturer in Cambridge between 1937 and 1940.

2. Ramsey wrote affectionate tributes to Raven in *Proceedings of the British Academy*, LI (1965) and *The Modern Churchman* N.S. VIII, 2 (1965). In the latter publication he wrote, "I am one of many whose decision to seek ordination was greatly influenced by his Cambridge sermons" (p.134).


4. Ramsey reprinted that part of the report in which he had been most concerned in CECF (ch.19).


6. In a letter to the President of Colgate Divinity School, Sept. 1966.

7. *The Report, Prayer and the Departed*, SPCK: London (1971) was prepared under his chairmanship; as was the report on *Subscription and Assent to the 39 Articles*, SPCK: London (1968).

8. Cf. also DCCD, CELOE, OCR, TE etc.

9. The style of much of Ramsey's unpublished writings, particularly those of his "Cambridge period", is very far removed from this description. Indeed the clarity of the early material suffers badly from not offering the reader enough in the way of analogies and examples.

10. All the abbreviations used for Ramsey's unpublished writings are prefixed by the letter "U" and are listed separately in the Bibliography. Appendix B provides the date of composition.

11. Here I agree with T.W. Tilley, who is the only other student of Ramsey's work to have studied the text in question (Tilley (Thesis) 283).

12. For the evidence relating to Ramsey's intentions regarding the publication of U-FMO see Appendix B.

13. See p.16 below for a fuller account of what is essentially the same argument.

15. The influence of Whitehead on Ramsey's early thought was considerable, but by no means completely determinative. Thus although Ramsey writes of the experiential unity as a "process" (U-Burney 55, 82), he is not to be classified as a "Process Theologian".

16. Cf. U-EP 47: "Perceptual experience ... stands to another unity of experience in precisely that abstractive relationship as do sense-data and mental events to perceptual experience. Such more concrete experience is ... conational or volitional".

17. "Sentient experience ... is reality, and what is not this is not real" (Bradley (AR) 127; cf. ibid. 463, also Ramsey U-EP 6-7). Saxena comments, "for Bradley, 'experience' is, in the end, identical with 'the experienced'". "Experience ... is never without content; and content ... in turn, neither is nor is thinkable apart from experience" (Saxena 221-222; cf. Bradley (ETR) 91, G. Dawes Hicks (JW) 90-91).

18. For a defence of Bradley against Ward's criticisms in this article, see Saxena 97-109. Ward also criticised Bradley's account of the Self for giving no more than an Empirical Self, whereas what was needed was a Pure Ego as the subject of experience, actively attending to the presentation which is the object of experience (cf. Wollheim 130-135).

19. "Bodily-abstractive" are the group of spatio-temporal abstractive from concrete experience which we describe as "human bodies".

20. The argument was later gradually modified by Ramsey and finally abandoned (cf. M 18; U-HA: "Idea of God" B.c.1953, p2; U-HA: "Idea of God" C.c.1955, p2; U-FMG (2) 10/65/192-(3) 11/16/208 (c.1956-1960)). In its last appearance (in 1965) it is no longer a theistic argument but a plea to use personal disclosures around hair, feet, skin etc."as our unit of thinking for the Universe, so that around all the observables a cosmic disclosure is evoked" (U-HA: "The Traditional Arguments for the Existence of God" H65, p4).

21. Cf. Rashdall 17-19, to which Ramsey appeals at U-Burney 86. Ramsey argues that "if we are to be faithful to our principles, and especially the philosophical need for a proper degree of concretion we cannot interpret 'God' as anything less than another Volitional Unity with a Timeless Self and mental events analogous to our own" (U-EP 70). Hence "the Present may be described (not as an Absolute) as an Absolute Unity of Experience which can only be described in terms of (i) God's Unity of Volition (ii) Personal unities of Volition - all in mutual accommodation" (ibid. 71; cf. 96). Such an argument, in Ramsey's view, is an improvement on that of Berkeley, for "Berkeley has to conceive God as a sort of super-human organism ... an organism capable of seeing, and so on, very much like ourselves ... We are not so likely to think in terms of God's physical organism ... once we see that our ideas of God must start in an Act of will, which will then have for abstractive various routes of sense - data and mental events which, in our case, effect descriptions of 'minds' and 'bodies' but in God's case will certainly not do precisely that" (ibid. 75; cf. 78, 96-97, 135).

23. ITR Raven 259. The letter was written in criticism of a reviewer's comments on a book by C.E. Raven; it ends with the cri de coeur: "With the moon of Wittgenstein on the wane, the sun of Berkeley may rise again!"

24. Ramsey concluded that "Individuals - or, rather, persons - are ultimates, but they are only ultimates as 'persons - in - community' " (ibid. 310).

25. The reference is to the "encounter" of riding on a London tube train, compared with the various maps or models of the tube system which might be constructed. Ramsey later applies the analogy to our encounter with God, which can be inadequately mapped by scientific and theological language (ibid.12).

26. According to Whitehead, "The ultimate fact for sense-awareness is an event" (Whitehead (CN) 15; cf. (PR) 98, Emmet (WPO) 78).

27. Whitehead had denied that an abstractive series of events had any last term. It converges to nothing and not to a "limit"; although the set of quantitative measurements of events "does in general converge to a definite limit" (Whitehead (CN) 81). In fact Ramsey argues against Whitehead that "the word 'point' must be taken as itself specifying the limit indicated by a converging punctiform route" (U-EP40). Thus Ramsey's modified version of Whitehead's theory can be described as a thoroughgoing Limit Theory of Language, even in its application to the language of mathematics (cf.ibid.11, 39-41). However, the "limits" which Ramsey is describing in common sense language are merely lowest common denominators of abstractions. Ramsey's modification of Whitehead's views on the limiting nature of mathematical concepts is more relevant to his later application of mathematical analogies to the problem of the meaning of religious discourse (see CD 34-35 and below).

28. i.e. noise or mark on paper.

29. In a briefer discussion in U-OCP 6, and some marginal notes to U-EP 13, Ramsey describes all words other than those introduced by ostensive definition as being "metaphysical", insofar as they are "preferred descriptions of the Present 'immediate' experience" (U-OCP 6). However Ramsey does recognise that words like "chair" are less metaphysical than words like "God"! (U-EP 13 margin). Perhaps we have here a precursor of that element in Ramsey's later thinking which seems to suggest that our knowledge of, and language about, physical objects differs only in degree and, not in kind, from our knowledge of, and language about, strictly "metaphysical entities". For both are disclosure-based (see below).

30. Cf. below pp.171 ff. For an early formulation of this conviction cf. U-HA "The Reasonableness of the Christian Faith I", Cambridge period, p.3: "All notions of an indubitable theology have gone ... Theology must be empirical and tentative, though it may dare to be speculative".
31. Cf. below pp. 267 ff. For an early articulation of this, which is coupled with his Cambridge doctrine of experience, cf. SRCP 300: "neither physics nor theology need deny their claim to describe reality, once they admit that it is not described directly by either maths or the Bible ... in such descriptions as each gives lies only 'understanding' of 'reality' ... 'reality' in 'fact' is apprehended at a more concrete level ... in a personal encounter".

32. i.e. the active Subject (the Self) and its active Object (other persons and God, known via the objective spatio-temporal particulars of other people's bodies and the external world).


34. Cf. SR 5: "I believe in fact, that words like God ... complete - fill out - our language map, and help us to give the best possible description to the encounter". Cf. also SRCP 299.

35. Hume (T) BK I, Part IV, Sect. VI and Appendix. Cf. below pp. 54 ff.


37. "It is clear that it is in some ways a Pure Ego Theory, but ... it differs essentially from that type of theory as, ordinarily formulated ... (a) ... we do not regard 'Pure Ego', Mind and Body as three independent existents ... (b) ... we are not committed to such philosophical absurdities as supposing the 'Pure Ego' to 'act' or to 'descend into time' ... " (U-EP 57). Ramsey rejected traditional views of a substantial self but spoke of "a 'permanent substance' in the continuity of a Unity of Volitional Experience - always 'mine' in virtue of a Timeless Self which is an abstractive constituent of it. Yet ... its constituents are always changing ..." (ibid. 65)

38. It is only a "Serial Theory" in so far as the Self may be analysed into a Timeless Self (Pure Ego) together with "the two series dear to the hearts of the supporters of the Serial Theory" (U-OCP ?) - i.e. a series of mental events and a series of human body events. Certainly Hume should not have expected to "stumble upon" or "observe e" his Pure Ego: "We may perfectly well agree that the Pure Ego is not a datum of introspection, for it is no 'object' at all ..." (U-EP 59).

39. It has however clear similarities to Ramsey's later theories about the "integrating" function of certain metaphysical "key-words". See below ch. III.


41. Cf. Ewing (FQP) 140 (theory(4)).

42. Whitehead's philosophical system is, of course, basically realistic (cf. Whitehead (SW) 81-82, 113-114 etc). However, Whitehead and Bradley appear to "agree in making experience or Sentience fundamental", by claiming that "A concrete actual entity is an act of experience" (Emmet (WPO) 89, 141). It has been claimed that Whitehead's theory of the world as a prehensive unity of events "is clearly ... a resuscitation of the cardinal presupposition of idealism, the doctrine
of internal relations" (Quinton (CBP) 535; cf. Passmore 341).

Whitehead himself described his cosmology as "a transformation of some main doctrines of Absolute Idealism onto a realistic basis" and confessed "though throughout the main body of the work I am in sharp disagreement with Bradley, the final outcome is after all not so greatly different" (Whitehead (PR) Preface: vii).

43. The reference is to MRIC.

44. The shift of idealist influence in Ramsey's later work is found most explicitly in his reliance on Berkeley rather than Bradley. We have already seen Ramsey's attempt to "reinstate ... Bishop Berkeley" (U-0GP8) through his account of the active object of the conational encounter. Later he laid more stress on Berkeley's doctrine of "notions" and their rôle in making possible an empirical metaphysics. In a review of F.H. Cleobury's Christian Rationalism and Philosophical Analysis, Ramsey agreed with that author "that we may press a Bradley-like epistemology into the service of the empirical Berkeley "thus giving the absolute idealist position "an empirical turn"(Review Cleobury 355). Certainly the name of Berkeley, the pioneer of phenomenalism, has proved to be more respectable in the ears of twentieth century philosophers than that of a Bradley tarred inevitably with the same brush as Hegel the Obscure. In order to survive the battle at Oxford, Ramsey had to chose carefully the banners under which he was prepared to fight; as well as the ground that it was absolutely necessary to defend.

CHAPTER II

1. See p. 17.

2. It is still to be found, particularly in the work from his early days at Oxford, in Ramsey's treatment of metaphysics and the philosophy of science. Cf., passim, M, PPMT, U-FMG. In Ramsey's early work cognitive experience was itself seen to be an abstractive of the conational encounter. The same emphasis is perhaps partly expressed in Ramsey's later thinking in the way that he views the "situation" of discernment - commitment as the truly concrete datum. For this situation "contains" two abstractives: (i) The cognitive experience of discernment as a response to a disclosure; and (ii) the conative element of commitment which leads to human volitional responses. Thus in 1951 Ramsey could still write of "a non-inferential awareness more concrete than cognition" (M 16). And in a draft for his article on "Wissenschaft" for the Encyclopaedia Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart (3rd edition), he argued that theology had "a distinctive anchorage in a situation closely similar to that of personal commitment. In this way it is in conation and its language that the languages of cognition find their unity and concretion".

3. Thus Ramsey had once written about the self being "disclosed as an abstraction of a volitional unity" (U-Burney 133-134).

4. Ramsey sometimes used "empiricism" and "empiricist" to refer to the narrow empiricism association with Logical Positivism (PF 333, n.1). More usually, however, he applies the terms to the whole tradition including the broader elements within it (e.g. CPCF 51). The adjective "empirical" in "empirical theology" and "empirical
metaphysics" is always to be taken in this wider sense (e.g. CCP 254; cf. Schedler (Thesis) 170, Macquarrie (GT) 231-233).

5. Cf. BPM 14. A notion is not "an inactive idea" but "some sort of an active thinking image" (Berkeley (D) 267).

6. For a vigorous defence of the importance of "notions" in Berkeley's epistemology and metaphysics, together with a complete survey of the occasions on which the term is used, see Park, espec. chs. I to III.

7. Berkeley usually presents his theory of a divine visual language rather differently from this. He argues that visual experience is divine language because visual sense-data "suggest" other, tactile, sense-data ("as words suggest the things signified by them"). Such "suggestion" (inductive inference) is a result of a regularly experienced connection between the two sets of ideas, the connection having been effected by God (cf. Berkeley (A) BK.IV, sec.10; (BMTV) secs.XLV, CXLVII; (P) secs.XLIII-XLIV). However, Berkeley also writes occasionally (and this fits Ramsey's use of the theory much better) as if the "language" of sense-data actually reveals God's attributes (cf. Berkeley (P), 1710 edition, sec.CVIII). J.D. Mabbott has attempted a modus vivendi here by suggesting that "God's words - our sense-data - express or suggest other sense-data, but evince his power and good will" (Mabbott 376).

8. Cf. Helm (VB) 94. Butler's dissertation "Of Personal Identity", in which he argues that we cannot define personal identity but are simply aware of it, is more open to being understood in this way (cf. Butler 330 and PF 332-333).

9. Cf. Cohen (Thesis) 79-80; the "questions of great consequence" are of great consequence to the agent rather than, as in Ramsey's examples (RL 16-17), other people.

10. This sort of argument is similar to Pascal's "wager", but, as Jeffner indicates (ibid. 85-86), Butler's argument is from the positive probability of Christianity rather than its bare (unevidenced) possibility, and is therefore more reasonable than Pascal's.


12. Ramsey often seems to be striving to make Butler's analysis fit his own "sure in religion/tentative in theology" framework (cf. ITR Owen 127, CPCF 60) and below pp. 171ff. But Butler is talking about evidence rather than theology, i.e. something which comes before discernment-commitment rather than something which flows from it. However one could argue that a person might commit himself totally yet reasonably to someone else's theological assertions (which are only tentative), rather than his own religious experience (based on "probable", ambiguous evidence): cf. PFMT 176.

13. In his 1962 lectures Ramsey argued that Hume was a "Skeptical believer", who accepted that "with firm religious feelings can go what (as based on ideas and impressions) is a problematic theology". (Cf. "he would be saying: We can be sure of God's existence while talk of him is at every point problematical", Review Pike 236)
14. Ramsey goes on to interpret Hume's position vis-à-vis God as a species of "natural belief" - just as he says elsewhere that we can be sure of the existence of physical objects without being able to give compelling reasons for that belief. Others have strenuously denied that Hume thought of belief in God in this way - and have drawn their support from the philosopher's very negative views in his *Natural History of Religion*.

15. Hume adds that "PHILO was a little embarrassed and confounded" (ibid. 129) at the argument; later he is made to confess (and this is in Dialogue XII) that: "A purpose, an intention, a design strikes everywhere the most careless, the most stupid thinker" (ibid. 189). He clearly argues elsewhere, however, that whatever the "feeling" the argument from design can prove little.

16. Cf. below pp. 233 ff. For a recent restatement of the fundamental objections to this theory Cf. Chisholm (O S).

17. When Hume claims that a man is made up solely of "perceptions" he is referring not to other people's perceptions of that man, but to the man's own (private) sensations, dreams, feelings, images, and so on (cf. Penelhum (HPI) 219). In criticizing Hume, Ramsey's language sometimes obscures this fact.

18. Presumably Ramsey would apply this interpretation of Hume's "feeling" - as an intuition - to the latter's analysis of the idea of necessary connexion in causality in general. After all Hume considers that the self is only understandable in terms of causal relations (cf. Hume (T) Bk.I, Part IV, Sec. VI, p.261; N. Kemp Smith (PDH) 500-502). And the "feeling" mentioned in the Appendix to the Treatise is just a particular example of Hume's general thesis that the idea of necessity in causal connections is not conveyed by sensations but is "internally felt by the soul" (Hume (T) Bk.I, Part III, sec. XIV, P.166). "This connexion ... which we feel in the mind, this customary transition of the imagination from one object to its usual attendant, is the sentiment or impression from which we form the idea of power or necessary connexion" (Hume(EMU) sec.VII, part II, p.75; cf. N. Kemp Smith op.cit. ch.XVII). In an unpublished passage Ramsey does in fact argue: "We might also evoke metaphysical situations by telling causation stories ... A certain inevitability belongs to the situation. Don't you feel (it might be said) some sort of 'necessary connexion'? ... Here in a causal pattern we should know a situation 'more than' its spatio-temporal feature" (U-FMG B40/153).

19. Wittgenstein's own view seems to have been that to discover that a statement has no verification was to discover an important piece of information which assists our understanding of it. It did not imply that there was nothing to understand; Cf. Malcolm (LWM) 66.

20. We may note especially the difficulty of defining the verification principle in any acceptable way.

21. Ramsey usually uses the term "logical empiricism" to cover the whole movement in recent Anglo-Saxon philosophy which emphasises the logical analysis of language and the importance of sense experience as our primary source of knowledge (cf. CPCP 47). It therefore
refers both to the early phase of logical positivism and to the later broadened empiricism, the latter including what is usually described as ordinary language philosophy or linguistic analysis (a better term might be "linguistic empiricism"; cf. Black (LL) 203). Sometimes, however, Ramsey uses "logical empiricism" to refer solely to the later stages of the entire movement (cf. RL 13).

22. Ramsey notes that: "This newer emphasis of Empiricism unites with Existentialism in suggesting that personal situations may very well provide helpful parallels to religious situations". (Enc. Brit. 602).

23. In 1956 Ramsey wrote "the Christian in claiming exceedingly odd situations which demand for their currency language whose logical structure is suitably odd, need not apologise for wanting a rather more extravagant empiricism than one which has on quite general grounds never been adequate. Indeed, I should say that contemporary Oxford philosophy should encourage him" (U-ITR SW2).

24. Both terms are used, and declared synonymous, in Religious Language (e.g. RL 24, 57, 112, 149; cf. U-FMG B 39/152, RE 404).

25. or "my awareness of (a putatively objective) X".

26. There is another common meaning of "disclosure", i.e. "disclosed fact". This is what Ramsey describes as "the newspaper sense ... a sense which carries with it overtones of information disclosed" (FD 115). He wishes to avoid this sense of the word as he believes that the objective reality of what is disclosed is known incorrigibly; whereas the language we use about it is corrigeble (tentative). "Disclosure in the newspaper sense" would appear to involve the disclosure of propositions, i.e. of language. Cf. below pp. 129 ff.

27. Commitment is usually specified as a response to a disclosure, rather than as a response to a discernment (cf. RE 404, RFT 34, HG 212). But this is simply a convenient shorthand, for commitment arises in response to the discernment we have, through which a "more" is disclosed to us.

28. i.e. "what ... an intuition discloses" (Prospect for Metaphysics introduction, p1). Ramsey actually writes of "the object of 'disclosure' or 'revelation'" (RL 167); but his stress on the "active objectivity" (cf. U-Credo 2, MM 58) of what is disclosed indicates that the word "subject" would be more accurate.

29. This is clearly preferable in the case of God, for orthodox theism does not view the world as a "part" of God. But the case of I is different, for we cannot get away from the fact that the word "in referring to what is distinctively personal about a certain situation, also refers to my public behaviour as well" (FI 100). This is one element of disanalogy between God and I which raises problems for the theist.

30. Although, as we shall see, "ordinary sense experience" is itself (at another level) disclosure-based.


32. or "supra-logical" - with Owen (PTR) 68.
33. The use of such "revelation" language in regard to other types of disclosures is however more problematic (cf. NM 19-20, TL 4, PA 196). The problem is discussed below (pp. 210 ff.).

34. Ramsey describes such "transcendent objects" as transcending, but including, the spatio-temporal (cf. NL 389, OCR 2, MDA 57). However the situation would be better expressed in terms of mediation through the spatio-temporal.

35. Here again Ramsey is to be found writing of "discernment" as a species of awareness that includes but goes beyond sense experience (cf. RL 90: "Here is a discernment which is perceptual and more"). And again it would be better to think of this as an intuitive awareness that is mediated through the objects of perception but is distinctively different from sensory awareness. And although sensory awareness is itself based on a distinctive intuition, discernment-based sense experience and discernment-based meta-empirical disclosures are obviously to be placed in different epistemological categories.

36. In Models for Divine Activity Ramsey states that "cosmic disclosures occur around models" (MDA 65). But when Ramsey is writing of "models" it is often not clear whether he is referring to model language or model situations - cf. below pp. 271 ff.

37. Here, and in all the examples that follow, "juxtaposition " must be taken to mean "juxtaposition in thought" (cf. W.H. Austin (MMP) 45).

38. Ramsey must be referring here to mental images because the phrase is introduced as an alternative to "language".

39. At least according to an elementary theory of catalysis.

40. Ramsey may be interpreted here as offering another "catalytic" analysis. For the imperative evokes a disclosure as it is brought "alongside" the pattern of "the transition from chaos to order" (RSCS 91); but this disclosure (i.e. the revelation of the Creator God) is really a "second order disclosure" through a mixed medium, which is only possible because the imperatives themselves have given rise to (first order) disclosures: "the school imperatives make us aware of a master ... they disclose his presence" (ibid.).

41. Mathematically: if Sn is the Sum of the first n terms of an infinite geometrical progression, Sn = a(1-r^n); then, if r<1 and n→∞, Lt. Sn = a/1-r .

42. Mathematically: as n→∞, Lt. n→∞ n/ (n+1) = 1.

43. A model-word, therefore, is a word "which specifies such a particular situation" (RL 61); cf. ibid. 68, 71, CD 44, TL 7.

44. As is the "linguistic medium" if we come to understand language through disclosures.

45. Thus Ramsey writes both of a disclosure of a pattern (P1 93-94, RSCS 6) and of a disclosure of purposiveness or personal activity.
through patterns of design or behaviour (F1 127, MDA 16, TG 81). Here the "medium" of the second disclosure is taken to be what is disclosed in the prior disclosure (i.e. a pattern), rather than that prior disclosure itself. Cf. also MDA 62.

46. Evans' classification (Evans (IRTG) 127) lists the following types of disclosed "more": Other selves, Moral claim, Aesthetic wonder, Whole, Scientific models, Infinite mathematical series and Concrete particular.

47. In fairness to Ramsey we must note that, although he describes all disclosures as "going beyond" their medium and revealing a "more", he usually uses the actual word "transcendent" only in relation to disclosures of I (F1 26, 81, RSCS 57, EPEM 18), disclosures of moral claim or duty (F1 33, 42, 61), disclosures of persons and personal behaviour (HG 209, RB 191), and disclosures of God and eternity (CD 45 MDA 61, E 47). In such cases what is disclosed is always more than spatio-temporal objects (the empirical medium of the disclosure), although the objects of discernment are all very different from each other and therefore show different kinds of transcendence (cf. Evans (IRTG) 216-217). However, Ramsey does on occasions also describe other disclosures as "transcendent": e.g. a recognition (or gestalt) disclosure is so described at PA 160.

48. There are exceptions: e.g. PA 178, but they are very rare (cf. PA 194, FD 120 etc.).

49. It is perhaps not too far-fetched to see Ramsey's disclosure by means of an (infinite) series as originating in Whitehead's analysis of concepts like that of a point in terms of experienceable entities such as a series of concentric spheres (his "Method of Extensive Abstraction", cf. Whitehead (CN) ch. IV). As O'Connor notes, Whitehead "found that such a series (that is, the set of spheres together with the relation which orders them) constitutes an entity which satisfied all the logical requirements of the geometrical concept point" (O'Connor (BR) 480). For Ramsey the series produced by a qualified empirical model can similarly represent the transcendent entity (concept?) to which it points.

50. Cf. above pp. 86f.

51. Cf. AC 91 where Ramsey is reported as having "certainly rejected the so-called 'sense-data' of Bertrand Russell, that is, static brute facts, detached and independent". Recent analytical philosophers have tended to attack sense-datum theories (Cf. J.L. Austin (SS), Ryle (CM) ch. VII). For a recent defence of such theories, which treat the sense-datum as "an internal accusative after 'perceive'." in the analytic truth "we perceive sense-data", see D. Locke, espec. ch. 11 (quotation from p. 180).

52. An "existent" is here to be defined as "everything that is in anyway discriminated, particular ised, in any situation" (ibid.). It is a category which includes "phenomena", "events", "situations", "states of affairs", and "features of the world" (PA 178; cf. FD 125 153).

53. These two kinds of awareness (subsidiary and focal) together comprise "tacit knowledge" (cf. Polanyi (UTI) 7): "in tacit knowing
we always attend from the proximal [i.e., the clues] to the distal term [i.e., the object]" (ibid. 13, cf. (TD) 9-16).

54. Cf. OCR 3, where Ramsey argues that "when older philosophers talked of 'substance' ... they were claiming some such discernment and commitment around ... the 'appearances' of (say) an apple. They saw that a certain number of perceptible qualities - hardness, sweetness, redness, greenness, and so on - 'go constantly together' ... and the penny dropped - 'It's an apple!'". If the observer had exclaimed "It's something - I-know-not-what" he would have been treating the disclosure merely as a disclosure of objectivity; by saying "It's an apple" the observer reveals that the same disclosure is also (for him) a recognition disclosure.

55. For criticisms of Hick's position see Nielsen (CCR) 86-88 and Schedler (TGT) 240.

56. Ramsey gives the example of the observable"fact" that the sun rotates around the earth.

57. For Ramsey, contra Russell, even a sense-datum is no "uninterpreted fact": "sense-data are never given to us as mere patches they are always of something", "an interpretation would be always there" (U-FMG 1/7/9).

58. It allows Ramsey to espouse a liberal standpoint (cf. Sermon (5) 7-9) and reject any view in which "the Bible, or the Church, or a particular brand of theology had the authority of God himself" (The Times Literary Supplement 25/12/69, p1477; cf.H212, OBSR 77-8, CF 30, U-Credo 6).

59. In one place Ramsey distinguishes between "analysing out a pattern" from twelve criss-crossed lines (seeing, for example, two squares with lines joining their corners) and the "subsequent stage" "when the twelve lines disclose a further dimension and we recognise a cube" (CCS 49). However, we may treat this third dimension as part of the total "pattern" disclosed around the twelve lines.

60. "Isomorphy", basically, is "structural similarity" (HM 12). The term is derived from mathematics where two groups - a group being a set of elements, together with an operation - are said to be isomorphic if a one-to-one correspondence can be established between their respective (different) elements. Cf. Black (HM) 222-223.

61. Ramsey's treatment of scientific invariants shows that he believes that induction is disclosure-based also (cf. RGCS 72 n.1, FD 131). An inductive generalisation goes beyond the immediate empirical facts and arises in a movement of intuitive insight. To say "water boils at 100°C (under normal pressure)" is to say more than" the water in this beaker boils at 100°C. (under normal pressure)". But the "more" can still be adequately expressed in empirical language (cf. M 5), we have not yet reached a meta-empirical "more".

62. Such an entity may be categorised as "metaphysical" in the sense that the postulation of such objects "is very often considered to be [the] defining characteristic" of metaphysics, where metaphysics is the study of being or reality "as such" or "as a whole" (Kearney 178).
63. Thus according to Ramsey parables stories evoke cosmic disclosures "because and in so far as the stories repeat a structure and pattern of universal significance ... repeated in situations the world over" (ibid.)

64. Ramsey distinguishes between "finite" ("restricted", "limited") disclosures and "cosmic" disclosures. A person may be the occasion of a finite disclosure, when we recognise an "impersonal official" as an old friend, a "real person". But the friend could also be the occasion of a cosmic disclosure if we are led to say, "You are the whole world to me" (WMR 265). The other person is then seen as having universal significance, his (her) existence takes on all-inclusive relevance. Taking a theological example, we may evoke the cosmic disclosure of "the God of all power and might, the King of the whole earth" by "developing a pattern" of kingship "whose range is unlimited" (TG 82).

65. Cf. "No matter how much of the universe I survey, this is still my duty" (RFT 29). However, Evans' distinction between positive and negative all-inclusiveness is one that Ramsey himself does not make (cf. U-WM 19-20, TS 168, RFT 19-20).

66. And, conversely, "there is no self-disclosure without a situation which comes alive objectively as well" (U-WM 18).

67. G.E. Moore is one of those who uses the word "entity" in a wider sense than this. In his eyes, "it is by no means clear ... that all 'entities' ... can rightly be said to 'exist' " (Moore (SMP) 236, cf. Whitehead (SMW) 173). We confront here, of course, the problem of what it is to "exist". It may be argued on the one hand that "there neither is nor is not a standard existence", for the word "exist" can only function within the context already given by this or that type of sentence" (Miles (NE) 399 - 401, cf. Lewis (EM) 31). On the other hand we are surely justified in at least distinguishing between the "everyday" (standard?) senses of existence (whether applied to chairs or God) and the more technical sense in which "to say that A exists means that A is a class which has at least one member" (Russell (EIP) 98-99). Mathematical entities (e.g. numbers) can be said to "exist" only in this technical sense.


69. For the distinction cf. Frege (OSN). I am not, at this point, arguing that Ramsey accepts a referential theory of meaning. The "meaning of 'meaning' " adopted here is simply for convenience of exposition: although cf. ITR Owen 126, OBSR 62 and below ch. IV.

70. In the same way "2" is "posited" to designate the limit of an infinite sum and "circle" is "posited" to designate the limit of a series of regular polygons with an increasing number of sides (cf. RL 59-60, 69-70).

71. He stresses "I am not claiming logical identity between mathematics and theology" (OBSR 23), for these mathematical illustrations are "by no means exactly similar" to religious disclosures (U-WM 16), although they are "not at all unlike" (RL 70). Hepburn rightly notes that the basic question, which Ramsey's account never answers, is: "how close is this analogy between mathematical
and religious disclosures?" (Hepburn (M2) 21). My own feeling is that Ramsey - the mathematician turned philosophical theologian - believed that the analogy was very close indeed.

72. Ramsey expresses it thus: "there may at a certain point be a 'disclosure', a characteristically different situation - what we may call mathematical insight - and in the mathematical case there might at the same time come to our minds the number '2'." (RL 70).


74. James Harris and William Austin both seem to concur with this interpretation. Harris writes of the consideration of a succession of regular polygons as suggesting "the notion of a circle" (Harris (MQ) 91). Austin, in describing the disclosure of an infinite sum, argues: "what is disclosed is the significance of the concept, 'sum of an infinite series'" (W.H. Austin (MP) 43). For another general argument to the effect that Ramsey's disclosures are only "disclosures of meaning", cf. Schedler (The.sis) 226.

75. Although cf. below (pp. 138 ff.) for the interpretation of mathematical and moral disclosures.

76. See Russell (HAKB) and (PP) ch.5.

77. Cf. ibid. 32: "Knowledge concerning what is known by description is ultimately reducible to knowledge concerning what is known by acquaintance. The fundamental principle of the analysis of propositions containing descriptions is this: Every proposition which we can understand must be composed wholly of constituents with which we are acquainted" (Cf. also Price (B) 69).

78. And conversely: "To speak of religious experience as a 'sense' reminds us, e.g., of Russell's claim for sensation as being knowledge 'by acquaintance' where an object is 'given directly'," (U-HA "Religious Experience and its significance", c.1954, p1).

79. Paul F. Schmidt argues that because of this lack of truth or falsity (and of justification procedures), we should speak of "acquaintance claims" and "knowledge suggested by acquaintance" rather than "knowledge by acquaintance" (cf. Schmidt 121, 123). We may feel free to adopt such terminology, while disagreeing with Schmidt's contention that the belief "that there is a bridge from acquaintance experience to a descriptive claim to knowledge" is an "illusion" (ibid. 125).

80. Hofstadter does recognise the possibility of "sheer reference" in an apprehension (e.g. "an orange cross not qua orange or a cross but simply qua something": 85). However, "It is true that I cannot refer to anything which is not somehow characterised, which does not somehow possess describable (or indescribable) character" (84).


82. Cf. Ryle (CM) 155.


84. Cf. Quinton (PP) 83.
85. Cf. D. Locke 187s.

86. Clearly mathematical entities can be treated as "formal universals" and moral values as "non-sensory predicative universals"; but it is probably easier to treat them separately because of the different problems that they raise.

87. "Imagism", the view that universals are mental images rather than concepts, may be treated either as a type of conceptualism or as a type of nominalism.

88. Whether a real entity or a mental concept.

89. i.e. "collections of things which it is natural to class together in contrast to other collections whose association is arbitrary" (Quinton (NT) 262).

90. The published text actually reads: "substance, the self, universals"; but this is clearly a mistake and is corrected in Ramsey's personal copy of the article.


92. Ramsey's prolific use of the concept of intuition (discernment) in mathematics suggests a non-formalist position (cf. also PR 206), and might make us think that "Intuitionism" would appeal to him as a philosophy of mathematics. As "the subject matter of intuitionist mathematics ... is intuited non-perceptual objects and constructions which are introspectively self-evident" (Körner 120), such a view would have implications for our understanding of Ramsey's analysis of the nature of the formal universals of mathematics. Despite Ramsey's mathematical background, however, his writings offer us very little by way of evidence for his position on these matters.


94. Knowing by intuitive insight whether a certain object or situation is good or bad is less clearly a part of Ramsey's moral intuitionism. However, both "right" and "good" can be related to the equally fundamental concept of "duty" (obligation, moral claim etc.), cf. Strawson (E) 30: "'Right' - sentences, 'good' - sentences are shorthand for 'ought' - sentences."

95. Cf. "the believer must remember that in talking of God's will or God's command he is talking about God and not about man" (MJGC 171).

96. Stace calls them "unreasoned beliefs", i.e. beliefs that (a) are not cases of immediate knowledge, and (b) have not been reached by a process of reasoning (Stace (PUB) 29).

97. Arthur Danto puts the point strikingly: "There is knowledge only if, after having attained understanding, it is open whether what we understand is true or false ... Quests for certainty ... forfeit, at once, the possibility of attaining knowledge... Truth does not lie beyond truth - and - falsity" (op.cit. 181-182).

98. Many philosophers seem to think so. Thus W.D. Hudson describes the belief "that men have a faculty which is unerring in its
apprehension of certain truths" as "the bedrock belief of intuitionism" (Hudson (MMP) 82).

99. Ewing, we should recall, was Ian Ramsey's supervisor at Cambridge and I would argue that he had a considerable influence on the latter's thinking. It should be pointed out, however, that Ramsey himself alludes only rarely to Ewing's work (e.g. CCP 263-264). As Dr. Ewing died in 1973 it was not possible to canvass his views on Ramsey's work and its relation to his own.

100. i.e. "intuition" is normally used as an "achievement" (or "got it") word - cf. Kyle (CM) 125-126, 143-147.


102. The account that follows is indebted to a paper by Donald Evans (Evans (PKCT) ), but is supplemented by the reflections on which Evans' analysis is itself based (i.e Ayer (FK) 75-83 and Gasking) and by the suggestions of Chisholm (TK ch.4), Quinton (NT) 112-114, Waismann (LS) 28-29 and Bambrough (PM) 101-107. Cf. also Dretske 40-42.

103. Quinton prefers "transcendentalism". Cf. also Bambrough (PM) 106-107.

104. The "supporting" fact (statement) is the one which appears to form the basis of our knowledge of the "supported" fact (statement). Cf. Gasking 185.

105. And perhaps also to Chisholm's "Critical Cognitivism" (Chisholm TK) 60-61, 66, 68; cf. also Waismann (LS) 28-30.

106. Or as "offering a simpler explanation" than the alternative.

107. Here the explanation is "metaphysical" rather than "analogical-inductive" (as in (c)).

108. And (in Ramsey's case) rather overshadowed by this element of intuitionism.

109. Such a combination of approaches is also to be found in A.C. Ewing (cf. Ewing (VR) and Knox (ACE)).


111. Cf. Bambrough (WEBS) footnote 1, 255-256.

112. Hepburn cites the examples of Emil Brunner, Karl Barth and H.H. Farmer, in addition to his seminal work, I and Thou by the Jewish religious thinker Martin Buber (cf., e.g., Buber 80-81).

113. Cf. above pp. 146 f.

114. Cf: "the fact that I may be wrong does not mean that I cannot have the right to be sure" (D. Locke 220). On the next point compare also 222-228, and below pp. 182 f.
"Critical Realists" tend to distinguish between the intuitive element in perception (the direct awareness of sense-data) and a non-intuitive element of judgment ("an active external reference ... we refer an intuited datum ... to an external object"; Hirst (PEW) 20). We could argue, however, that this "reference" is itself an act of intuition rather than an act of judgment (albeit implicit judgment); cf. Owen (CRG) 125 - 126, and above pp. 107 ff. For a recent account of Critical Realism see R.W. Sellars; cf. also R.J. Hirst (PP) especially ch.10.

It may be argued that only a "true theology" would in fact mediate a religious intuition. But adherents of different religions have all claimed to have religious experiences mediated through their own, often incompatible, theologies and symbols.

But cf. also N.K. Smith (IDEC) 119, Bobik 255.

Disclosures through a mixed medium were also distinguished. For the purposes of this argument, however, they may be considered as a sub-category of empirical disclosures.

Or even through the medium of mental images.

Cf. below pp. 233 ff.

Cf. Badham 122-123, 145; J.E. Smith (BG) 81 etc.

Cf. King ... 70-76.

"I^O" is used by Ramsey to symbolise the subject-object structure of awareness: it represents the self ("I") in relation ("r") to some object ("O"). Cf. also FI 98-99.

We may appropriately observe at this point that Ramsey has been criticized for not seriously applying his analysis of religious epistemology and religious language to religions other than Christianity (cf. Smart (FR) 222-226, (ICBC) 33-34; Lewis (FL) 175). But in the few references that Ramsey does make to "Other Religions" he would appear to be prepared to do just that; cf. JR7, RE 405, VM 106. Although this aspect of his work was one that he left almost completely undeveloped, it would be fair to claim that Ramsey's philosophy of religion might prove to be useful in the dialogue of religions. For Ramsey would contend that all religions unite at their disclosures and diverge only in the different languages that they use to interpret what is disclosed (cf. Review Smart 88).

We might observe once again how much more natural it is to speak of things, events (and people) as "media", rather than to apply the same term to our experiences. Further, in the example given here, there is only one "experience-medium" but many "thing-media" involved.

We should note, however, that this position has not gone unchallenged - cf. Ayer (PE) 116-120.

For an account of the relativity of theological model language in different and changing cultures see Glenn.
128. An incorrigible statement may be defined as one that is wholly verified by the experience that prompts it.

129. Cf. above pp. 51ff.

130. It was Russell's view that a logically proper name (a category which for Russell seemed to be limited to such demonstratives as "this" and "that") was characterised by the fact that "its significant use guarantees the existence of the object which it is intended to denote" (Ayer (R) 57, cf. 103-104; cf. also U-FMG 37/120). In Ramsey's view this could only be true of proper names or demonstratives whose referent was some mundane, perceptual object. Russell himself argued that "God", as used in the proposition "God exists", must be a description and not a name. For "If 'God' were a name, no question as to existence could arise" (Russell (IA) 108).

131. As well as treating the certain/tentative dichotomy in terms of the differences between proper names and descriptions, Ramsey also relates it to Russell's distinction between knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description (cf. FD 122). But, as we have already argued, "acquaintance" is not a form of knowledge, and therefore is not something of which one could predicate certainty. In order to transmute an acquaintance-experience into knowledge one has to spell it out in terms of corrigible assertions - i.e. one must give it "content".


133. See Geach (GS) chs.4 & 8; but cf. also Durrant (LSG) preface and ch.1, (TL) 75-86, (GA) 17-21; Barnes ch.4; Ziff; Ross (FT) 35-37, 68; Owen (CG) 154. For St. Thomas' position cf. (S T)1a, 13, 9; 1a, 13, 11.

134. For this distinction cf. Owen (CKG) 284-286, Quinton (NT) 171. Norman Malcolm and others have strenuously argued against the position that only the incorrigible is "certain"; cf. Malcolm (KB), also Trethowan (AV) 74-79.

135. The examples Ramsey has given are (i) "coming to oneself" in remembering that the car is low on petrol; (ii) the revelation of the unknown man as Robin Hood to the Tinker who is looking for him; and (iii) the moral challenge constituted by a letter being found by a park sweeper in the course of his duties; PPMT 168-171.

136. Ryle rejected the dualism of "mind" and "physical world", speaking rather of a person's "one career" or "one activity"; cf. Ryle (CM) espec. chs.1 & 2, also p.190.

137. It should be noted that such an interpretation, unlike Ramsey's, necessitates our "describing" what has been disclosed - i.e. our moving into the domain of corrigible language.

138. Ramsey himself hints at these criteria; cf. FT 48 and below pp. 379ff. Cf. also Smart (RRR) 84-85, K. Ward (CG) 106-107 and passim.

139. "In order to see what is being talked about", Ramsey writes, we must "consider words in the context of sentences, themselves in the context of discourse, which itself is given its concrete social setting" (TEEF 221).
140. Compare Ramsey's much earlier (1954) remarks in a letter to W.H. Poteat: "I entirely agree that to ask 'Is this real' is often the same as to ask 'Can it be cashed in language of this kind?'. In other words, to say that 'pink rats are not real' is to say that 'pink rats cannot be talked about in the language of veridical perception'. On the other hand, pink rats are 'real' for that language which organises hallucinations" (U-ITR WHP).

141. Ramsey writes not only of the "Universe", but also of the "real world", "hidden reality" etc., confronting us. Compare the references above, and also MMR 266, 268 and MM 13, 19.

142. Norris Clarke is another philosopher of religion who suggests the experience of the other's activity, coupled with our own passivity, as a criterion for the objectivity of an "encounter" with God. Cf. Clarke 59.

143. We may note, however, that in Ramsey's latest thought "activity" is a word that may be univocally predicated of God and Man; cf. note 146 below. This suggests that at this stage Ramsey would not wish to differentiate between different "types" of activity. For another metaphysics of activity cf. MacMurray, especially chs. 5 and 10.

144. A favourite phrase of Ramsey's, used of the disclosure situation; cf. PD 115 etc.

145. Cf., e.g., an "active volcano" and "radioactivity". Ramsey remarks that machines and officials "may be 'active' but in no disclosure sense" (PG66).

146. Ramsey later changed his views on "activity", treating it no longer as a model or "super-model", "but a word which unites God and ourselves in a literal sense" (U-ITR Evans 3); cf. Excursus II where I argue that his original position is more credible.

147. Compare Ramsey's distinction between the "reciprocity".. simpliciter that exists between a driver and his car (i.e. "the mutual variation which even things can display": PG 63-64) and the "personal reciprocity" that "relates to a disclosure situation characterised by and arising out of a behaviour pattern displaying mutual variation" (ibid. 64).


149. Cf., e.g., Farmer ch. V; also Webb (RE) 29, 39-40.

150. Cf. Penelhum: "even if one holds that it is God who is revealed, and not propositions about God, this cannot be rendered intelligible in a form which does not entail that the person to whom God is revealed is thereby made aware of some critical truths about God" (Penelhum (PRK) 92; cf. Lewis (EM) 269).

151. It is true that we do speak of people "revealing themselves" by their non-linguistic behaviour. But it is significant that we usually only use such a phrase when a person's behaviour reveals his personality, "despite himself". And we cannot then describe such a revelation as an active revelation on the part of its subject.

152. While recognising a "logical kinship" between "God and "I", Ramsey denies that there is any "identity of logical behaviour". God, afterall, is not a man (cf. FI 49, FFMT 174, EPIT 187).
For "whatever fact you tell me now, might have been otherwise" (RGS 73).

Compare also Alvin Plantinga's "tentative conclusion": "If my belief in other minds is rational, so is my belief in God. But obviously the former is rational; so, therefore, is the latter". (Plantinga 271) However, our knowledge of God and our knowledge of another mind do not share an identical epistemological structure (cf. Owen (CKG) 155-156; Lewis (OM) 218, 236-237). The fact that I have a prior knowledge of my self means that there is some possibility of an argument by analogy to other minds, but this argument is much more tenuous when applied to the transcendent 'God. Further, another person's body is a part of him, for people are psycho-physical unities. But the world is not in the same way an integral "part" of God.

Ramsey does treat the word "thou" as a logical counterpart of 'I', recognising that the empirical anchorage of "thou" is a disclosure-situation (U-FMG B75/188). He also makes similar claims for the word "person" (cf. U-FMG (3) 11/13/205). Several commentators have noted the similarity of Ramsey's thought to that of Martin Buber with his emphasis on the I-Thou encounter (cf. Evans (IRTG) 129-130, Lewis (PR) 105).

Several commentators have noted the similarity of Ramsey's thought to that of Martin Buber with his emphasis on the I-Thou encounter (cf. Evans (IRTG) 129-130, Lewis (PR) 105).

Cf. Shaffer (MMB), Putnam etc.

Such a theory is also defended by Owen (CKG) 130-134, Lucas 142-144, J.E. Smith (EC) 85-86.

Cf. above pp. 147ff.

The basic question for the religious epistemologist in his examination of Schleiermacher's work must be whether the catalogue of terms used by that author connote an "objective" experience of God or merely a "subjective" feeling-state. Schleiermacher's language is both varied and ambiguous; he writes of "immediate consciousness", "immediate feeling", "affection", "revelation" (e.g. Schleiermacher (OR) 36), "sense", "taste", (ibid. 39), "feeling" (ibid. 49), "intuition" (ibid. 278-281), "feeling of absolute dependence", "God consciousness" (e.g. Schleiermacher (CF) 17), and "immediate self-consciousness" (ibid. 18). Rudolf Otto is one commentator who interprets Schleiermacher as viewing religious experience solely in terms of feelings from which we must infer the existence of God as a cause (Otto (IH) 10). Others, however, have been more generous in their interpretation. Even H.R. Mackintosh - who is critical of Schleiermacher's general approach - writes that, in Schleiermacher, "Feeling is indeed an experience on the part of the self, yet one in which the self 'apprehends' not itself but God" (Mackintosh 68; cf. ibid. 51-52, and also Macquarrie (TAG) 161-162, Sykes passim, Welch 64-68). It would appear that Ramsey would also interpret Schleiermacher in this way; and he is surely right to do so.

Cf. Otto (IH) espec. chs.XIV-XVII. Many others have criticised Otto's use - or misuse - of Kantian concepts. H.J. Paton remarked that 'Kant must have shuddered in his grave'! (Paton 139); cf. also Dawes Hicks (PBT) 139. C.A. Campbell (SG) 337) is more kindly disposed.

162. In fact this criticism forms only a small part of Tennant's discussion of religious experience (see Tennant (PTI) 322-323).

163. Cf. Tennant (PTI) 311.

164. In an unpublished paper, which bears neither title nor date but was probably written around 1955-6, Ramsey wrote of Tennant's inferential theology: "Tennant's mistake ... was to suppose that theological language is just a matter of strengthening the evidence when it is rather a matter of commending an entirely different logic." (p.12, cf. RL 77).

165. Cf. Alasdair MacIntyre: "The only apologia for a religion is to describe its content in detail; and then either a man will find himself brought to say 'My Lord and my God' or he will not" (A.C. MacIntyre (LSRB) 195).

166. It is just possible that this interpretation is supported by a passage in Ramsey's Models and Mystery: "a qualifier like 'infinite' will work on a model of human love until there dawns on us that particular kind of family resemblance between the various derivative models which reveals God - God as 'infinitely loving'" (MM61, emphasis added). There seem to be two "revelations" here:
a) a revelation of family resemblance, i.e. a disclosure of similarity between the different examples of "love"; and
b) a revelation of God, superimposed on (a).
In this case, however, the first-stage disclosure is not a disclosure of the concept "infinitely loving", though it might be described as a disclosure of the concept "love".


168. For a positive and a negative use of this "parable" in its general form (i.e. treating the theist as the one who can see in a country of blind men (atheists)) see Horsburgh 192-193 and Matson 34-37.

169. My argument here bears some similarities to that of H.H. Price in chapter 10 of Belief. He argues there that a man may need to acquire certain conative and emotional dispositions in order to discern certain (religious) facts (ibid. 471-473), and that one way of acquiring these dispositions is by imaginatively indulging in religious practices (484-488). It may be that one of the main functions of such practices is to evoke and express a full understanding of the central concepts of religion. Cf. also Baelz (PD) ch.8.

170. In his paper The Systematic Elusiveness of I, Ramsey contends that Ryle's analysis of the elusiveness of the self is in error. For Ryle, the I is elusive in a systematic way because with regard to any one of our actions there is the systematic possibility of an infinite series of higher order operations. Thus we can never arrive at a completely adequate self-description. But there is no ultimate mystery: the elusiveness of I is no more than the elusiveness of an infinite series to a term by term enumeration. Ryle writes: "To concern oneself about oneself in any way ... is to perform a higher order act, just as it is to concern oneself about anybody else ... A higher order action cannot be the action on which it is performed.
So my commentary and my performances must always be silent about one performance, namely itself, and this performance can be the target only of another commentary" (Ryle (CM) 186). Ryle goes on to argue that self-elusiveness is comparable with "diary elusiveness": "every act of a diarist (cannot) be the topic of a record in his diary; for the last entry made in his diary still demands that the making of it should in turn be chronicled.

"This, I think, explains the feeling that my last year's self, or my yesterday's self, could in principle be exhaustively described and accounted for by me, but that my today's self perpetually slips out of any hold of it that I try to take" (Ryle (CM) 187).

Ramsey proffers two criticisms of Ryle's position:
(i) It blurs the distinction between subject and object: "If we assume that what eludes us now, becomes in the next minute wholly tractable (i.e. wholly describable in object language), then since, at this next minute, an earlier situation has been completely objectified, what account can we then give of the subject - object distinction...?" (SE1 197).
(ii) It can give no account of personal identity: "any attempt by 'I' to discover 'I' replaces 'I' by some fact In and so on without end ... How are we to talk of 'one self' if all we have is an infinite series of perceptual terms? How can 'I' + 'I' + 'I' + ... + 'I' elucidate 'I'?'" (SE1 197).

The elusiveness of I, Ramsey claims, is an observational elusiveness (ibid. 198). Ryle's analysis, therefore, is inadequate and misleading (cf. also Lewis (EM) 84-85; Gill (SI) ).

171. For similar arguments also Jones (SK), (TC), Ayer (HG), Russell (WM), Campbell (RI), Davie ch.II etc.

172. It is not correct, therefore, to speak of "acquaintance" with my self as something strictly analogous to my acquaintance with an object. For the self is not something we can stand apart from and observe; something having an objective, describable character which we can note by observation (cf. Lewis (EM) 229-231, (SI) 44-45, Novak 274).

173. Ramsey refers here to the fact that, on the Biblical view, man needs God's "activating breath, wind, or spirit" in order to live (ibid. 80).

174. Ramsey goes on to relate this point to James Ward's contention "that it is conation and not cognition which must be taken as the definitive account of the self" (ibid.; cf. above pp.139).

175. Although recent thinkers have paid attention to the notion of the "pattern of what we are" being what ensures our personal continuity in a post-mortem existence (cf. the accounts in Hick (DEL) 281-283, and Badham ch.5).

176. Such a pure ego view has been recently defended by Ramsey's Cambridge teacher A.C. Ewing - Ewing (VR) ch.4 and 254-255 (cf. also Campbell (SG) ch.V). Ramsey himself, as we have seen, accepted some such theory of the self during his Cambridge period. The concept of the mind as "an entity in its own right" has been recently described as "making a vigorous comeback" (Smythies ix). We may cite particularly the work of H.D. Lewis (cf. (EM) and (SI)) which contains a spirited and reasoned rejection of the "Functional Theory" of the Mind (as espoused by Aristotle and Ryle - cf. White (PM) 46-55). According to
Lewis the self is "essentially mental reality" (Lewis (SI) 193; cf. (EM) 307, 320-321); it is more than our particular experiences, but is always in some mental state. Others have suggested, however, that the self is radically distinguishable from the mind and may survive the latter's death (see Knox (CSS) and (HPW) and cf. Woodhouse).

177. "Immortality" is treated by Ramsey as a qualified-model leading to a disclosure (cf. FI 92-93), as are the terms "everlasting life" and "eternal life" (cf. FI 94-96).

178. Ramsey often interprets it in this fashion; for in every day language, he reminds us, "'I' stands in part for my public behaviour to which everyone has equal access ..." However, "'I' also stands for something more ..." (FI 25, cf. ibid. 100). It is, of course, the status of the personal "more", the transcendent I, that is under discussion.

179. Cf. below pp. 303 cf.

180. W.F. Zuurdeeg's analysis of convictional language in religion is relevant here. For Zuurdeeg a "conviction" involves elements of loyalty and decision as well as an element of persuasion concerning the meaning of life, God etc. Convictional language is the language of a person who has had the experience of "being overcome". In some correspondence between Zuurdeeg and Ramsey in 1956, Ramsey agreed that the former's analysis accords well with some of his own concerns (ITR WFZ; Cf. also PA 190, Zuurdeeg 64-68). Zuurdeeg's analysis, however, is less adequate than that of Ramsey in so far as he holds that convictional utterances have no "indicative" (i.e., representative, descriptive) element: cf. McConnell and Smith (URC) 30-35, 80.

181. However Ramsey argues that the devotion of the lover might count as a "cosmic" commitment on occasions, being cosmic in scope, i.e., "when someone said (and we had reason to believe it) 'You are the whole world to me!'" (U-ITR Evans 2; cf. Evans (INTG) 131-2).

182. Presumably "faith" in the sense of fiducia (trust).

183. Further, Ramsey, unlike the "Wittgensteinian Fideists", never claims that it is impossible for someone who has no religious commitment to understand religion (cf. Schnetzer 162-163).

184. Ramsey allows that "Christian faith might reasonably remain if some one event or other proved false as a historical fact". But he adds: "not all the events must be proved false without our being converted to infidelity" (HG 214); "because our commitment may be reasonably based on a few facts" it is not the case "that it might just as well be based on none at all" (ibid. 216). Thus love is more than overt behaviour but there could be no love "if there is no visible behaviour at all" (ibid.).

185. On the view that God is disclosed only through an empirical medium.

186. It is significant that Ramsey writes both of "a discernment which provokes a commitment "and of" a claim to which a religious man makes an appropriate response" at RL 90 (emphasis added).
CHAPTER III

1. Ramsey, like most contemporary philosophers, speaks of the "logic" of an assertion "to talk of the kind of argument or discourse in which it may be found" and thus as "a compact way of referring to the distinctive kinds of reason which might be given for it; the distinctive kinds of evidence which might be given in support of it" (WG 9; cf. PP 13, CPGF 50). The "logic" of theology, then, is its (informal) "logical structure" or "logical syntax" (CCP 256) which can be displayed by the philosopher of religion's "logical mapwork" (cf. M 3).

2. The accusation may appear to be supported by the sub-title of Religious Language: "An Empirical Placing of Theological Phrases". However, it appears from Ramsey's papers that it was his publishers, and not Ramsey himself, who were responsible for both the title and the sub-title of this book.

3. "Theological", like "religious", can bear both a wider and a narrower connotation when specifying forms of language. The language of "systematic theology" excludes "religious language" when the latter is interpreted more narrowly. Cf. Ferré (AC) vii-viii.

4. Cf. Jeffner (SRL) 10. Jeffner suggested Rudolf Bultmann as an example of one who proposes such a theory (ibid. 27).

5. Paul Helm also criticises Ramsey for his "a priori" approach to religious language. He argues that "nothing but confusion can result from treating 'religious language' as one distinctive phenomenon" (Helm (VB) 58).


7. Ramsey is very fond of using the word "currency" in this sort of context. He often speaks of language as "appropriate", "suitable", "reliable", "apt" or "adequate" currency for a disclosure (cf. RL 56, 87 and passim; FI 118 and passim; CE 182, RSCS 26). "Currency" is Ramsey's word for language which is in general use or circulation and relates to disclosure-situations; normally it denotes language which "represents" what is disclosed in a disclosure (e.g. RL114; cf. below pp. 277 ff.). At other times, however, Ramsey extends the use of the word to cover the evocative function of religious language as well (e.g. MDA 9; cf. below pp. 292 ff.).
8. For Ramsey "literal" language is "unadorned" language which serves as a "plain description" of its spatio-temporal object (MDA 58). We should note that, at least in his latest thought, Ramsey viewed empirical language as disclosure-based, but still treated it as "descriptive". It is language about the meta-empirical that is logically odd.

9. John McIntyre, having noted Ramsey's distinction between "articulation" and "description", contends that he uses the former word in the sense of "the delineation of relations within a mystery which might otherwise remain inexpressible" (McIntyre (SC) 63-64). McIntyre goes on to claim (rightly) that "articulation by means of models is the form which description takes when we are dealing with certain parts or aspects of reality" (ibid. 64).

10. As opposed, in particular, to "image" (cf. TTST 82, TG 76n.2, 86n7, H 219-221). Ramsey tends to use the term "model" very widely (cf. MacQuarrie (GT) 198). Others, however, would distinguish images (e.g. Father) with their limited historical and social associations from models which are of greater generality and give coherence to a set of images (e.g. the model of transcendence): cf. King 11.

11. Ramsey rejects "symbol" because it "suggests that it is something which is entirely other than what is symbolized" (TTST 82; cf. RB 192). Contrast Scharlemann 69-70.

12. The value of a similar plurality of models in science (modern physics) has been stressed by P.M. Clark 44-45.

13. Against this it could be argued that it is not the television or telephone as an object, but the result of its activity (i.e. the image or the sounds produced) is the real medium. Similarly it is not, e.g., Christ's nature that is the medium of God's revelation, but his activity and its effects on us (cf., e.g., Hick (GUF) ch.11). And these activities do resemble (the activities of) the objects they reveal. Perhaps in the end we shall have to accept that the term "medium" is too ambiguous for arguments and analogies to be very helpful in any direction.

14. Ramsey confesses, "I cannot produce a blue print of a dominant model" and adds significantly (in the context of a discussion about models of the Church), "Perhaps one has to conclude that the concept of God is alone complex enough to incorporate all these diverse strands" (TL 28-29).

15. Ramsey had his lectures on "Models and Mystery", "in a first draft" before Black's Models and Metaphors reached him (cf. MM ix). To some extent, therefore, the two analyses are independent. Ramsey certainly goes much further than Black, e.g., in stressing the importance of the model in scientific understanding (MM 19) and in adapting Black's account to fit in with his own theory of disclosures.

16. Ramsey observes that similes are very like "picturing models" (cf. below), having a descriptive, univocal use (MM 47-48). Allegories have a similar status (CD12-13).
17. Ramsey gives as examples of metaphorical expressions having the structure "A is B": "Electricity is flowing in the wire", "Light is a wave motion", "Jesus is the Messiah" (ibid.). Presumably the "disclosed objects" in these cases would be "Electricity as 'flowing"", "Light as 'wave' motion", "Jesus as 'Messiah'", and not "Electricity", "Light", "Jesus" simpliciter. For "Electricity", "Light" and "Jesus" can be known by perception, without the need for any disclosure (of this nature). What Ramsey calls "a disclosure revealing some object" may then be interpreted in our terms as "a disclosure of isomorphism which reveals an interpreted object, i.e. in which we recognise an object as an object having certain characteristics" (cf. below pp. 284-ff.). It will be recalled that disclosures of isomorphism have been classified as examples of recognition disclosures (above pp. 111 ff.).

18. "all metaphors are models; but not only metaphors", Ramsey notes (U-TTLE 5); he later speaks of metaphors as "very imprecise models" (L-FMG 855/178a). Thus his concept of a model is "very close to that of a metaphor" (TL 28, cf. TTST 82 and Ferré (MM) 333). Ramsey would probably agree with Tilley that "metaphors fail to work as models if they do not have a capacity for analogical development, or a systematic complexity in their source, or a systematic deployability" (Tilley (Thesis) 188).

19. We should note that Ramsey adopts a much looser notion of isomorphism than that used by Black. Ramsey seems to be speaking of a similarity between the web of relationships in model and phenomena. Black's account, however, which is based on the mathematical concept of isomorphism, calls for an identity (cf. Black (MM) 222, Cohen (Thesis) 137, W.H. Austin (MMP) 46-47).

20. Of course Ramsey argues that models may also be given "directly" in religious experience when disclosures arise around fathers, kings and other "model-situations" or phenomena (cf. MM 58-9, TG 88). In such cases there is no "tangential contact" schema as analysed above. Nor does this arise when a disclosure occurs around language alone, as when "we ... talk about fathers, and loving fathers, approaching as it would be said the 'ideal' as closely as we can" until "at the end a cosmic disclosure breaks" and we then "reasonably talk of X - what the disclosure discloses - in terms of the model of 'loving father'" ..." (MMR 265-266).

21. Oddly enough, Ramsey immediately continues: "It is on these occasions that we speak ... of a 'friendly' valley ...", thus pulling the discussion back down to the level of the use of metaphors about an observable pattern. He ought to have pointed out that it is such situations that justify us in speaking also of a "friendly" God.

22. For the 'catalytic' effect of disclosures cf. above pp. 82ff.

23. Ewing would argue that such an inference is in any case based on intuitively known "steps" (cf. above p. 147). This would not, however, put the whole argument at the same level as Ramsey's intuition of a personal God.

25. Cf. above pp. 280 ff. Note also, however, that Ramsey occasion­ally applies the term to the "self-appointed" models of religious experience (cf. MM 58).

26. An operator is a mathematical symbol or function denoting an operation, e.g. a differentiation or square-root sign (cf. FI 92, CD 80).

27. It might be argued that my own position, as outlined above (pp. 266 ff), and below (pp. 295 ff), amounts to the collapse of function (i) into function (ii). For I hold that qualifiers qualify models so as to disclose the concept of God, and not God himself.

28. Sometimes Ramsey describes qualifiers as having "some minimum descriptive character" because they "interlock with a particular context" (CD 79; cf. CD 71). Similarly the word "exi t" has some descriptive force, though it functions mainly as an imperative (CD 79).

29. Ramsey actually refers to this function as "logical" (RL 68), though he describes it in terms of our being stimulated to develop a sequence of models in the right direction. Perhaps McCluskey has the right balance when he writes of qualifiers as "logical signposts instructing us as to how we ought to proceed in our analysis" (McCluskey 131: the "analysis" involving our meditation on the model-as-qualified until the disclosure comes).

30. Ramsey himself at one time adopted a different distinction between specific examples of the two types of qualifier. He argued that the qualifier "infinitely" reveals the analogy: God: loving-language: Infinite sum: finite sum; whereas the use of a qualifier like "perfect" or "all" claims that "the word 'God' is a unique and ultimate key word dominating the whole of a theistic language scheme, an 'irreducible posit'..." (PR 208). Unlike Evans' distinction, this account distinguishes the two qualifiers by means of their "formal function" alone - cf. above p. 289.

31. Ramsey also relates his own position on self-realization, the peculiar nature of first person logic, and the necessity of the subject term in all assertions, to Austin's views - cf. PA passim, MDA 9,60, TST 80, W12, EP II 47-48.

32. Cf. Donald Evans' Australian study of the language of creation, The Logic of Self Involvement; Evans also uses the word "performative" despite his recognition of Austin's later position (cf. Evans (LSI) 38 n.1, 45 and passim).

33. I am not convinced by Ramsey's frequent assertions that he is "not at all concerned with the psychological ... origins of religious language" but with its logical foundations (U-ITR W12 3). It does not seem to me that Ramsey "distinguishes clearly between logic and psychology" (Owen (PTR) 70). Certainly he stresses - and ought to stress - that "disclosure" is not merely a psychological category, for it is both a psychological and an epistemological category. But Ramsey refers too often to the distinctive psychological concomitants of disclosure - situations for us to ignore this element in his work (cf. FD115, Gaskin 134). In any case, discernment must occur as a real mental (psychological) event before the epistemologically-minded student of discernment has anything to analyse (cf. FTMT 175).
In just the same way, sense experience - whatever its veridical status generally or in particular cases - is a real psychological phenomenon which the epistemologist treats in his philosophical investigation. Ramsey's account of the evocative function of religious language involves him unavoidably in claims as to what does in fact occur in people's mental lives when they are confronted by qualified-models. No amount of contending that it is the logical structure of such language with which Ramsey is really concerned should blind us to the psychological weaknesses in his account (cf. TL17, TST82; also Cohen (LRL) 153, McCluskey 89, Tilley (Thesis) 172).

34. The reference is actually to "pointing the word God", but Ramsey recognises that the problem is raised by many aspects of his exposition.

35. D.Z. Phillips has recently argued that "it is not at all obvious that the sequence of cases itself determines that there must be a reality called the infinite goodness of God" (Phillips (IA) 483). He contends that unless a series of morally good people already somehow ties up their goodness with the goodness of God, the series is neutral and so does not necessarily point to God (in the way that the mathematical series does point to a certain mathematical sum).

36. See the next section.


38. Another term that might be used for this function of religious language is "expressive". This too can be supported by reference to Ramsey's writings, but has the disadvantage of carrying with it non-cognitive connotations from its use in such phrases as "the expression of emotion". Cf. RL 152, FI 122, LEP 542, U-NRL; also Smart (PR) 224, Schnetzer 193.

39. H.D. Lewis has argued that Ramsey "just manages to keep his feet" on the "very slim tightrope between ... 'the pit of anthropomorphism' and 'the pit of agnosticism' " (Lewis (PR) 109). I fear that this must be denied, on the evidence in particular of Ramsey's unpublished work on theodicy. And when Ramsey does fall it is into the agnostic (equivocal) pit, rather than the anthropomorphic (univocal) one. Ramsey was always more aware of the dangers of the latter chasm (cf. RL 78, MJCC 152).

40. Ramsey's argument against such a position seems to ignore the helpful distinction that he drew earlier between positive - comprehensive and negative - exclusive qualifiers: cf. p. 291.

41. Cf. Tilley (Thesis) 176; also OCR 14, OBSP 57-58.

42. i.e. the doctrine that the attributes or activities proper to one nature of Christ may be attributed to his other nature by virtue of the unity of both in one person.

43. Cf. "the Athanasian formula is claiming that Father, Son and Holy Spirit - as a group - have the placing of the word 'God' " (U-TLIB 8).
44. i.e. the concept of "coming from/belonging to", and the doctrine of the "interpenetration" of the Persons of the Trinity respectively.

45. Ramsey also speaks of qualifiers as "mnemonics" and we recall that one of their major functions was a "formal" one (cf. p. 289). "Qualifier sentences", e.g. "God is up there" ("up there" being the qualifier or operator), are described as "slogans or mnemonics" which must never be viewed descriptively. They are "much more like a rule about operators" (CD 80). Ramsey also views moral rules and principles as "no more and no less than convenient mnemonics" whose purpose was to preserve and recapture a basic moral insight (U-UFMD 5; cf. U-Man and Morality 6). We shall observe below that Ramsey distinguishes models from "mnemonics" in both science and religion; for models have a representative function, some "ontological commitment" (cf. MM 20, FMT 162).

46. Even the Fall and the Virgin Birth may be spoken of as "mythological representations" of real meta-empirical states of affairs in the relationship between God and human beings (although not necessarily of the states of affairs they appear prima facie to be describing).

47. We recall that Ramsey speaks of "balancing" one model against another in the multi-model discourse of theology. Unfortunately he never develops this into a solution to the problems of religious paradox. His "tracking back" to a disclosure is seen as a way of revealing the evocative, rather than the representative, function of the language so analysed.

48. Ramsey argues (surely incorrectly) that the word "cause" always implies a causal predecessor; in which case "first cause" would be self-contradictory. The phrase is therefore analysed in terms of its evocative and formal functions, and the paradox thus resolved (cf. RL 61-65 and Ramsey's similar treatment of "eternal purpose" in RL 75-79).

49. See above pp. 24 ff., 32 ff., 41 f.

50. One in which Ramsey attempted to argue from "linguistic necessity" to existential reality (i.e. that as God is needed to "complete" the language hierarchy, God exists).

51. But cf. my remarks on the dating of FMG in Appendix B.

52. "Berkeley and the Possibility of an Empirical Metaphysics" was Ramsey's title for a paper published in 1966, though much of it had already appeared in two pieces published in 1952 (NI and Homage). This concern for an "empirical metaphysics" may also be documented from other writings of the early part of Ramsey's Oxford career - cf. M4, 18, 24; CCP 254; SEI 204; U-FMG 1/19/21, 3/29/67 etc.

53. Ramsey agrees with Stcherbina, however, that no actual metaphysical scheme is entirely either "descriptive" or "revisionary" (FMT 154 n.1).

54. Ordinary language itself, in Ramsey's view, "exhibits such diversity as argues for the possibility of metaphysics, i.e. for the possibility of some language used aptly about what is 'unseen' ..." (FI 152).
On this analysis, all language reduces to elementary (atomic) propositions consisting of names, and the world reduces to states of affairs which consist of objects. The "structure" or "form" of propositions mirrors the structure or form of the world (cf. Russell (LA), Wittgenstein (T)).

This is not to say that there may not be some "future crux" of a quasi-experiential (non-mundane) state of affairs, which may "guarantee retrospectively" one metaphysical scheme at the expense of another (Hick (CC) 102; cf. (FK) ch.8). But such a state of affairs is not a part of the world which is open to sense experience of people living in the world, and therefore it is not part of the evidential raw material that metaphysics seeks to explain and organise.

Cf. CCP (1952), U-TLIE (c.1953) and U-FMG Draft (c.1955).

Ramsey equates the three terms on p.1 of U-TLIE, but then goes on to speak mainly of "levels".

As illustrated by Russell's Theory of Types (see Russell (LA) 153-155, Ayer (R) 49-52; cf. also CE 179, RSCS 77-79).

He also uses this theory in wider contexts - e.g. "God is loving" is an incomplete assertion compared with "God is infinitely loving", the word "object" is logically incomplete as it always presupposes some correlative subject (cf. WC 8, TL 4, 9, RSCS 41, CPL 245-246, BP II 199). W.A. de Pater reports that Ramsey argued (in an unpublished paper delivered in 1971) that "for a Christian the expression 'There is eternal life' is incomplete in two ways, it ought to be 'I believe (or hope, or witness); that there is eternal life in Christ'" (de Pater 115, own translation).

This is described elsewhere as a "top grade metaphysical category" which presides over the full range of models, but is itself impossible to model. Ramsey gives as examples "I" and "God" (B65/178c; cf. below pp. 349 ff.).

It should be noted that Ramsey's mathematical parallels to the boundary/apex words of metaphysics are not very close. As N.H.G. Robinson puts it, with reference to the cognate circle/polygon analogy, "The circle may be said to bear a relationship of logical transcendence to the 'language route' which consists of the series of regular polygons, but it does so within the context of geometrical language as a whole" (Robinson 42). Ramsey's apex word, on the other hand, presides over all languages.

The index of a book is the place where "alone perhaps the unity of the book is portrayed" (U-TLIE 3).

i.e. at the fact of "self-other awareness" or disclosure (cf. U-FMG 3/29/67).

Ramsey remarks elsewhere: "I certainly would not wish to assert that there were no more than three" (U-ITR WFZ 2); the three here (I, person, God) are simply the index words which are "near the apex of the metaphysical map".
66. In a draft of "Fact, Metaphysics and God", Ramsey argues that the metaphysical enterprise always needs both "heterogeneous language" and "continuity of language", i.e. the recognition of the different levels (areas) of language, together with some attempt to unite them (U-FMG Draft 1/19 -2/1).

67. literally "to combine (parts) into a whole". This is a useful word which covers the "explanatory" role of both science and metaphysics, and will be used as such below — cf. Chapter IV.

68. Ramsey sometimes distinguishes "God" as a "final key concept" (TL 8) or a "unique and ultimate key word" (PR 200).


70. In a different context, Ramsey uses this metaphor to designate whatever puts an end to the development of a model in a certain direction (cf. BP II 194, OBSR 22, CD 36). Formal rules for developing certain doctrines — e.g. the doctrine of the Trinity — are also treated as "logical stop cards" which prevent the development of certain of the theological models which the doctrine utilizes (CD 43-44).

71. "To call a posit a posit is not to patronise it. A posit can be unavoidable except at the cost of other no less artificial expedients. Everything to which we concede existence is a posit from the standpoint of a description of the theory-building process, and simultaneously real from the standpoint of the theory that is being built" (Quine (WO) 22).

72. For criticisms of Quine's position cf. Ayer (HCS) 53-54, Staniland ch.5 and the papers by R.L. Cartwright, R. Carnap and G. Bergman in Feigl, Sellars and Lehrer.

**CHAPTER IV**

1. This "referential function" of religious language is coupled with its "representative function" which gives content to the term "God" — the referent of theistic language. Cf. above pp. 297 ff. and Tilley (Thesis) pp.151-154.

2. Cf. above pp. 188 ff.

3. Kai Nielsen's terms cf. Nielsen (WF), (WFA), (CCR) ch.5. Some have argued that the Wittgensteinian Fideists are not really Wittgensteinian (W.H. Austin (RNS) 85, Bell; but cf. Brown 46-47).

4. Cf. Smart: "God, if at all an ostensive concept, is only circuitously ostensive — by pointing, as it were, to the place from which you see rather than to what is seen" (Smart (PR) 224). Cf. also Ramsey on the difficulty of pointing at a mystery: CKCF 57, MM 21.

5. Cf. also Stebbing 151-152; Waismann (PLP) 330-333; McPherson (AA) 213; Lucas 136, 140; Kellenberger (PC); Heynell (SNC) 164-165; Walsh (H) 44; Popper, The Open Society and Its Enemies (1966), Vol. 2, pp. 371-375.
6. i.e. in the sense in which "Lincoln was assassinated" is true, and "Napoleon had twelve fingers" is false.

7. Cf. Hick (FR) vii, (PR) 106; Nielsen (CSR) 66-68; Copleston (CP) 6n. 17.

8. Cf. Blackstone (FRK) 75-76; Schedler (TGT) 238, cf. 235. For this response see Mitchell (TF); Hick (FR) preface and Ch. 8; Ferré (LLG) ch. 10, ibid. (MIM). Ramsey rejects entirely the "Left Wing Response" of the non-cognitivists (cf. Review Meynell 270): a fact that often passes unnoticed both by Ramsey's "followers" and his detractors (cf. van Buren (SMG) 93-97; Bebblethwaite 645; Robinson 39-40).

9. It has often been pointed out (cf., e.g., Penelhum (FRK) 84-85) that Flew's challenge relates not only to the question of the falsifiability of religious assertions, but also to the problem of the analogical use of language. Ramsey's analysis of religious language in terms of qualified-models, and his recognition of the importance of using many complementary models in theology, comprise his own attempts to deal with this aspect of the challenge (cf. MM59, TG55, U-PE2).

10. pace Wisdom (G) 187).

11. On the nature and problems of explanation in science cf. Theobald ch. 6; Hempel ch. 5, 6; N.R. Campbell ch. 5; Popper (CR) ch. 5 and appendix.

12. For an analysis of the "explanatory" role of the concept of God cf. K. Ward (G) 138-152. Ward concludes "that God can be said to explain events by placing them in a rational, purposive and intrinsically valuable context" (152, cf. 148-149). Cf. also Hick (ABG) 46-52.

13. A distinction is often made in science between (a) hypotheses, which are highly specific and have a limited range; and (b) theories which are much more general, inclusive and wide-ranging, and employ theoretical concepts of a meta-empirical nature (cf. Hutten 295-296, Braithwaite (SE) ix, Nagel 89-90, Hesse (SHI) 135 etc). As Ferré puts it: "Hypotheses are subjected to procedures of verification. Theories are weighed" (Ferre (SDG) 144).

14. i.e. a "programme" of aims, methodologies, theories, techniques etc. (cf. Lakatos 132-138).

15. i.e. a concrete scientific achievement viewed as an exemplary model for "doing science" and treated as a standard "puzzle-solution" for students. (Kahn (SSR) postscript and passim). Kahn also uses the term more widely on occasions (treat it as equivalent to Lakatos' "research programme").

16. Barbour's examples include "Events in the life of Moses, Buddha and Christ" which have a dominant rôle in defining the self-identity and development of a religious tradition (ibid. 133-134). In an unpublished paper, G. Lindbeck has spoken of the papacy as a "pastoral paradigm" and Jerome as a paradigm for biblical scholarship.

17. Does it, e.g., recognise "the existence of the metempirical within experience" and adequately make sense of it? (cf. Daly 203).

19. He may therefore be described as a "qualified intuitionist" (cf. Shepherd 128).

20. The employment of these criteria is described by Ramsey as "a logical translation of the Vincentian Canon" (U-Inter-Communion 20).

21. The phrase "theism as a metaphysical scheme" designates an explicitly metaphysical treatment of God-language as "Kata-language". "Religious discourse" is always fundamentally metaphysical (in being discourse about a meta-empirical entity that provides a general integrating category); but in Ramsey's later work he is more interested in justifying the application of different models to God than in justifying the metaphysical status and function of the term "God".

22. Quoted above p. 341.

23. The difficulties of stating clear criteria of simplicity in science, and of justifying the preference given to simpler hypotheses and theories, are reviewed in Hempel 40-45. Cf. also Losee 161-162; Popper (CR) 61, 241-242.


26. W.H. Austin argues that "falsification procedures in science are not so clear-cut, nor so different from the method of empirical fit as Ramsey supposes" (W.H. Austin [REPE] 52; cf. Kuhn (SSR) ch. VIII). But Ramsey himself notes the absence of "knock-down" criteria of falsification in scientific method; and in his references to the social and human sciences acknowledges that the method of empirical fit has its place within the sciences as well.

27. Cf. above pp. 376 ff.; also McClendon and Smith (IRMRL) 423; Miller 257; McCluskey 158; Tilley (Thesis) 222-228, (IREP) 971-976.

28. Cf. Tilley's distinction between the initial "testing" of a shoe at the time of purchase, and the later testing that takes place outside the shoe shop (Tilley (Thesis) 222,225; (IREP) 971, 973-4). The first element of testing (mainly for comfort, "looks" etc.) may be regarded as equivalent to the more a priori testing of a theory for its likely adequacy in integrating those facts with which the individual is particularly concerned. Such a test is a very individual matter, as is one's choice of shoes. This is then followed by the more a posteriori testing of the shoe (mainly for waterproofness, durability, long-term comfort, etc.) which may be regarded as analogous to the empirical testing of a theory against the entire range of relevant empirical facts (i.e. not just those which the individual personally regards as most crucial).

29. Hence this is not a return to the notion of "self-authenticating" intuitions. Intuitions may be wrong, but we do have ways of checking whether we are likely to be duping ourselves. Ramsey himself uses the phrase "the possibility and necessity of checking intuitions" in the context of "looking again" at the ever widening situation
30. Thornton criticises Ramsey for jumping "straight from faith to works without the mediation of grace through prayer". He asks "Is not prayer itself another, and more workable, test for the reasonableness of doctrinal models and analogies?" (Thornton (PT) 79). But he seems to mean by this no more than that certain models may be "justified" if, when used in prayer and meditation, they give rise to further (deeper) disclosures of God.

31. For the argument that, as "the principal concern of all religions is how to get rid of evil", one may "speak of faith as being verified (or falsified) in action", see Boyce Gibson 211-214. Cf. also Farrer (RF) 145-148 and Christian 264-266.


EXCURSUS I

1. i.e. "real" or "iconic" models (" real or imagined things and processes which are similar to other things and processes in various ways, and whose function is to further our understanding" - Harré 174). For various views of the relationship between models, analogies and theories see Achinstein (MAT), (TM); Hesse (HP), (MAS), (SHI) Ch.VIII; Spector; Brathwaite (SB) ch. III, IV; Ferré (MLM) 54-56; Nagel ch. 5 etc.

2. The Duhemist position is convincingly countered by Hesse ((MAS) ch.I).

3. The other main non-realistic account of theoretical entities among philosophers of science is the related reductionist view that sentences that refer to them are statements but really refer to observables, and not to unobservable entities. Cf. Quinton (NT) 288-289, Barbour (ISR) 162-164, Hampel 88-91, Losee ch.12, Hesse (SHI) chs. VI and VII.

4. The arguments are reviewed in Nagel 137-140, 145-146; Barbour (ISR) 166; W.H. Austin (RNS) 24-30; Maxwell; Harré ch.3 etc.

5. The question of the ontological status of the theoretical entities of science is relevant to other areas of philosophy in addition to the problem of perception. It is of particular relevance for the problem of other minds; as Maxwell puts it: "Sensations and inner states ... are theoretical entities (and they 'really exist') and not merely actual and/or possible behaviour. Surely it is the unwillingness to countenance theoretical entities ... which is responsible for the 'logical behaviourism' of the neo-Wittgensteinians" (Maxwell 14 n.9; cf. also Ferré (MMR) 344).

6. Cf. Theobald 134: "The term 'exact model' cannot apply to anything in science — indeed it is a contradiction in terms except when applied to things like motor cars".

7. Ramsey has also stressed the similarity of science and religion from another angle, arguing that he "always found in science the kind of exploring attitude to the universe which was itself wonderful and mysterious" (U-BBC).
EXCURSUS II

1. Owen (CKG) 255; cf. ibid. 214.

2. This seems to be the same concern which lies behind the criticism that the doctrine of analogy needs a univocal and not an analogical conception of creative causality; cf. p. 422 below.

3. i.e. Models for Divine Activity. Cf. "If we are looking for some concept, some feature of the disclosure which characterises ourselves and what confronts us equally, which we therefore talk about neither equivocally nor analogically but univocally ... which we can use of what confronts us in the same sense as we can use it of ourselves, we have it in 'activity'. For we only know our own activity in matching it with an activity which confronts us" (ibid. 56). "If Christians claim to go beyond picturesque, inspiring stories, at least talk about God's activity must be literal and univocal, straightforwardly reliable" (ibid. 57-58).

4. For more on Ramsey's use of "activity" see above pp. 202 ff.

5. I shall adopt this standard convention of referring to the Summa Theologicae (S.T.) by part, question, and article. Page references are to the Blackfriars edition, Eyre & Spottwoode, London (1963-).

6. Classical Thomists, along with many modern interpreters, often treat analogy as a type of equivocation, whilst denying that it is "pure" or "simple" equivocation. Cf. Gilson 154, Bouchenski 430-433, Ross (NTA) 127-128, 131-132, McNerny 151-156.

7. According to H. McCabe, St. Thomas' objection to the metaphor theory of theological language "is that in metaphor the primary use of the word is a literal one, so that words would always apply primarily to creatures and to use them of God would be to move outside their ordinary meaning" (p. 107, Vol 3 of the Blackfriars edition of the Summa Theologicae). Cf. (S.T.) 1a, 13, 6; Gilson 152.


9. Recent Thomist scholarship has tended to stress the relative unimportance of this form of analogy in Aquinas' own thought, in comparison with the analogy of attribution. Cajetan has been 'charged with having mischanneled centuries of speculative effort into defending what he called 'analogy of proper proportionately' as the normal form of analogical discourse" (Burrell 120; cf. H. Kyttens: The Analogy between God and the World, Upsalla Universitet Åreskrift; Upsalla (1953) pp. 218-220, 409-475; R. McNerny: The Logic
of Analogy, Martinus Nijhoff: The Hague (1961) pp. 1-2. Such critics have also stressed (against Cajetan and Thomists like Anderson) that analogy in Aquinas is basically a logical rather than a metaphysical matter (cf. also McInerny passim).

10. There are great dangers, of course, in interpreting the equals sign too literally - cf. Mascall (EA) 104, Hesse (NAS) 71-74, Ross (ARM) 94 n. 4.

11. Cf. Aquinas (S.T.) 1a, 3; 3a, 3, 4. God's esse is known as "unparticipated being" (self-existent, uncaused etc.)- Anderson 289-290.

12. Ninian Smart points out that in one sense immanence is identical with transcendence, "for 'within' is an analogy like 'beyond' - not to be taken literally; who is to say that 'within' and 'beyond' point in different directions? And God's dynamic working within all things is surely equivalent to his continuous, omnipresent, creativity" (Smart (MT) 487; cf. ibid. (CH) 229-230, 238)

13. Cf. U-SMR 21-22, RL 71-73. It should be noted that Ramsey also views creation language as placing "God" "as a 'key' word for the universe of 'creatures'" (RL 73; cf. U-CMB, U-SMR 22). Giving the word "God" the status of/ key or apex "word" is in Ramsey's view "a linguistic formulation of the doctrine of creation ex nihilo" (CCP 264; cf. FR 215-216). An interesting example of Ramsey's shift in interest from metaphysics to religious model-language is to be seen in the fact that he later writes in "The Problem of Evil" MS: "every feature of the world can be used as a model to be developed by a qualifier until, in principle, nothing is excluded from the survey and a worshipful situation is evoked... This indeed is the linguistic version of the doctrine of creation" (U-PE 20).

14. Or used in a modified sense without the "ex nihilo"; cf. Mascall (HRI) 98.

15. Perhaps this point is to some extent acknowledged by Thomists who accept that in the ordo cosmoecondi the finite analogue comes first, whilst in the ordo essendi the Creator comes first (cf. Mascall (WI) 108).

16. Of course certain "abstract negative terms" - e.g. "eternal", "simple", "immaterial" - can be univocally predicated of God. Aquinas is concerned here with positive concrete terms which are all predicated analogically. Clearly a "negative attribute" is the denial of a positive predication and as such may be understood non-analogically, although Ramsey still treats such terms as qualified-models (cf. above p. 294).


18. For Palmer's view of Ramsey's religious epistemology ("that theological burbling can help a penny drop") see pp: 53-54. However Ramsey is not mentioned by name!

19. Ramsey himself allows that it is possible to make inferences from theological models (cf. CD 50).

20. A similar intention may be discerned in Paul Hayner's defence of
analogy in his paper "Analogical Predication". He writes "The word 'love' is being used ambiguously when predicated of God compared to its use in other contexts. But the ambiguity can always be clarified by designating the properties signified by this term when predicated of God, and comparing these properties with those signified by the same term when predicated of other things. Whenever an analogical meaning is involved, the two sets of properties will overlap. Thus 'love' as predicated of God may signify, among other things, the property of having tender concern, and the same property may be signified by this term when predicated of a human father in his relation to his children. In other words, having tender concern is a property signified in common in both cases of its predication." (Hayner 861). Cf. also Dacasse 284-285, Sherry 443-445.

21. With regard to metaphysics, Kearney claims that: "In two respects metaphysics can proceed only by using words analogically, namely in respect to affirmations concerning the whole of reality, and in respect to affirmations concerning the nature of meta-empirical entities" (179). As our descriptive words 'are ordinarily such as to distinguish some parts of reality from others, not to describe the whole of reality' (ibid.), metaphysics must use "the language of partial reality" in a "new, analogical sense" (181). Examples of such uses are the idealist's use of "idea" and the materialist's conception of "matter" (181-182; cf. Emmet (HMI) ch. IX, Pepper 369-370). In relation to meta-empirical entities, the same situation obtains: "to the extent that the words of experienced reality carry connotations of the empirical nature of the objects or properties to which they refer, it is only with some modification of their meaning that they can be used concerning meta-empirical entities" (182-183). If God is meta-empirical - i.e. "not an object accessible to direct human observation of any kind" - then "analogical predication is a necessary and fundamental feature of the language of theological explanation" (18 8). Such a view might be another way of interpreting - and accepting - the Thomist maxim that "the 'salvation of metaphysics' lies in analogy ... without this principle metaphysics is lost" (Anderson 317).

22. Or in Mary Hesse's words, to recognise the "negative analogy" in his model: i.e. the properties which belong to the model but not to reality (Cf. Hesse (MAS) 9-10).

23. i.e. the "irreducibility" of religious metaphors "must prohibit an exact paraphrase" but it does "not necessarily prevent a partial interpretation by analogy" (MacCormac 405). As Copleston has remarked: "To demand that the content of analogical ideas should be perfectly clear and expressible ... would be to misunderstand altogether the nature of analogy" (Copleston (HP 2 II) 116; cf. Woods (UACT) passim).

24. Those who demand a "prior literal knowledge [for] any meaningful use of analogical language" (Harris (ESAL) 212; cf. Blackstone (SCP) 361, Schedler (TCT) 235), often seem to be demanding no more than that there be an observed similarity between the two things which are compared (Harris op.cit. 213-214). Harris writes: "If it is admitted that there are not observed similarities between God and other terms which would serve as bases for analogies, then could one ever know what it would be like to justify such connections ...? " (218). But if such observed similarities were discovered by a religious intuition (a transcending "observation"), would this not be
sufficient to justify the analogy? The only "literal knowledge" presupposed would then be that "God is like a father, judge etc.". It is surely such "knowledge by acquaintance" which alone allows us to specify the analogy more clearly (cf. Hepburn (CP) 177-178).

25. One function of the *analogia entis* in Thomism is precisely to prevent the agnosticism of a pure (i.e., unspecified) analogy of proportionately (cf. Farrer (RF) 76-77).
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Review Trethowan

Review Wisdom

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RSFP

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Sermon (1)

Sermon (2)

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Sermon (4)

Sermon (5)

SR

SACP

TAE

TE

TCEF

TG

Trinity


U- indicates an Unpublished work - see separate list below.


(B) Unpublished Works


U-CL "Christian Individualism" (c.1947).


U-FLG A typescript, presumably of Ramsey's planned magnum opus: "Fact, Metaphysics & God" (c.1956-1960).
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"" (PK)
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APPENDIX A:

A Chronological Table of Ramsey's Works

Notes:
(i) Only the more important works are included in this table;
(ii) In the case of lectures or sermons the date given is the date of delivery rather than the date of publication;
(iii) (?) indicates that the date is uncertain;
(iv) U- indicates unpublished material.

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<td>CE HSCS U-FMG(?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>HG CPL FP FRFI CBSR OCR</td>
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<tr>
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<td>EP I CD EM TL</td>
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<td>1965</td>
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<td>DPERL COCE MDL TB FG</td>
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<td>JB II MFT TV</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>E U-ITR Evans</td>
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<td>U-PF ITR Owen UP WG HP</td>
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<td>1972</td>
<td>U-Credo CF FD</td>
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APPENDIX B:

Notes on the dating of Ramsey's unpublished and undated works

U-CI: c.1947 - similar themes to those in LRIC (1948); found in file with papers dated in 1940s.

U-EP: c.1945 - letter to Ramsey dated 1945 and attached to MS refers to a "magnum opus" from Ramsey and gives page references which are consistent with the MS. Another letter referring to the thesis by name is dated 1949.

U-FHG: c.1956-1960 - referred to as "in hand" in U-ITR (1956), RL9 (1957). Comparison with published works indicates the late 1950s as the date of composition. Ramsey's later themes (as in, e.g., OBSR, RL, TL etc.) are not to be found within its pages. Portions of the thesis are, however, reproduced in SEI, RL, PPLT etc.

Ramsey was still writing of his determination to produce "the major work" in the mid 1960s (in September, 1966 he wrote to Russell Aldwinckle that it was nearly ready for publication!). But Ramsey's chaplain at Bishop Auckland was not aware that Ramsey ever worked on it during his time there, and Ramsey signed two contracts with SCM in 1966 for books on other topics (The Empiricists and Religion, and the Logical Status of Creeds). Neither book was written and I have been unable to trace any publisher with a contract for FHG. And yet Professor W.A. de Pater wrote in 1972 of a conversation with Ramsey the year before in which he indicated that FHG was still "on the way"; although de Pater added "but his little smile made me unsure". For other references to the work see ITR Smart 110, D.Edwards 60, Tilley (Thesis) 283.

U-HA: various dates - many of Ramsey's lecture summaries are undated but I have attempted to give an approximate date on the basis of internal and external evidence (in particular comparison with his developing thought as evidenced by publications).

U-GCP: c.1946 - this shorter and somewhat different version of U-EP was found in the files with a letter relevant to its contents dated February, 1947. It appears to have been produced for a group of theologians (the "Wk" group?), but cf. also Tilley (Thesis) 14 and D.Edwards 27. U-GCP, unlike U-EP, contains references to works published in 1945.

U-TLIE : c. 1953-1955 - copies of this paper were filed with letters dating from 1952 to 1955. A letter from Ian Ramsey to Austin Farrer dated January, 1956 refers to "Theology and Language" and the "Department Store Analogy". Ramsey's position in U-TLIE indicates that it was written somewhat earlier than RL (Lectures delivered in 1955). Cf. also U-ITR 6PZ, Tilley (Thesis) 100 n. 26.