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## *The moral theology of Ian Ramsey: connections between theory and practice in the work of Ian Ramsey*

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The basic aim of this thesis is to explore the con-
nections between theory and practice in the work of Ian
Ramsey.  The study itself proceeds from a theoretical con-
sideration of philosophical bases of Ramsey's writings to
his actual practice in meeting ethical dilemmas.  In Chap-
ter One the challenge of logical empiricism is described,
as well as the reaction of philosophers of religion.  Ram-
sey's own response is detailed in Chapters Two through
Five.  His key epistemological concept, disclosures, is
examined in Chapter Two.  Chapter Three describes Ramsey's
linguistic concept, the qualified model, by which he at-
tempts to analyse the odd logic of religious discourse.
Ramsey's work in linguistics is linked to others in Chap-
ter Four.  In Chapter Five Ramsey's work in mapping reli-
gious experience is examined.

Chapter Six provides the theoretical background to
Ramsey's ethics.  Challenges to Christian ethics are set
within the context of the relationship of God and ought.
Ramsey's ethical methodology is examined in Chapter Seven
as it emerges from dialogues with others.  Here the
empirical-exploratory method is central, a means by which
Ramsey hopes to fruitfully apply theory to practice.  The
final section describes Ramsey's actual practice in social
ethics--Chapter Eight demonstrates his approach to a range
of social problems and Chapter Nine deals with euthanasia.
The concluding chapter is intended to review and integrate
various points made in the course of the thesis.

UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM

THE MORAL THEOLOGY OF IAN RAMSEY

Connections between Theory and Practice in
the Work of Ian Ramsey

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## Preface

I found the experience of working on this thesis very enjoyable. The task of writing it was made all the more pleasant by many with whom I associated. I greatly appreciate the financial assistance of the PHEAA in the form of a loan, and also the support of St. John's College and its Senior Tutor, Dr. Bruce N. Kaye. I would like to thank Jon Pye for his comprehensive bibliography of Ian Ramsey's published material and Roger Norris of the Archdeacon Sharp Library for his guidance. I am grateful for the patient support of friends, including Jon and Maggie, Judy, Dave, Rick, and others.

I received invaluable guidance and encouragement from Prof. Jerry H. Gill, to whom my debt of gratitude continues to grow. I am most grateful for the efforts of my supervisor, Dr. Ann L. Loades. I found the breadth of insights and guidance which Dr. Loades provided indispensable. More important to me was her enthusiasm for my work, which often surpassed my own. Although I am solely accountable for the flaws in the thesis, much that is of value is to the credit of Dr. Gill and Dr. Loades. Finally, I would like to thank my typist, Dorothy M. Edgar, and my proof-reader, John W. Edgar, for their love, patience, and kindness. To them I dedicate with love my firstfruits.

Philosophical Background

The rise of logical empiricism in the twentieth century has changed the face of philosophy, and radically altered philosophical method. Admittedly, some of its most forceful tenets have 'died the death of a thousand qualifications'. But the implications of empiricism for theology have been fortified by its more subtle articulation. A faithful response to this challenge is a continual task of theology; to clarify its odd logic, and to ground its discourse in experience. It was the theoretical mission of Ian Ramsey to do the 'under-labourer' work, to lay a firm foundation upon which a tighter theological method can build.

It is not necessary to examine the rise of the philosophical movement in great depth, nor is it possible to elucidate the positions of Moore, Russell, Ayer, Wittgenstein, and others in sufficient detail to do them justice. Further, Ramsey's own relation to empiricism is described in a number of works.[1] Nonetheless, a quick sketch of Ramsey's view of the challenge will help to frame the philosophical foundation of his work.

Ramsey sets out the development of empiricism in four stages, broadly: (A) the reaction to Hegel; (B) logical positivism; (C) Wittgenstein; and (D) a further mellowing.[2] He cites a passage from the neo-Hegelian, William Wallace,[3] which could frighten the impressionable into taking a vow of silence:

> The first part of Logic, the theory of Being
> may be called the theory of unsupported and
> freely floating Being ... the terms or forms

of Being float as it were freely in the air,
and we go from one to another, or--to put it
more correctly--one passes into another ...
This being is immediate: i.e. it contains
no reference binding it with anything beyond
itself, but stands forward baldly and nakedly
as if alone; and, if hard pressed, it turns
over into something else ... The ether of 'Is'
presumes no substratum, or further connexion
with anything: and we only meet a series of
points as we travel along the surface of thought.

The difficulties the early British empiricists had
with such discourse were not at all of the kind expressed
by Kierkegaard: There was no objection to the 'worship'
of reason, nor--at first--to a systematic metaphysic.
Rather, they objected to the grandiose high-sounding
phrases, the empty verbiage, and the pleasure in raising
contradictions of the neo-Hegelians. They responded by
pressing for logical clarification. G. E. Moore contin-
ually demanded, "What do you mean?". In attacking the
language used, he felt that what they said should be
plainly expressed, or not said at all.

Moore relied upon common sense assertions such as
'there is a table' for his standard of precision. He felt
that philosophy should turn from its concern for isolated
concepts such as Time, Sensation, Implicit Beliefs, etc.
to the analysis of common sense assertions. Ramsey's
single example may suffice to expose the dangers in iso-
lating ideas, and then developing them by reason alone:
"We do think of Time"; therefore "There must be such a
thing as Time"; therefore "Time is a fact". The difficulty
with this logic becomes clear when we begin with, "We do
think of unicorns"; therefore ... "philosophers ought not

to argue about the 'reality' of Time before they know in what common sense assertions their arguments are grounded."[4]

Bertrand Russell brought his probing mathematical logic to bear upon the analysis of philosophical discourse. Among his insights into logic were: (A) Don't let grammatical structures deceive--logical structures vary with subject and object as well; (B) Don't ascribe any final absolute to the subject predicate form--'Dogs bark' $\neq$ 'Dogs exist'; (C) Adjectives and nouns do not necessarily describe things--'A candy house', 'a fictional servant'; (D) The language used of a class (e.g. humanity, colour, fruit) must be logically distinguished from language used of members (e.g. a man, blue, oranges). Ramsey gives the phrases 'I crossed the bridge' and 'I crossed the Equator' as an example of the logical webs entailed by confusing different logical types: While 'I crossed the bridge' means that I must have touched it, 'I crossed the Equator' requires no such conclusion. These logical rules totally disrupt the neo-Hegelian language game.

Russell's search for certainty carried him beyond the key-note, 'There is a table' of Moore. He held that one must build a molecular language structure, beginning with the atomistic terms of sense-data. These were the truly 'immediate' sensations: the colour, texture, smells, tastes, and sounds of things. He thought that one could build a reliable, unambiguous language, grounded in sense-data. This would be a more secure foundation than Moore's common sense 'table' assertion because, he argued, the

table must be inferred; it is the sense data which is immediate.

Ramsey is careful to point out that there was no direct attack upon theology thus far. Obviously much of the above criticisms of neo-Hegelian discourse could be applied--and devastatingly so--to much of the current theological language. Russell's 'sensibilia', for example--the idea that the universe is no more than the aggregation of observables--while basically part of his linguistic analysis, could easily be used against theology. This is because such a theory subsumes the universe under the empirical method. Based upon this assumption is the idea that science will one day, given the necessary data, explain all that theology claims as its private sphere of specialty. In other words, it could be used to demolish any theological explanatory hypotheses.

Then, too, the philosophy had its drawbacks. With necessary concepts like 'unsensed data'--reminiscent of neo-Hegelians themselves--Russell had substituted one complex metaphysical system for the other. For his part, Moore never stopped clarifying. The question, 'What do you mean?' was infinite--or, rather, ended in the absurd 'What do you mean by "mean"?'[5]

With the publication of Language, Truth, and Logic the empiricist quest for meaning entered a new stage in Great Britain. The cornerstone of logical positivism, the verification principle, was there passionately propounded and developed by A. J. Ayer. But this is to anticipate.

The principle was itself a development of the verifiability criterion. This more rigorous criterion of meaning held that a proposition was meaningful if and only if it could be verified in experience. This was intended to set the bounds for efficient philosophical method.

Unfortunately, it was much too strict. What of those phenomena which might be called the 'as-yet-unknown'; that could be verified at some future date? (e.g.--at that time, the texture of the moon's surface). Hence the criterion became a principle: A proposition has meaning if and only if in principle it can be verified in sense experience. This again required modification: ... if and only if, in principle, sense data is somehow and in some way related to it.

But positivists also had to provide a place for mathematics. This was accomplished by widening the concept of reason to include 'significant tautologies'. Obviously, two plus three does not describe any facts. It is merely definitional, analytic; in Ayer's own terms, "it is true solely in virtue of the meaning of its constituent symbols, and cannot therefore be either confirmed or refuted by any fact of experience."[6] This 'brings analytic statements in the back door': The verification principle now grants meaningfulness to propositions which are either analytic or empirically verifiable (in principle).

Ayer also distinguishes between 'strong' and 'weak' senses of verifiability. In his first edition, he argues that it is only the weak sense which is required by his position. Briefly, 'strong' verifiability demands that the

truth of a proposition could (in principle) be 'conclusively established' in experience. The weaker version merely requires that experience 'render it probable'.

Ayer returned to tighten the latter framework, insisting that it allowed meaning to any statement whatsoever. He then required that the statement must be more directly related to observation, and based upon other empirical or analytic propositions, without being deducible from these premises alone. This is itself dependent upon 'basic propositions' which can be conclusively verified. The subsequent development of the principle carries us beyond the scope of the background to Ramsey's response.

In any case, with Ayer's manifesto, we do have a direct attack upon theology. Jerry Gill sums up the challenge in a neat syllogism:[7]

> All cognitively meaningful language is either definitional or empirical.
>
> No religious language is either definitional or empirical.
>
> Therefore, no religious language is cognitively meaningful language.

Ayer applied his criticism with equal gusto to metaphysical philosophy. As metaphysics is neither definitional nor empirical, it, too, is non-sense. Like Hume before him, Ayer charges that in metaphysics, unlike science, problems raised cannot be resolved by the testing of hypotheses. Ayer distinguishes himself from atheism and agnosticism, claiming that theological discourse is not to be refuted--it is simply meaningless. In the same way, Ayer would see no opposition between the meaningful assertions

of empiricism (about predictable processes, observable behaviour, etc.), and the meaningless waste of time which he, like Hume before him, would 'commit to the flame'.

Following Russell, a more subtle attack on metaphysics can be found along the lines of the logical diversity of language. If language does exhibit all kinds of logical differences, "may not all so-called ultimate problems arise from confounding these logical differences and in this way misusing words? Confound logical differences and you will have pseudo-problems."[8]

Although Ramsey's response to this challenge will be elucidated below, his reaction to the verification principle itself is more direct: (A) Theological language is not 'flat' description of the evidence. To construe 'Seeing God' in the sense of 'seeing grass' is simply bad logic. (B) On the other hand, if theology should attempt to claim necessity (or analytic status) it also wants to maintain its significant (but non-empirical) object. Theological discourse fails to meet either of the rigid criteria of the principle. Thus it is non-sense. Even if theological facts are said to be of another world, they are not sense-data.

But the verification principle also, significantly, rules out ethics. Also, it is not without interior difficulties: (1) If we now have two kinds of reason, (sense datum and mathematics); why stop at two? If only one type (empirical discourse) makes a tight case, it suffers from being unworkable. But, once the step is taken to two, it

remains to be demonstrated that cognitively meaningful discourse is limited to the analytical and the empirical. (2) Where does this verification principle itself fit in? It is neither necessary, nor confirmed by sense data. Perhaps it is enough to assert, as did Wittgenstein, that the verification principle is nonsense; but that it is useful nonsense. Or it might be defended as definitional: its proponents are merely defining reasonable discourse. But certainly Ayer would like to claim more than that. To say it is tautological would mean that no one need accept such a definition. Because of such difficulties, the challenge of the verification principle should not be exaggerated.

The third stage described by Ramsey is, in many ways, like the second, the work of one man, Ludwig Wittgenstein. It is interesting that chronologically, the second and third stages overlap. But Wittgenstein was never as rigid as Carnap, Schlick, Ayer, and others in empiricism. He is seen as a separate phase in empiricism in Great Britain because in him the more harsh, circumscribed logical positivism begins to give way to a broader, more open attitude. For instance, a key difference between Ayer's opus and Trac- tatus Logico-Philosophicus is Wittgenstein's acknowledgement of the mystical. Although his comments are rather allu- sive, e.g. "There is indeed the inexpressible. This shows itself; it is the mystical",[9] they granted sufficient sig- nificance to the validity of the mystical to draw the criticism of those more positivistically inclined.

The verification principle, nonsense in itself, was not a hard and fast rule for Wittgenstein. Rather, it was a mnemonic, a slogan which helps to organize propositions relating to sense experience. It is a clue to the logical behaviour of precise discourse, "enabling us to formulate the clearest, most precise, and least ambiguous of languages, and it was valuable in so far as its talk about 'verification' and 'criteria' implied that we would only understand a word when we had elaborated a context of use."[10]

The principle elaborates only one such context, and Wittgenstein would not allow the dismissal of other contexts as meaningless. Other language games are more mystical, more in tune with THAT the world is than the empirical HOW the world is. Although he did not develop this mystical approach in depth, he did leave open the possibility of meaningful theological discourse. The diversity of language contexts eliminates the possibility of reducing meaningful discourse to statements for which scientific evidence will suffice.

Wittgenstein's later catch-phrase was: "Don't look for meaning; look for use." As an analysis of diverse language games, philosophy ought to map the logical behaviour of terms within their contexts rather than imprison itself within the notion of 'fact'. This rejects the so-called 'luggage-tag' theories of language which the early Wittgenstein had himself sponsored. He commented, "The meaning of a word is no longer for us an object corresponding to it."[11] Words find their meanings in diverse

contexts; one term may find a variety of meanings in a number of contexts. Hence the possibility of Russell's molecular language must be rejected. Because of the great diversity of contexts and logical behaviour, "Every assertion has its own logic" replaces the verification principle. Wittgenstein had opened the door for theological and metaphysical discourse to claim meaningfulness. But he had neither rejected the precise language contexts of science and logic, nor had he obtained for theology a license to return to wooly assertions and empirical proofs for the existence of God.

The further mellowing is a development along the lines of Wittgenstein's linguistic broadening. Language is far more complex than the verification principle acknowledged. Sense-data as the basic stratum for unambiguous language collapses. In its place, the basis for reasonable discourse becomes ordinary language. Freed from the strictures of the positivists, philosophy begins to discern types of uses for words. R. M. Hare, for example, points to the type of use illustrated by the word 'good'. He writes that it is descriptive of a kind of behaviour, but it is also commendatory. Nowell-Smith comes to a similar conclusion about the word 'callous'. It, too, is descriptive and more; in this case it is disapproving.

As implications of the development of empiricism for theological language, Ramsey briefly mentions: (1) Don't look for objects as meanings of words--especially 'God', 'spirit', 'soul', etc. Do not approach such nouns with a

'luggage-tag' sense of their meaning. (2) Problem words must be set in context, and their logical behaviour studied. (3) Look for the empirical grounding of words. Look for the ways in which theological words are anchored in sense experience.

The first implication draws upon Russell. If the grammatical structure of straightforward discourse can deceive, this applies a fortiori to theological language. 'He hit me' and 'God saved me' should not be given like interpretations, despite their apparent similarities in grammar. Further, theological discourse must beware of simplistic semantic comparisons. To see 'God is loving' in flat descriptive terms risks making God just like everybody else. If it is taken in the ordinary sense: (1) one must ask, "But what of the terminal cancer patient?" (2) It is falsifiable in experience. Or to remove it from the empirical: (3) if it is not falsifiable, then what is it?

Ramsey mentions another instance in which the implications can be seen, viz. the issue of transmutation. Does consecration really change the bread? If one responds to the empiricist challenge by asserting that it is only its underlying substance which is changed, the empiricist asks, (quite rightly) "Can you apply 'change' to that which is non-spatio-temporal?"

If instead we make an attempt to ground theological discourse, we note that the above issue neglects Russell's guidance to examine the particular logic of the assertion in question. In this way, we can distinguish between the logic

of 'very loving' and 'infinitely loving', of 'brown bread' and 'consecrated bread'. Theology need not assume that it is descriptive, at least not in the flat sense of the positivists. "Somehow, in some way, we must contrive to show the kind of situation which illuminates theological discourse."12

But this is not the only response theology can take to the logical positivist challenge. The strict separation between science and religion, between the empirical and the theological, can be enthusiastically adopted by theology. This position detaches theological assertions from ordinary language, from the basic 'there is a table' assertions. The context in which theological terms are set to determine their meaningfulness is limited to the faithful. But such a course risks a radical separation of science and religion and invites social schizophrenia.

But Ramsey doubts that theology wants to deny all sense-data. Admittedly finding a means to fit in even some significance to experience is problematic. Thus the important question is not so much whether or not to respond to the challenge, but to what extent do we respond? The possible theological approaches are, of course, broader than to accept the verification problem as it is, and either deny it, or welcome it, and go about one's irrational business. Theology can attack, criticize, and qualify each step of the empiricist syllogism as sketched by Gill. The approach Ramsey chooses to take is suggested by his question: Where is ordinary language paradigmatic of theological discourse?

Before presenting Ramsey's response to the empir-
icist challenge to Christian theology, it is essential
that the background be given further detail. The reac-
tions from Christian theology and the philosophy of re-
ligion have been varied, both in terms of content and
strength. One crucial issue is the amount of ground
granted the empiricist position from the start. Only by
setting out these divergent stances in some detail can we
determine the merits and faults of Ramsey's position with
respect to this important issue.

A strong case for approaching Christian discourse
from within an avowedly empiricist stance is argued by
Richard Braithwaite in his 1955 Eddington Memorial lec-
ture, "An Empiricist's View of the Nature of Religious
Belief".[13] Ramsey included the lecture in Christian
Ethics and Contemporary Philosophy, including a discussion
by Schofield, Mackinnon, and Ramsey himself. As Ramsey's
response draws upon his own position, I shall explicate
Braithwaite's argument here without comment and refer to
the lecture in my discussion of Ramsey's view of the mean-
ing of religious assertions. Braithwaite began with
Eddington's rendition of the verification criterion of
science. "The meaning of a scientific statement is to
be ascertained by reference to the steps which would be
taken to verify it."[14] He points out that the principle
is consonant with current philosophy of science. But he
is cautious about its application, adding that Eddington
himself distinguished his use of the principle from that

of the positivists. He sees the criterion as a helpful tool within science, whereas the positivists apply it to all language. Braithwaite believes that a broader rendering of the principle will make it more applicable to religious language without departing significantly from the spirit of empiricism. A clue to the great success of the principle in science is its ability to sort useful hypotheses from those which are useless precisely because there are no means by which to test them. The verification principle helps to distinguish statements that conform to the methodological requirements of description, observation, prediction, measurement, etc. Braithwaite concludes that a more fundamental meaning of the verification principle would read: "The meaning of any statement is given by the way it is used."[15]

In his attempt to apply this broadened principle to religious discourse, Braithwaite finds a helpful parallel in moral language. It, too, has been notoriously difficult to fit into the confines of the verification principle. Much work has been done, however, to determine the uses of moral discourse. To some extent it is used to express an attitude. Not to express that the speaker has the attitude--this can be verified. But, more particularly, that he approves the moral assertion. But even this is not precise or basic enough for Braithwaite. He argues that to make a moral assertion is to express one's intention--to declare that, given the opportunity, one intends to act (or not to act) in accordance with the course he approves.

Certainly one does not always fulfill his intentions, but Braithwaite argues that a man who realizes he may not have the strength to carry out his intentions will not necessarily be insincere in his expression of them.

Braithwaite labels this the 'conative' theory of moral assertions. 'Smoking marijuana is wrong' is translated 'Given the opportunity, I intend to refrain from smoking marijuana.' But not all expressions of intention are moral in character. 'I ought to give Barbara the book' may mean no more than that she needs a book which I have. Braithwaite's requirement here is that the intention is fitted into a general policy of action or a general attitude. Under this criterion, it might be my general policy to give all the research students in my department my most recent publication. In which case, my intention to give Barbara the book is a moral one.

Braithwaite goes on to draw a profound parallel on the above basis, between religious and moral assertions.

> The view which I put forward for your consideration is that the intention of a Christian to follow a Christian way of life is not only the criterion for the sincerity of his belief in the assertions of Christianity; it is the criterion for the meaningfulness of his assertions. Just as the meaning of a moral assertion is given by its use in expressing the asserter's intention to act, so far as in him lies, in accordance with the moral principle involved, so the meaning of a religious assertion is given by its use in expressing the asserter's intention to follow a specified policy of behaviour.[16]

Braithwaite cites as an example, 'God is love', and maintains that this expresses the asserter's intention to pursue an 'agapeistic' life-style. The assertion of this

moral intention exhausts the meaning of the religious
claim, (at least as far as the broadened verification prin-
ciple allows). Intentions are, after all, empirical. We
can verify that a person did (or did not) intend to lie to
us. Here, however, one may see a fault in Braithwaite's
case. This framework would rule out the possibility of
ever intending to do wrong. The assertion, 'Lying is wrong,
but I intend to do it,' would be impossible, since, by
Braithwaite's reckoning, it would be translated, 'I do not
intend to lie, but I intend to lie.' Other weaknesses
will be discussed in connection with those who have raised
the objections.

One point is anticipated by Braithwaite, and is used
to further refine his argument. If, under this scheme,
religious assertions are all basically the expressions of
the intention to follow a policy of love, what becomes of
religious claims to exclusivism and distinctiveness?
Braithwaite responds by claiming that the uniqueness is
given in the particular stories around which each religion
arranges its way of life. He appeals to Matthew Arnold,
who used the terms 'parable' and 'fairy-tale' to illus-
trate Christianity's essential imaginative element. The
point of such 'stories' is their capacity to nurture the
desired ethical attitude rather than their veracity.
These 'stories' range from the straightforwardly empirical,
'Jesus was buried in the tomb', to those which might be
said to transcend history, 'He ascended and sitteth on
the right hand of God.' Braithwaite comments: "A man

is not, I think, a professing Christian unless he both
proposes to live according to Christian principles and
associates his intention with thinking of Christian stor-
ies; but he need not believe that the empirical propositions
presented by the stories correspond to empirical fact."[17]

Hence, in Braithwaite's view religious language has
but two functions: (1) Parallel to moral language, reli-
gious language is used to express the intention to pursue
a particular policy. (2) Religious language uses 'stories'
to express a non-empirical event (not necessarily histor-
ical) which nurtures, inspires, motivates the life-style.
Although other religious assertions can have different
tasks, these statements fit in with the general framework
of religious language's functions above. Further, such
assertions, being non-empirical, depart from Braithwaite's
conceptualisation of the verification principle and thus
cut themselves off from the proper consideration under the
philosophy of religion.

A philosopher of religious knowledge who grants the
empiricists slightly less dominion is the heir of Wittgen-
stein, John Wisdom. Unfortunately, for reasons which (I
hope) will emerge, Wisdom's insights will have to be
presented in a somewhat disjointed fashion. This apology
having been made, we can begin our discussion of Wisdom
with Wittgenstein. In his _Investigations_, Wittgenstein
arrived at a radically different interpretation of epis-
temology. In his now-famous 'duck-rabbit', _example_ he demonstrated
that we do not simply 'see'; we 'see _as_'. His ambivalent

sketch is not so much a psychological trick, as the means to an insight into epistemology.

Wittgenstein argued that we see in terms of aspects. We might view his sketch from the aspect of rabbit, until someone whispers 'duck' and another aspect 'dawns' upon us, completely changing our recognition. Though a change has taken place, it is difficult for Wittgenstein to specify what it is that has changed. When two observers differ as to whether they are seeing a rabbit or a duck, there is no factual discrepancy; they are looking at the same thing. There is only one fact, yet paradoxically, two different interpretations.

Wittgenstein believes that 'seeing as' is not a part of perception, but a part of thought. If one is having the visual experience, one is also thinking of what one is seeing. It is when this insight is applied to one's view of the world in its totality that its significance for the issue becomes clear. Insofar as the metaphysician is trying to construct some kind of model, grid, or map to integrate the various, disjointed 'facts' of the world, he is here given a new justification for his work.

Drawing upon this key insight, Wisdom begins his consideration of religious knowledge and the validity of religious language with a well-known parable:[18]

> Two people return to their long-neglected garden and find among the weeds a few of the old plants surprisingly vigorous. One says to the other, 'It must be that a gardener has been coming and doing something about these plants'. Upon inquiry they find that no neighbour has ever seen anyone at work in their garden. The

first man says to the other, 'He must have
worked while people slept.' The other says,
'No, someone would have heard him, and besides,
anybody who cared about the plants would have
kept down these weeds.' The first man says,
'Look at the way these are arranged. There is
purpose and a feeling for beauty here. I be-
lieve that someone comes, someone invisible
to mortal eyes. I believe that the more care-
fully we look the more we shall find confirma-
tion of this.' They examine the garden ever
so carefully and sometimes they come on new
things suggesting that a gardener comes and
sometimes they come on new things suggesting
the contrary and even that a malicious person
has been at work. Besides examining the gar-
den carefully they also study what happens to
gardens left without attention. Each learns
all the other one learns about this and about
the garden. Consequently, when after all
this, one says, 'I still believe a gardener
comes,' while the other says 'I don't' their
different words now reflect no difference as
to what they have found in the garden, no
difference as to what they would find in the
garden if they looked further and no differ-
ence about how fast untended gardens fall
into disorder. At this stage, in this con-
text, the gardener hypothesis has ceased to
be experimental, the difference between one
who accepts and one who rejects is now not a
matter of the one expecting something the other
does not expect. What is the difference be-
tween them? The one says, 'A gardener comes
unseen and unheard. He is manifested only in
his works with which we are all familiar',
the other says 'There is no gardener' and
with this difference about what they say
about the gardener goes a difference in how they
feel towards the garden, in spite of the fact
that neither expects anything of it which the
other does not expect.

In a sense, Wisdom, like Braithwaite, has allowed the

empiricist attack much influence. He has acknowledged the

point from Hume, Ayer, and company that God is not an exper-

imental issue  to be resolved by an empirical methodology.

Already he has no doubt alienated many theists, and for

diverse reasons. Some may object that he has denied God

any place in experience (although Wisdom would deny this);

these would attempt to retain an empirically demonstrable proof of God's existence. Conversely, many would charge that Wisdom has made God too naturalistic; merely a matter of personal taste.

Wisdom's parable does serve to demonstrate Wittgenstein's insight into 'seeing as'. It shows that the question of the existence of God is no longer a matter of bringing to light new, unexpected facts, of gathering more and more empirical evidence to demonstrate another geographical area in which no God was found. Unfortunately, his parable was in many ways too strong, too effective at showing the empirical ambiguity of the question.

This idyllic neutrality was enthusiastically welcomed by philosophers who perceived points not exactly in favour of theism, nor (necessarily) intended by Wisdom. In New Essays in Philosophical Theology, Antony Flew used the parabolic garden to construct an impressive variation on the verification attack. Although the two explorers in Flew's rendition go to great lengths to verify the one's claim that an invisible gardener comes--e.g. they set up a barbed wire fence and patrol the grounds with bloodhounds--no new evidence of the gardener is forthcoming. Apparently, the brave explorers have already missed the point of Wisdom's garden. Still the faithful believer is not convinced. This behaviour leads perfectly into Flew's primary charge: "... it often seems to people who are not religious as if there was no conceivable event or series of events the occurrence of which would be admitted by

sophisticated religious people to be a sufficient reason
for conceding, 'There wasn't a God after all', or 'God does
not really love us then'. . . I therefore put the simple
central question: 'What would have to occur or to have
occurred to constitute for you a disproof of the love of,
or of the existence of, God?'"[19]

The charge, in contrast with the earlier verification
issue, is that an assertion which is not in principle fals-
ifiable, is not meaningful. Flew bases this point upon the
tendency of apologists to defend their faith against the
probing questions of the empiricists with increasingly du-
bious qualifications. What begins in Wisdom's parable as
a comparison of the evidence, seems to degenerate into the
evasion of the skeptic's questions by the believer. Flew
says that this process of qualification comes to a halt at
some point, but that it is not always stopped before the
original asserter has completely demolished his own argu-
ment; 'the death by a thousand qualifications.'

Flew's point was picked up by the Oxford moral philo-
sopher, Richard Hare. In his contribution to New Essays
in Philosophical Theology,[20] he offers an alternate view
of beliefs. Hare concedes Flew's major premise, that it
is the nature of religious beliefs that nothing can deci-
sively undermine them in the believer. Religious views are
simply a kind of outlook or interpretation of one's exper-
ience--but they are completely unverifiable and unfalsifi-
able. Hare invents the term 'blik' to cover this unques-
tioning attitude.

Hare gives an example of a man who fears that all professors are out to murder him. We take him to see professors in the hope that we can demonstrate to him how harmless most of them are. But those signs we take as perfect evidence for our case, he interprets to be due to the craftiness of those hoping to carry out their sinister purpose. Kindly professors notwithstanding, the man will hang onto his blik.

Hare points out that it is important to distinguish between right and wrong bliks. This man's blik is obviously an insane one, and ours is (presumably) sane. But no one has NO bliks. Hare cites as other examples of bliks: the blik that the steel frame of one's automobile will stay rigid and not fall to bits, the blik that everything happens by chance (Hare states that this is something that no evidence could verify or falsify--like the converse, the blik that nothing happens by chance). What is crucial is the behaviour such bliks foster. Obviously, someone with a paranoic blik about professors will take steps to defend himself as one approaches. It is not _merely_ attitudinal because of such blik's effects upon the things which we do. In many ways, this argument parallels the conclusions of Braithwaite about religious language. Like Braithwaite, Hare's point is that beliefs _are_ meaningful in virtue of the behaviour which they encourage. Unlike Wisdom's garden, beliefs are not a matter of idle speculation. But this is gained at the cost of conceding the empiricist's point that factual evidence counts neither for nor against the 'story' or the 'blik'.

Basil Mitchell continues the story-telling with the tale of the stranger and the resistance partisan. During a war, in an occupied country, a member of the resistance and a stranger meet and spend the night in conversation. The partisan is greatly impressed by the stranger who encourages him to have faith, and tells him that he, the stranger, is in fact the leader of the resistance. The partisan is completely convinced of the stranger's trustworthiness. Although they never get a chance to talk again, the partisan sees the stranger from time to time. He is sometimes seen helping members of the resistance, and the partisan gratefully proclaims his virtue to his friends. But at other times he is seen helping the occupying forces, and even turning over patriots. Then the friends cast aspersions upon his reliability, but the partisan remains faithful. He believes that the stranger knows best how to accomplish the goal. When the actions of the stranger are most suspect, the friends demand of the partisan, "What would it take for you to admit that you are wrong; that he is in fact on the other side?" But the partisan will not put the stranger to the test because of his trust in him.

Mitchell comments "The partisan of the parable does not allow anything to count decisively against the proposition, 'The stranger is on our side'. This is because he has committed himself to trust the stranger. But he of course recognizes that the stranger's ambiguous behaviour does count against what he believes about him. It is precisely this situation which constitutes the trial of his faith."[21]

Mitchell further argues that 'God loves men' resembles 'the Stranger is on our side' in not being conclusively falsifiable. They can both be treated in at least three different ways: (1) as provisional hypotheses to be discarded if experience tells against them; (2) as significant articles of faith; (3) as vacuous formulae (expressing perhaps, a desire for reassurance) to which experience makes no difference and which makes no difference to life.

The Christian, once he has committed himself, is precluded by his faith from taking up the first attitude: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. He is in constant danger, as Flew has observed, of slipping into the third. But he need not; and, if he does, it is a failure in faith as well as in logic".[22]

All other factors aside, Mitchell's parable is perhaps the most fitting to the debate. In the first place, this is hardly a matter of idle speculation. The loyalties of the stranger are both ambiguous and extremely crucial. It is also a question of trust, rather than the empirically-slanted issue of existence. Finally, the facts are significantly different in two ways: (1) The evidence under consideration is not the kind with which empiricism is adept at describing, observing, predicting, and measuring. Nonetheless there is evidence, and it is agreed evidence. More important, (2) Mitchell's situation is one in which conclusive falsifiability can be asserted in principle. There will be an end to the war; the truth about the stranger will emerge.

Finally, we must consider one last parable built upon this second point. John Hick writes of two men travelling along a road.[23] One believes it is the way to the Celestial City; the other does not believe that it has a destination. Neither has been along the road before, so that they cannot say what they will see at the end, or even around the next bend. The one comforts himself through adversity that this is the way to the City. During times of pleasure he realizes that these are encouragements for him to go on. The other sees their journey as an aimless ramble and simply takes what pleasure he can from the good times, and endures the bad. As in Wisdom's garden, the issue is not an experimental one; but it has nonetheless been a very _real_ one. Although they do not see any different evidence nor expect to find anything different on the road, the ultimate answer, when they turn the last corner, means that one of them will be right and the other wrong. One of the traveller's expectations were _true_, and one's were false.

Hick has picked up what he feels to be a crucial claim of Christianity in relation to the verification/falsifiability debate. Although the mere survival of death would not conclusively decide the general question of theism, i.e. the 'after-world' might be as ambiguous as the present life, the after-life would conclusively decide the veracity (or falsifiability--and hence the meaningfulness) of Christian claims. This is because of the exactness of Christian eschatological beliefs. For the Christian, the after-life

will manifest the authority of Christ. One further aspect
of this argument--and an odd one at that--is the assymmet-
rical character of the question with relation to the veri-
fication debate. As far as after-life in general, it is
one expectation that <u>can</u> be verified  but can never be
falsified. If we survive death, we shall know it; but if
we do not, we shall not know that we have not.

More attention will be given to both Hick and Wisdom
below. Before going on to two rather different responses
to the challenge, some integrating comments are in order.
In this exchange of story-telling, we can see how far the
issue has ranged from the primary charge of the positivists.
Although the status of such imaginative discourse might be
problematic (is it metaphysical, symbolic, are these stories
meaningful, are they models?) it is certain that we are no
longer within the rigid confines of the positivist bounda-
ries for meaningful discourse. Although Ayer attempted to
slide out from under the label 'atheist', Flew's argument
obviously concedes significance to religious language, but
it disputes its claim to an objective referent. In other
words, he is not so much saying that non-empirical, non-
analytic discourse is meaningless, as that the God of theism
is himself meaningless by being qualified out of signifi-
cance. (Along these lines, Hick writes in his <u>Philosophy</u>
<u>of Religion</u>, " ... the common core to the concepts of
'existence', 'fact', and 'reality', is the idea of 'making
a difference'. To say that x exists or is real ... is to
claim that the character of the universe differs in some

specific way from the character that an x-less universe
would have".[24])

More to the point is the significance granted the
empiricist claim by the various philosophers of religion.
Braithwaite and Hare both admit that the positivist attack
on the fact claims of religious discourse must be conceded.
Both turn to demonstrate the emotive, intentional, imagina-
tive, and ethical significance of what is otherwise meaning-
less. We must reserve judgement on Wisdom and Hick, partly
because neither position has been examined in enough depth.
Although Wisdom has shown that it is not a difference in
_facts_ which divide the theist from the skeptic, both charac-
ters _do_ use facts to argue their positions. At this point,
then, Wisdom's full point remains a mystery. Hick, on the
other hand, has gone a long way to answering the demand for
verifiability in his Celestial City parable. But because his
road, like Wisdom's garden, contains no disputed facts, his
position, too, is in doubt. How does the ambiguous road
relate to his insight into existence, viz. that the exis-
tence of x means that there is a difference between an x-
influenced universe, and an x-less universe? Basil Mitchell
is not so ambiguous. With his partisan parable, his posi-
tion with respect to the positivists (and more tolerant em-
piricists) is quite strong inedeed. In the first place, his
parable gives us some insight into the kind of facts that
come into question. They are facts concerning ambiguous
behaviour; facts which demand a judgement despite the lack
of conclusive evidence.

More significant is the condition of the partisan. First, Mitchell makes the point of the gravity of the question. If Wisdom's garden is the world, it is not so clear in his fable as in Mitchell's how significant the way in which one sees the world is, how crucial is what one 'sees the world as.' Secondly, as the stranger exists, our attention is drawn away from that question to the more important one--as James Richmond states it, our attention is drawn to the essential element of trust in the man-God relationship. This perfectly counters Flew's raising the frightening issue of theodicy.[25] The occurrence of evil is provided for by the ambiguous behaviour of the stranger, but it is partisan's trust which is decisive.

We must now explore another side of the responses to the verification positivist issue. This is a response from Alasdair MacIntyre and D. Z. Phillips.[26] Although they take different approaches, both argue that the verification/falsification issue is not applicable to religious language. Phillips develops Wittgenstein's concept of a language game to apply to a distinct domain of religious discourse. Taking the diversity of the tasks of diverse language games as his cue, Phillips holds that theological discourse is an autonomous game with its own rules. Likewise no account of religious language which does not consider what the believer means to say will be adequate. But this is not to make the meanings of religious assertions subjective or private. Rather, the meaning must be seen within the total context of the language community. This

is to say that while assessment of assertions does take

place within the community, no assessment of the total

'game' from another 'game' is logically possible. All cri-

teria are internal to the language-using community. It is,

for Phillips, unintelligible to demand the justification of

one 'game's' criteria and rules by another. Nonetheless,

and this is what makes his case difficult to scan, Phillips

insists that religious language games are not isolated from

life.

Like Phillips, Al asdair MacIntyre holds that the veri-

fication principle is inadequate, and that religious asser-

tions must instead be checked against the community from

which they rise. In an extended footnote, MacIntyre dis-

cusses the difficulties of applying tools of empirical or

philosophical analysis to religious discourse:[27]

> To offer a philosophical analysis of religious
> utterances ... we must see how they are used
> in all the complexity and variety of the con-
> texts in which they are used. And to do this
> is to see at once that what puzzles us about
> religious language is not so much individual
> utterances as the whole business of religion
> and the religious ways of talking.

MacIntyre is careful to point out that this autonomous

language game does not necessitate no connection with ordi-

nary language. In fact, religious discourse draws many of

its key words from their ordinary usage; to praise, to

love, to express awe. Likewise MacIntyre is careful to

disassociate himself from interpretations of a radical

separation. He denies, for instance, that the believer

is able to understand assertions which are otherwise

meaningless by the gift of grace. 'Mountain neither fire

red here' is no less non-sensical for the religious
person.

Still, his thesis is closely tied to that of Phillips
in his view of an autonomous language game. Central to
his position, however, is the faith of the individual be-
liever. In response to Flew, MacIntyre states that the
religious philosopher faces an either-or in his response
to the twin attacks of verification and theodicy. "Either
the believer allows that the facts of evil count against
his assertion or he does not concede this."[28] To take
the latter course (to say that the facts of evil do not
undermine one's faith) is to ensure the meaningless of
one's assertions under the falsification principle. But
MacIntyre attacks the former position as compromising
the nature of faith. He argues (against Crombie and Hick)
that a cancer patient and a loving God cannot be resolved
by a wonderful future.[29]

In somewhat poetic fashion, MacIntyre paints rather
than argues the second alternative. He cites the example
of Wordsworth as one who came to faith through an experi-
ence of suffering at the hands of evil. "(Wordsworth) ...
does not invoke belief in a better world to support an
already held belief in a good God. He comes to believe
in a better world because he encounters just the kind of
thing that on the Verificationist view makes against
belief in such a God".[30]

Against Braithwaite, MacIntyre distinguishes between
the man who accepts all the facts, and even adopts the

intention to live a Christian life, pursue a policy of
'agape', and a Christian who in some elusive way goes be-
yond all of that.  His point is that the man lacks some
deep and vital commitment.  These 'stories' which Braith-
waite describes go beyond encouraging intentions.  Myths,
imaginative literature, poetic symbolism incorporate cen-
tral situations in human existence.  Further, these atti-
tudes, intentions, commitment, could not be maintained
without thinking in some way that they were deeply true.
The religious man becomes receptive to these stories by
submission to authority.  Only authority can justify Chris-
tian discourse--and this is why it is non-sensical to
MacIntyre to justify religious assertions from outside the
community of faith.  If religious assertions are to be
justified as explanatory hypotheses about the universe,
they are bound to fail.  Hence, only authority will suffice
to justify religious assertions.  After ruling out the
Bible and the Pope as authorities, MacIntyre concludes
that Christ is the final authority upon which religious
language is justified.

MacIntyre and Phillips outline a position which is
both a powerful rejection of the verification principle
and a genuine alternative to the more empirical responses
above.  But one wonders if they have not succeeded in
making faith less relevant and more meaningless in their
attempt to defend its distinctive character.  Phillip's
point  that a religious assertion cannot be fairly consi-
dered apart from an understanding of what the asserter

meant by it, is a strong reminder of the importance
that 'seeing as' plays in the meaning of a statement.
MacIntyre is certainly right to oppose Braithwaite in the
latter's reduction of religious language to intentional
functions.  But although he is able to point to functions
more characteristic of religion than the mere performance
of good deeds, he is unable to fill out his insight.  An
in-depth discussion of religious discourse's function is
still lacking.  Still, the fact that one can conform to
Christian behaviour and even accept certain Christian his-
torical facts, but not necessarily be a Christian in terms
of faith, must be kept in mind.

Disclosures

It would certainly be comforting (for me at least) to begin this discussion of Ramsey's response to the empiricist challenge with a nice short-hand label; e.g., 'at heart, Ramsey was an empiricist'; or, 'basically, Ramsey was an idealist after all'. Even 'Ramsey stood firmly between the empiricist and idealist traditions' would be helpful. Unfortunately, such a label should be a conclusion gained from a discussion rather than a premise. In this case, however, I hope to show that any such label will be a distorting and ill-fitting tag when applied to Ramsey, whose ideas ranged over a broader spectrum than 'empiricist', 'idealist', or 'existentialist' might imply. This, too, remains to be shown.

Another temptation arising from a consideration of Ramsey's theoretical work--because it is so well integrated--is to present his major ideas: models, disclosures, logically odd discourse, empirical fit, etc. in one complete piece. The task of communicating the whole of his approach would be greatly eased if it could be shown whole, rather than presented in some disjointed order. There is little doubt, though, that it is his concept of disclosures which is primary. Indeed, Ramsey acknowledges this in his response to Braithwaite's criticisms of his <u>Models</u> <u>and</u> <u>Mystery</u>.[1] This being so, we shall begin with this concept. For the moment at least, we shall approach 'disclosure' as an epistemological concept. As such, it will provide a basis from which to explore his more methodological insights

into models, his understanding of the logical peculiarities of religious assertions, and, further, the problem of the confirmation of religious knowledge, the role of commitment, and the possibilities for a rehabilitated metaphysics.

As David Edwards points out, Ramsey began his academic career lecturing along the philosophical tradition of Berkeley.[2] This is confirmed by an unpublished manuscript from this period (1949) entitled Experience and Personality. In his introduction, Ramsey acknowledges his debt to Berkeley, as well as Whitehead, Ward, Bradley, in their insistence on experience as an organic unity. It is 'idealist' in character throughout. But, significantly, he remarks in the introduction that two of his objectives are: (1) to find a path between analytic and empirical philosophy: "No one, without courting disaster, could start even the least hopeful philosophical journey anywhere except at the twin towns of experience and language." But (2) "My main purpose is to point out that both Experience and Language are far more complicated than the simple piety of recent Logical Positivists would have us believe."

Over fifteen years later, recalling his intentions in Religious Language, Ramsey wrote that it "was written at a time when ... it was necessary to show (1) that religious language should not be read as if it were flat and altogether descriptive ... (2) that 'what there is' is not restricted to 'empirical facts' supposed to be solid, independent, utterly objective sense data."[3]

The similarity--across sixteen years--is hardly coin-
cidental. Ramsey saw his task to be the clarification of
the logic of religious discourse which would in turn serve
to justify its meaningfulness; and which would break through
the restrictive definition of experience advocated by the
positivists. The concept of disclosure (absent from the
1949 work) provides a keystone around which Ramsey inte-
grates his analytic and his empirical thoughts.

In contrast to the verificationists, and even the
broader sense of the criterion of meaning we have seen in
Braithwaite, Ramsey saw the meaningfulness of religious
assertions as verified by their evocative capacity. In
the concept of cosmic disclosures, the justification of re-
ligious assertions as reasonable and meaningful discourse
is found. This is not to say that a disclosure allows the
kind of verification possible for scientific assertions--
far from it. Rather, the concept of disclosures serves to
broaden the understanding of human experience. If the evo-
cative function of religious assertions is to be taken as a
criterion of their meaningfulness, the reductionist ontology
of the positivists must be shown to be inadequate.

In Religious Language Ramsey demonstrates the inade-
quacy of the positivist position by reference to experience
which presupposes, but goes beyond the descriptive, spatio-
temporal, observable phenomena of science. Not that this
was a prodigious feat; the stringent positivist criteria
had been relaxed; there had been a progressive mellowing.
Wittgenstein had always acknowledged experience beyond the

language of empiricism.  His later work opened the lingu-
istic possibilities of mapping the logic of assertions
built upon this broadened empiricism.

But the epistemological difficulties were great.  How
could we be certain, how could we know HOW we knew of these
wider experiences?  Taking a clue from Butler's _Analogy_,[4]
Ramsey argued that it was _reasonable_ to act decisively in
situations of gravity when conclusive facts were lacking.
Here is a first step towards the resolution of the problem.
It _is_ reasonable to make urgent decisions on the basis of
relatively few assured facts, when they are all we have to
go on.  Ramsey's example was of a man walking along a
river-bank alerted to a drowning child.  Though the facts
alone--the current, the depth of the river, the child's
weight, the man's swimming ability, etc.--could never ac-
count for the reasons for making an attempt, Ramsey points
out that we would think someone distracted who did not act
to try to save the child.

Here is a situation in which human experience clearly
goes 'beyond the empirical data'.  Yet, in the example,
we find more than a broadened view of experience.  We find
a means of accepting both religious and moral discourse as
significant--for reasons which are both empirical and log-
ical.  Empirical, because in the moment of decision  the
man on the bank had experienced something beyond the 'flat
facts'.  Logical, because talk of such empirical situa-
tions could evoke response in its ability to disclose a
moral duty.

Solidly anchored as it is in human experience, the concept of disclosures could be demonstrated in a broad spectrum of human life. Ramsey writes of disclosures in mathematics, e.g. 1, 1 1/2, 1 2/3, 1 3/4, 1 4/5, ... discloses ... 2!, in geometry and visual perception, e.g. these twelve lines looking like two squares with joined corners,  suddenly take on depth and become a cube. (Note here the dependency upon Wittgenstein's seeing-as).

But the most fruitful for Ramsey's purposes were his examples of moral and personal disclosures. He describes the sort of disclosure given in learning someone's name:

> We may have had a great deal of what Russell would have called 'knowledge by description'. We may first have known him as the man in the bowler hat who came to sit next to us in the train. He then appears opposite us for lunch, and we begin to see him regularly. We now know him as the man who invariably orders 'Double Diamond'; the man who does the Times crossword in fifteen minutes; and as the weeks pass we come to know him as the man who has a wife and three children; too much herbaceous border to weed in the evenings, too few vegetables left after the frost, too little money left at the end of the month. But one day he says, offering his hand: "Look here--I'm Nigel Short.' At that moment there is a disclosure, an individual becomes a person, the ice does not continue to melt, it breaks. We have not discovered just one more fact to be added to those we have been collecting day by day. There has now been some significant 'encounter', which is not just a moving of palm on palm, no mere correlation of mouth noises, not just heads nodding in some kind of mutual harmony.5

With other examples of personal disclosure, he is able to draw together a number of loose strands. The connections between theological and ethical dimensions are

again brought home--as they were when the positivists

dispensed with metaphysics, theology, and ethics. Fur-

ther, Ramsey finds in moral disclosures fruitful situations

for describing disclosures of religious significance, or

'cosmic disclosures'. Pointing out that Kant had identi-

fied the call of duty and religious claims, Ramsey argues

that disclosures of morality within human experience also

allow for an empirically legitimate religious disclosure.

Finally, in the mixing of ethical and religious dis-

cernment, Ramsey found yet another strength in his disclo-

sure concept--one which is quite helpfully applied to a

perpetual sore-point for empiricists. This was the dis-

closure of one's subjectivity. All three elements--the

moral, the personal or subjective, and the religious--com-

bine beautifully in the story of David and Nathan. In

II Samuel 12.1-7 the prophet Nathan comes to David after

the king had attempted a cover-up. Nathan's words are

paraphrased by Ramsey:

> There are ... two men in the city; 'the one rich
> and the other poor'. The rich man has many
> flocks and herds; the poor man has nothing save
> one little ewe lamb. Along come the guests; the
> rich man hesitates to kill his own cattle; takes
> the poor man's lamb and prepares it for his
> great dinner. Here is an 'objective' story.
> Faced with the situation David judges that the
> man who did this is 'worthy to die' and 'shall
> restore the lamb four-fold'. So far the story
> is one which might have been told in a Law
> Court, and David has given an objective judge-
> ment on it ... So far the prophetic mission of
> Nathan is not obvious. The characteristic
> touch only comes in verse 7: 'Thou art the
> man.' The penny drops; there is indeed a dis-
> closure. David recognizes that the story is
> about none other than--himself. It is signi-
> ficant that at this point, when there has been

this disclosure, the language traditionally
used for prophetic insight becomes at once
appropriate currency; 'Thus saith the Lord.' (RL, p. 130)

The ethical disclosure--if we can divide a single

event for our present purposes--is obvious. David's ac-

tions are condemned by his own judgement. Ramsey discusses

the subjective disclosure at length in a number of writ-

ings. It is closely tied to his contributions to tracing

the logic of first person assertions (see below). For

the moment two related points need to be made; (1) in

Religious Language and elsewhere, Ramsey closely ties the

cosmic disclosure to a revealing commitment: "Whenever a

cosmic disclosure occurs ... I respond with a commitment,

a self-affirmation, I realize myself in that response."[6]

(2) This self-disclosure itself transcends the 'facts'.

In following a duty, seeing deeper into the 'facts' about

myself, in pursuing the elusive 'notion' of the one who

is the subject of my first-person statements, I discern a

'paradigm of mystery', logically irreducible because 'I'

is never exhaustively objectifiable.

In his idea of a cosmic disclosure, Ramsey believed

that the subject (me) was necessarily matched by an objec-

tive reference. This claim is based on the discernment

of being acted upon. "We may recall, for instance, that

David in the presence of Nathan came to himself subjec-

tively when there bore down upon him objectively, through

the parable or model that Nathan used, a moral challenge".[7]

It is essential to grasp the directional balance Ramsey

seeks to establish in his concept of disclosures. The

'objectivity' he is speaking of is not in the sense of empirical data—things and processes fit for scientific analysis—nor is it the 'objectivity' of statistics, social sciences, and unbiased reporting. "It is the objectivity of what declares itself to us—challenges us in a way that persons may do."[8] When he is talking about the subjectivity given in a disclosure, Ramsey tends to speak in terms of one's own identity being disclosed (to himself). In speaking of the objective reference of disclosures, he talks of an active reference confronting the person. (It is perhaps noteworthy that, as far as the subject is concerned, Ramsey's terminology varied slightly from the relatively interchangeable 'discernment', 'disclosure', and 'insight' of his early works, Religious Language and Models and Mystery, to the virtually exclusive use of 'disclosure'—the most mentally passive of the three terms—in later works such as Models for Divine Activity, and 'Facts and Disclosures'.)

This, then, is the rough picture of the concept of disclosures. Although part of its strength lies in Ramsey's unspoken ambiguity in those hazy areas 'whereof one cannot speak', it is inevitable that one should feel the need for more detail. What—if it is fair to ask—is the content of disclosures? What exactly are they; insight, intuition, a leap, imagination, a notion?

A fuller understanding of the concept can be obtained by seeing the ways in which Ramsey aligns 'disclosures' with the work of others. One example is the comparison of 'disclosure' and Berkeley's 'notion' found in the

article, "Berkeley and the Possibility of an Empirical
Metaphysics". For Berkeley all significant words stand for
ideas, and ideas were either from without, through the
senses, or from within, by the 'operations of the mind'.
But he was puzzled by this concept of the operations of
the mind. At first, in deference to Locke's rule for
significant words, he was tempted to reject these opera-
tions outright. But this would require the elimination of
many terms Berkeley wished to retain. The difficulty was
that for Berkeley ideas impressed themselves upon a strictly
passive mind; the concept of a passive idea of the mind's
activity was scandalous.

Ramsey wants to argue that Berkeley introduced the
concept 'notions' to cover these curious operations, but
that he lacked the logical equipment to state his position
clearly. Hence interest in this area, when 'notions' are
not summarily dismissed as an accident or eccentricity, has
centred upon notions of will, of loving, hating, etc., to
the neglect of operations of the mind. Building upon Berk-
eley's own defence of notions against attacks charging him
with metaphysical rubbish, Ramsey claims that 'notions'
help to bring out the logical oddness of personal activity
as contrasted with descriptive discourse about the con-
tent of ideas. Berkeley had stated that 'spirit' was not
repulsive in the way the 'substance' was, precisely be-
cause it was an activity. 'Person', 'will', 'loving', etc.
are all references to activity--notions are the notion each
of us has of his own activity.

The parallel with Ramsey can be made by referring back to his concept of self-disclosure. We become aware of the notion of our personal mental activity when, around 'ideas', we come to our self in disclosure. An adequate empiricism has not only to include its 'objects' with typically descriptive language, but must also be able to characterize each of us in the epistemologically, logically, and existentially curious 'fact' of our self given in an experience of self-disclosure.

Indeed Berkeley comes very close to stating that every sentence will exhibit both a descriptive and a notional logic--not, of course, in equal proportion at all times. There will be statements whose logic on the face of it are wholly descriptive: "There is a table", or "That table is brown". There will be others whose logic seems to be purely notional: "How nice." Nonetheless (and here is a typically tantalising Ramsey statement): "Notions and ideas were mutually implicating elements of every genuine assertion."[9] To follow the implications of such a comment (as I shall attempt to do below) would be to establish a personal activity in each and every statement, as Ramsey sets out in his discussions of strictly first person statements. It would be to establish a degree (however slight) of personal commitment in any empirical assertion. But Ramsey does not pursue this course.

A more recent thinker with whom the concept of disclosure has been discussed and defended is H. D. Lewis. In response to the question, "What do disclosures actually

disclose?", Ramsey argues that Lewis is concerned lest dis-
closures disclose nothing distinctively Christian, nothing
transcendent. He writes that the primary aim of his talk
of disclosures is "to indicate the kind of empirical ground-
ing which a phrase or sentence may have when it does not
work merely as a plain description ... (If it is a religious
assertion), ... we shall only know what it means when <u>inter
alia</u> a disclosure has occurred."[10] Here we have further
evidence that, to some extent, the concept of disclosures
functions linguistically as a criterion of meaning. As the
verification principle establishes the meaningfulness of
empirical assertions, so a religious assertion is justified
by its capacity to evoke a disclosure.

Secondly, Ramsey remarks that there is "a certain arbi-
trariness about the way in which we talk about what such a
disclosure discloses ... <u>talk</u> about the <u>object</u> of a disclo-
sure <u>always</u> comes within a contextual setting."[11] The
objective reference of cosmic disclosures is guaranteed,
self-authenticating; while of course the language used to
describe, refer to, communicate, praise the reference is
not.

> When a disclosure has occurred, we certainly
> cannot be mistaken about the objective refe-
> rence, the objectivity which has been disclosed.
> We cannot be mistaken about that 'something'
> which is other than ourselves. But we cer-
> tainly can be mistaken about the articulation
> of this which is objectively given. Indeed,
> I have been at pains to point out that there
> are no guaranteed articulations. In that
> sense, we can never be absolutely right about
> what a disclosure discloses.[12]

Certainly, as the context is widened, more and more mo-
dels, more diverse articulations of what has been disclosed

are possible. But for Ramsey, the objective reference
is a unity, some would say monolithic. Any diversity a
religious language might exhibit is due to the multiplicity
of contexts and models available, and not to its objective
reference. This is a strange and difficult-because-subtle
point. The undifferentiated quality of the referent is
(depending on one's viewpoint, but clearly for Ramsey) a
philosophical necessity. Any distinctions between various
objects of cosmic disclosures would create havoc for the
objectivity of what is disclosed. Further, the unity of
the objective reference proves to have serious implications
for the possibility of an empirical metaphysics. Diverse
phenomena and experience can be integrated under a single
comprehensive term such as the 'Absolute'. This integration
would be impossible to accomplish under a many-faceted uni-
fier.

This subtle relationship between diverse experience
and a cosmic disclosure is further defined by reference to
one final comment by which Ramsey hopes to allay Lewis'
fears. He writes that the situations to which he appeals
for the human experience which characterizes disclosure
situations are not finite, for "in every disclosure the
object can eventually bear the name 'God'." Whether or
not it is the man's responsibility to translate his 'cosmic'
experience into the name 'God', the corollary to this state-
ment is that God discloses himself through human disclosure
situations. Referring to a group discussion, Jerry Gill
writes that Ramsey states, "quite emphatically that cosmic

disclosures, which give rise to talk about God and His activity, are mediated by means of more common disclosures. He defined a cosmic disclosure in terms of discerning something about total reality through the disclosures of everyday life."[13]

One of the most illuminating (and intriguing) epistemological dialogues centred upon disclosures is found in Ramsey's contribution to Intellect and Hope, a collection of essays on Michael Polanyi. Although his essay is concerned to link the epistemological insights of Polanyi with J. L. Austin's linguistic work, my immediate purpose is to trace the relationships between Polanyi's thought and Ramsey's concept of disclosure. (I shall pick up the Austin parallels in the linguistic discussion).

There are, from the very first, some extremely promising similarities between these two thinkers. As Ramsey points out, it was Polanyi's intention to highlight those features of epistemology most neglected by the positivist reductionism. Both see the need for a broadened empiricism. Polanyi's distinctive contribution to epistemology is to describe the activity of knowing (as opposed to knowledge in some static sense--whatever that might mean) as, "a personal participation of the knower in all acts of understanding."[14]

Ramsey introduces Polanyi's example of the knowing activity in the case of a psychiatrist who showed his students a patient having a mild epileptic fit. The class was to decide if it was a genuine or a hystero-epileptic fit.

The psychiatrist concluded the discussion: "Gentlemen, you have seen a true epileptic seizure. I cannot tell you how to recognize it; you will learn this by more extensive experience."

The psychiatrist knew the disease, as shown by his ability to recognize a genuine fit, but he did not know how he did this. He recognized it, argues Polanyi, by attending to its totality while relying on a multitude of particular, unspecifiable clues. As he is only subsidiarly aware of these, he is not able to be explicit about them. There are no exactly specifiable criteria. But that he knows the disease is clear from his confident, and verified, assertion, "you have seen a true epileptic seizure."

In other words there is an awareness of particulars underlying our comprehension of some entity in some way distinct from its parts. Here we see an obvious parallel to the perceptual disclosure patterns offered by Ramsey. Like the twelve straight lines, or two squares with joined corners, which disclose depth and a cube, Polanyi takes the perception of a comprehensive whole as one of his examples. There is, however, a significant difference in the two thinkers' treatment of the epistemological phenomenon. Like Polanyi, Ramsey acknowledges his debt to 'Gestalt' psychology. But in contrast to Polanyi, who offers the evidence drawn from Gestalt to support his case, Ramsey includes a rather lengthy section, (in Religious Language) to anticipate any charges of mere psychology or 'subjectivism':

Let me remark in parenthesis that by giving
Gestalt examples to afford a parallel to
situations of religious discernment, I am
not implying that religion is 'purely subjec-
tive' or a mere matter for psychology. I do
not know what a 'purely subjective' experi-
ence is--all experience is _of_ something; and
as for psychology--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 unim-
portant. Certainly I am appealing to sit-
uations of which we may all become aware.
But that does not make them 'subjective',
and far from being a theological liability,
I should have thought it was an asset for
theological apologetic to be able to make
some sort of empirical appeal. (pages 26-27)

Polanyi, on the other hand, quotes the findings of

Gestalt at length to buttress his analysis:

Gestalt psychology has demonstrated that we
may know a physiognomy by integrating our
awareness of its particulars without being
able to identify these particulars, and my
analysis of knowledge is closely linked to
this discovery of Gestalt psychology. But
I shall attend to aspects of Gestalt which
have been hitherto neglected. Gestalt psych-
ology has assumed that perception of a physi-
ognomy takes place through the spontaneous
equilibration of its particulars impressed
on the retina or on the brain. However, I
am looking at Gestalt, on the contrary, as
the outcome of an active shaping of experi-
ence performed in the pursuit of knowledge.
This shaping or integrating I hold to be
the great and indispensible tacit power by
which all knowledge is discovered, and, once
discovered, is held to be true. The struc-
ture of Gestalt is then recast into a logic
of tacit thought, and this changes the
range and perspective of the whole subject.
The highest forms of integration loom lar-
gest now.[15]

Whereas Gestalt psychology furnishes Ramsey with a

single incidental example, it forms something of an empir-

ical foundation for Polanyi's epistemological explorations.

As the perceptual phenomena in Gestalt testify, a comprehension of some whole is possible apart from a specifiable knowledge of the parts. Polanyi sees a far broader application of this fact than Ramsey. As Polanyi states on the preceding page, the activity of integration occupies a central position in his interpretation of knowing. Although his theoretical debts do lie elsewhere, the parallels to Berkeley's notions of operations of the mind must be mentioned. The particulars stressed by the positivists are only the beginning of the act of knowing. Such particulars are clues, pointing the operations of the mind to the comprehension of a whole, pointing in Ramsey's terms to a disclosure.

Ramsey believes that the concept of disclosure is absolutely necessary for Polanyi's case, if he is to avoid charges that what he calls the central act of knowing is merely a psychological oddity. Polanyi gives the example of a performer's art and the difficulties involved in learning a new skill. The performer relies upon a tacit (unspecifiable) knowledge of the component muscular acts to perform the skill. Whether in sports such as cricket or swimming, or in arts like music or ballet, the artist depends upon 'indwelling' (or in sociologists' terms, 'interiorization'), i.e. an empathy or assimilation of an act's component parts. Polanyi writes that the learner "must try to combine mentally the movements which the performer combines practically and he must combine them in a pattern similar to the performer's pattern of movements.

Two kinds of indwelling meet here. The performer co-
ordinates his moves by dwelling in them as parts of his
body, while the watcher tries to correlate these moves by
seeking to dwell in them from the outside. He dwells in
these moves by interiorizing them. By such exploratory
indwelling the pupil gets the feel of a master's will ..."16
To again combine Ramsey's and Polanyi's terms, a tacit
awareness of the component parts by indwelling is a pre-
requisite of the disclosure of the new skill.

Polanyi points out that any skill can be paralyzed by
attending focally to its particulars. Although it will be
beneficial in the long run, breaking a difficult passage
of music into its components temporarily destroys its com-
prehensive significance. Breaking a statement into its
component phonemes destroys the meaning of the whole;
graphically: a-t-t-e-n-d-i-n-g t-o e-a-c-h c-o-m-p-o-n-e-n-t
l-e-t-t-e-r o-f a w-o-r-d b-r-e-a-k-s t-h-e c-o-m-p-r-e-
h-e-n-s-i-o-n o-f t-h-e a-s-s-e-r-t-i-o-n. In cricket,
attending to the movements of the bat means that the com-
prehensive act--hitting the ball--is disrupted.

The difference between Ramsey and Polanyi begins to
tell at this point. And, to supply a clue for the follow-
ing, the distinction I wish to draw arises in reference to
the vectorial or directional bias of disclosure/comprehen-
sion. Polanyi's position can be more clearly established
in his description of scientific discovery. Neither the
empiricist nor rationalist traditions deal adequately with
the epistemological problems of discovery. Polanyi is

fascinated by the problem set by Plato in his <u>Meno</u>: To
search for the solution to a problem is absurd. If you do
not know the solution, you do not know where to find it,
and cannot expect to find anything. If you do know what
you are looking for, then there is no problem. Plato's
solution--if it can be called that--is that all knowledge
is the remembering of past lives.

The answer for Polanyi lies in his concept of tacit
knowledge. The discovery of new comprehensive entities is
dependent upon the indwelling or tacit awareness of
unspecifiable particulars. The 'hunch' is fed by what
Polanyi has called 'heuristic cravings', the desire to
integrate, to tie things together. "Only connect ... "
(E. M. Forster). Our passion for an integration is in turn
matched by intimations of an undisclosed coherence of pre-
viously unrelated things. This passion serves to nurture
the heuristic connections necessary for the discovery of
a new comprehensive entity.

Thomas Torrance has written of this process of dis-
covery:

> It is essentially an <u>intuitive insight</u>, the
> insight of a mind informed by intuitive con-
> tact with reality ... ('indwelling') ... What
> Polanyi intends by 'foreknowledge', then, is
> what the Greeks called <u>prolepsis</u>, a proleptic
> conception, an anticipatory glimpse, a tenuous
> and subtle outreach of the understanding with
> a forward thrust in cognition of something
> quite new. In the on-going process of inquiry
> it is an incipient knowing, in which the in-
> timation of the coherence of hitherto not com-
> prehended particulars...is at work: and there-
> fore Polanyi can speak of it as a prior tacit
> knowing leading to explicit knowledge ... the
> foreknowledge with which scientific inquiry

> operates is an intuitive anticipation of a
> hitherto unknown pattern...which arises com-
> pellingly in our minds under the surprizing
> disclosure and intrinsic claim of the subject
> matter. It is an authentically heuristic act
> in which the understanding leaps across a
> logical gap in the attainment of a new con-
> ception, and then guided by an intuitive sur-
> mise evoked by that conception probes through
> deepening coherences to lay bare the structure
> of the reality being investigated.[17]

In an article in Religious Studies, Jerry Gill has

specified the differences between the act of integration

and inference, although he confesses that there is some

ambiguity here as witnessed by the opposing interpreta-

tions of Torrance and Harry Prosch. In contrast to the

process of inference, integration is an act. This can be

seen in two aspects: (1) As inference is a process, one

can pursue it in steps, leaving it aside temporarily, etc.

In contrast, the spontaneous integration is an act; it

more closely corresponds to Ramsey's disclosures. (2) Be-

cause of its step-by-step process, inference can be reversed.

One can retrace one's path, follow the logic, see how one

got from A to B. Integration, however, is not reversible;

or at least, not in the sense of the inferential process.

It has the character of Ryle's 'got-it' verbs. It would

be as if one would attempt to forget the disclosure and

examine the situation anew, without the perspective of the

disclosure. As Polanyi points out, when the perceptual

'disclosure' has been shown, it is irreversible. One can-

not return to the 'innocence' of seeing the figure as

only a duck, or as only twelve connected lines.

This is not to say that one cannot return to give ex-

plicit attention to the component parts--as the pianist

does when he or she slows a phrase down to indwell the
fingering, or as the cricketer in the nets attends to the
movements of his bat. Indeed, Polanyi writes about the
oscillation between the objects of our awareness, our ex-
plicit attention. In literary criticism, for example,
attending to minute detail obviously destroys the compre-
hensive meaning in an effort to examine more closely the
particulars. But it also supplies us with more material
with which to guide further comprehensive knowing. As the
pianist returns to the whole piece his or her ability to
interpret and communicate its aesthetic qualities will be
helped by the dissection. As the cricketer returns to the
pitch, his (or her) batting in all its comprehensiveness will
be improved. But the point of the return to 'the basics',
the particulars, is its role in the extension of the compre-
hension. In direct opposition to the thesis of the posi-
tivists, Polanyi writes, "The belief that, since particulars
are more tangible, their knowledge offers a true conception
of things is fundamentally mistaken."[18]

Polanyi has here hit upon something rather crucial to
our current purpose. He has distinguished tangibility from
'a true conception of things', thereby casting doubt upon a
basic--and mistaken--foundation of the positivists; one
which, significantly, Ramsey shares with the positivists.
The positivists founded their certainty upon the sense-data;
their objectivity rests partly upon an incorrigible base
in observable data. Ramsey attempts to broaden this re-
strictive certainty with his disclosure concept. It is,

for Ramsey, a _disclosure_ which is the basis of certainty.
As we have seen (particularly in his dialogue with H. D.
Lewis), the disclosure is certain, while the articulation
of that objective reference is never absolute, always rela-
tive to the context, always susceptible to faults.

In contrast, Polanyi's comprehension, his integrative
acts, are always corrigible. Not all acts of integration
are veridical; and indeed, those that are certain always
bring with them unforeseeable implications--they come preg-
nant with possibilities to go beyond, to use the compre-
hended entity as a new particular of which we are focally
aware as we once again turn our proleptic sights on dis-
covery. Polanyi's integrations are corrigible; Ramsey's
disclosures are not. Polanyi argues that all claims must
vindicate themselves in shared experience. Recalling (for
me at least) Ramsey's comment about Berkeley's notions:[19]
"Notions and ideas were mutually implicating elements of
every genuine assertion", Polanyi writes that the personal
participation in each assertion varies greatly, e.g. from
the extremely personal, 'How nice!' to the relatively
impersonal, 'There is a table'! "We can distinguish in
everything we know some relatively objective fact supporting
a supervening personal fact."[20] This is of course implied
in Polanyi's attempt to define knowing in terms of a 'per-
sonal participation of the knower in all acts of under-
standing.' But either: (1) Polanyi had not expressed him-
self on the extent of the implications of personal knowledge,
or (2) Ramsey did not sufficiently grasp these implications,

or (3) Ramsey disagreed with Polanyi on the issue of the
foundations of objectivity.

Possibilities (2) and (3) are favoured by Ramsey's
clearest statement of his difficulties with Polanyi. Quot-
ing from a section on the role of the tacit awareness and
the active foreknowledge of an undisclosed reality, Ramsey
responds:

> Here he _seems_ to be giving us dubious psych-
> ology masquerading as metaphysics, and in a
> way which, to some degree, confuses logical
> and temporal sequence. What are these 'tacit
> powers' or this 'active foreknowledge of an
> unknown reality' or 'comprehensive entities'?
> My suggestion is that we can avoid these curious
> and perhaps puzzling phrases, we can avoid this
> puzzling mixture of psychology, epistemology,
> and metaphysics when we recognize that the
> point--or so I am suggesting--of all these re-
> marks is that the disclosure which 'compre-
> hension' involves may well precede, even if
> they more often follow, their spelling out
> in terms of some particular clues or features,
> and that this may often be the case in scien-
> tific discovery. Beyond this I do not think
> we need attach much importance to the temporal
> sequence.
>
> Perhaps, then the only point at issue here is
> that a disclosure will not always have the
> spectacular character of a 'flash', it may
> just be a 'becoming aware' in some rather
> more decisive way, what Polanyi calls in a
> passage I have already quoted 'focally atten-
> ding'. But nothing of this need suppose, I
> would say, a prior and tacit awareness.
> (pp. 182-183)

In this passage Ramsey _seems_ to have confused Polan-
yi's necessary vectorial character of knowing with a logi-
cal (inferential) or temporal sequence. The point is
really not so simple as the difference between a 'flash'
or 'penny-dropping' and a gradual awakening, a 'light
dawning', although it is at least that. But it is made

more difficult by their similarities:  the light dawns by gradual comprehension relying on indwelling; the penny drops in moments of illumination, in the sudden act of integration.

But Ramsey does not see the necessity of subsidiary, unspecifiable particulars, tacit knowledge, to the active comprehension of a whole or a previously unknown reality. "It is when 'knowledge of particulars', attention to details or clues leads to a disclosure that comprehension occurs, something which is not 'merely' psychological, and something which by its disclosure character safeguards the objective reference of what discloses itself to us."(p. 183) In short, while disclosure demands a response it is passive. While comprehension relies upon unspecifiable clues, it is active. Epistemologically, tacit knowledge fills out the picture of disclosure  by describing in depth their basis in experience.  But Ramsey must also accept the corrigibility of the disclosure (at least the non-cosmic variety). Further, there is here a broadening of Ramsey's own empiricism by the recognition of the variegation of the inexpressible.  On the other hand, the disclosure concept, instead of providing a way for Polanyi's odd epistemology to find sympathy with the positivists--if such a thing were conceivable--fills out the passive elements of the knowing process.  In more precise terms, Ramsey's insistence that persons and God disclose themselves to us, that we come to a disclosure in a realization of ourselves being acted upon, the 'objectivity of what declares itself to us',

corresponds nicely to Polanyi's more active view of the search for truth. That this degree of passivity is agreeable to Polanyi is given in his introduction to The Tacit Dimension. "I have shown that any attempt to avoid the responsibility for shaping beliefs which we accept as true is absurd; but the existentialist claim of choosing our beliefs from zero is now proved absurd too. Thought can live only on grounds which we adopt in the service to a reality to which we submit."21

Before turning to the final dialogue in which the concept of disclosure can be illuminated (this time in an analytic sense), I shall briefly mention Ramsey's relationship to what some would see as the opposite extreme from the positivists. This is the attempt to stress my responsibility in the face of those who would evacuate knowing of any commitment, any morality, any personal involvement. As we have seen the positivist case is dependent upon empirical blinkers, eliminating shared human experience, and concentrating only upon the more tangible sense data.

Commenting on the 'correspondence theory' of truth, viz. that a belief is true when there is a corresponding fact and false when no such fact exists, Polanyi asserts that there is an obvious contradiction here because such a noncommital definition denies the commitment of the asserter to the very proposition. A similar theory of truth was attacked by the short-lived author, Johannes Climacus, in the Concluding Unscientific Postscript:

> Whether truth is defined more empirically,
> as the conformity of thought and being, or
> more idealistically, as the conformity of
> being with thought, it is in either case,
> important carefully to note what is meant
> by being...If being ... is understood as
> empirical being, truth is at once trans-
> formed into a _desideratum_, and everything
> must be understood in terms of becoming; for
> the empirical object is unfinished and the
> existing cognitive spirit is itself in pro-
> cess of becoming. Thus the truth becomes an
> approximation whose beginning cannot be pos-
> ited absolutely, precisely because the con-
> clusion is lacking, the effect of which is
> retroactive.[22]

This perspective, that certainty cannot be defined

empirically since the entity is always unfinished and the

'cognitive spirit' is (inevitably) existing, holds that

truth must correspond to existence, activity, thinking,

living. Although this viewpoint is somewhat of a polar

opposite to positivism, it is not something which Ramsey

ignores; nor is the view unrevealing about the status of

disclosures. The key area of commonality is to be found

in the concept of self-disclosure. As we realize our

selves in our responses to moral situations and in the

commitment we make in reply to the disclosures, we approach

that authentic existence prized by the existentialists.

In The Flies Jean-Paul Sartre caricatures a society

whose people are barely existing because they have evaded

all responsibility, all personal decision. The target of

his satire is rather obviously Christianity, but it might

as well have been the rigorous empiricists who seek to

avoid any personal involvement by denying the importance

of commitment and responsible decision in their discipline;

and further, in life. The escape from ethical responsi-

bility, attacked by the existentialists, is as true of
those theologians who hold a positivistic propositional
view, with revealed commandments about tooth-brushing, as
it is of those who try to deny decision any more signifi-
cance than a 'mere matter of taste.' Those who worship at
the pedestal of objectivity do so partly because they long
for the burden of freedom and responsibility to be lifted.
They have long ago given up the attempt to find a guaran-
teed 'ought' within their meagre and microscopic 'is'.
This evasion of personal responsibility having failed, they
can only (passionately) deny the existence--or signifi-
cance--of the will, morality, and, oddly, of passion.

Although he would presumably not press the issue to
this extent, the self-involvement claimed by a disclosure,
the basic role of personal situations in his examples of
disclosures, and (as we shall see in our discussion of
models) the ways in which a disclosure can be seen as a
personal appropriation of that which we believe all wit-
ness to the sympathies with existentialist thought in
Ramsey's theoretical work. Nor are the constricting faults
of the positivists left unmentioned. In an uncharacteris-
tically ascerbic passage Ramsey writes:

> ... Not being content with an objective ref-
> erence whose expression was problematical,
> those who have worshipped sense-data have
> not only sponsored a common sense dogmatism
> styled in the idiom of perception language,
> they have wanted the language to correspond
> with certainty to indubitable units of the
> universe. All we need do to reach the posi-
> tion of some theologians is to read for
> 'sense-data', 'God'.[23]

It is true that he spent far more time defending his position against charges of mere subjectivity than he did arguing for the subjectivity inherent in the empiricist's scientific commitment. But the existentialist element is revealed in such works as Freedom and Immortality, and 'The Systematic Elusiveness of "I"'.

When we turn to the analytic applications of his disclosure concept, we find Ramsey on much surer ground. In an address given to the Aristotelian Society in January, 1972, Ramsey examined the use of the word 'fact'.[24] He begins by noting the difficulties between theology and philosophy which arise when philosophy wants to ask, "Is it or is it not a fact that Jesus ascended?" For their part, theologians sometimes speak of 'facts' as if there were two levels, ordinary and religious. For empiricists like Ayer this is nonsense: there are 'facts' about sense-data, and any other use of 'fact' is merely for convenience' sake.

Warnock, in elucidating Berkeley's position, argued that immediacy, certainty can be found only in the colours, shapes, sounds, etc. we perceive, as opposed to any inferences from these. He uses the example of seeing a book to claim that there is something more fundamental than seeing the book. The entire range of colours and shapes is more immediately sensed than the book. Future study might reveal that what I had seen was not a book, but it cannot be doubted that I saw the colours and shapes, etc. This recalls for Ramsey the search of Bertrand Russell for

something immediate, fundamental. This is the origin of the phrase 'sense-data' in The Problems of Philosophy. In 'there is a table' the table itself is not known immediately but must be inferred from the sense-data. In contrast, J. L. Austin thinks such 'progressive hedging'--to go from the ordinary statement 'there is a table' to some more basic idiom--is incredible. He takes seriously the slogan of taking ordinary language as his basis, and refutes the tendency to find a more basic paradigm for all speech.[25]

At this point, Ramsey proposes that what is given immediately is a disclosure of objectivity, an objective reference. He points out that this is what Russell himself works for in his 'story' of the table. He points to the table, invites us to come closer, to observe the texture, the shades of colour, the shape, closer and closer until ... there is a disclosure. What Austin calls progressive hedging seems to Ramsey to be good philosophical method.

But on the other hand, Ramsey refuses to push the objective reference as far as Russell, Warnock, Ayer, and others do. He takes Austin's point that we seek in vain for an infallible language--one which corresponds with certainty to indubitable units of the universe. This view takes some statements as incorrigible accounts of an objective reference. Against this Ramsey asserts that this confounds the certainty of the objective reference, the immediacy of the disclosure, with the relevant and more reliable assertions. As we have seen he sees the

certainty as given _only_ in the disclosure, and the articulation of it relative to context and often problematical.

To return this discussion to the term 'fact', any appeal to the 'fact x' refers to a situation in which some objective reference is given immediately, in a disclosure. In response, we are willing to take the assertion, p as in 'as a matter of fact, p' as an accurate account of the sensible phenomena characterizing the situation in which the disclosure was given.

Ramsey turns to the attempt of P. R. Strawson to clarify the meaning of 'fact' by distinguishing between 'facts' and 'things'. Strawson speaks of a cat on the mat who has mange, in which the cat is the thing, and the mange is a fact. He tries to separate what sentences are _about_ from what they state. The sentence, 'The cat has mange' states the 'fact' of the mange. The sentence is about the 'thing' the cat. Strawson argues that while facts are states of affairs, or features, they are not things-in-the-world; they lack ontological independence. In direct opposition to the early Wittgenstein, Strawson comments, "The world is a totality of things, not facts."[26]

Austin, in _Unfair to Facts_, thinks this is ridiculous. How can Strawson argue that the mange is not some 'thing-in-the-world'? "Phenomena, events, situations, states of affairs are commonly supposed to be genuinely in-the-world, and even Strawson admits they are so."[27] But this response conceals the question of reference

which Strawson wants very much to keep precise. Ramsey strikes a conciliatory position between them which turns out to be a necessary development of both their points.

He points out that talk of 'fact' necessarily involves some 'existential claim', by which I take him to mean that the asserter of a 'fact' appeals for agreement on some state of affairs, merely by using the word 'fact'. The 'thing' by virtue of its ontological independence, its being-in-the-world, needs no such validation. Things give sentences objective reference, whereas an appeal to 'fact' forms an existential claim to recognize some state of affairs, some features contingent upon things-in-the-world. Following this line of thought, it should not be difficult to see where disclosures fit in. Austin needs disclosures to ground his sentences which state features, matters of 'fact' states of affairs, in things-in-the-world, to tie 'facts' to their objective referents. The logic of fact discourse is to make a claim for objective reference. But this requires some kind of minimum context, some state of affairs.

Hence, if existents, or things, are taken as everything which is particularized, individuated, then assertions about the things will, at some point, evoke a disclosure. This disclosure will provide Strawson with the objective reference his 'things' need. But Ramsey is not content to simply mediate. He attempts to develop the theological and metaphysical implications of this middle position between Austin and Strawson--to draw out the connections between disclosures and existents.

Strawson talks of persons and things as basic units
of individuation. Around the bodily actions, observable
behaviour of persons, an objective reference is disclosed.
As I know myself--and even Russell talks about the direct
acquaintance which one can have of himself--in moments of
self-disclosure, we can take persons as an irreducible
being-in-the-world. Ramsey goes further and argues that
we can talk reasonably about acquaintance with other per-
sons. A finite individuation is disclosed around thoughts,
perceptions, actions--there is a disclosure of other per-
sons' identities.

But, argues Ramsey, the same can hardly be said for
things. How could a plurality of things disclose one
existent, one objective reference? Hence, this referent
has no easy characterizations, can never be articulated
in the same flat descriptive manner as tables, cats,
things-in-the-world. Like one's own person, it cannot
be further specified.

> My conclusion then is that the objective refer-
> ence 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 'appearance'.
> 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 disclo-
> sure of the one individuation, the one objec-
> tive referent...[28]

It is in this sense, then, that we can understand this
comment to H. D. Lewis, "in every disclosure the object
can eventually bear the name God." It also brings together

two lingering questions. The experience of disclosure
has seemed either too commonplace to disclose God or too
exceptional to do justice to the whole of religious exper-
ience. Secondly, the 'objective referent' of the cosmic
disclosure has seemed too monolithc. Even if a Christian
does not want to talk in terms of disclosures of God's
goodness, his righteousness, his love, etc., he will prob-
ably want to insist on disclosures of Father, Son, and
Spirit.

Are disclosures not too odd, too rare, an experience
to do justice to Christian experience? In the first
place, this question has lost track of the original pur-
pose of the disclosure concept. It is a means of estab-
lishing the meaningfulness of religious language by
elucidating the epistemology of faith. But the question
also fails to see the commonplace experience of 'the ex-
istential claim of facts' which is itself a disclosure.
We see the fact of the cat's mange around the objective
referent--the cat; we see that 'that dot on the post-card
is where I live' in a disclosure of the object of my home,
etc. The further problem, that disclosures are now too
commonplace is the perpetual task of theological dis-
course: to so describe the commonplace that it 'comes
alive', 'takes on depth'. Few would believe that a mangy
cat could disclose the transcendent God--until in the hands
of Christopher Smart 'Jeffrey' becomes an occasion for
a celebration of God's presence.

As to the second question--is not the disclosure
concept too monolithic?--the Austin/Strawson discussion
is again helpful. As persons and things are different
from states of affairs, so God is different from goodness,
love, righteousness, etc. What is disclosed by the use
of qualified models like 'omniscient', 'omnipresent', etc.
is not the extent of God's knowledge or his spatial aspects,
but God himself. In the same way, seeing 'Tom' giving a
child a sweet is not a disclosure of 'Tom's' goodness--it
is a disclosure of the person 'Tom' around the 'fact' of
his goodness. This insight into religious language will
have implications in the theological section to follow.
The disclosure is of the referent 'God' around the 'facts'
of his relations with us.[29]

Ramsey concludes with some sweeping statements of the
applications of disclosures: The is/ought dichotomy, seen
as the ways in which facts give rise to disclosures of
values, allows room for disclosures to mediate. Value
arises around facts and is, Ramsey argues, disclosure-
given. Likewise the fact/interpretation dichotomy of his-
torical studies is informed by the mediation of disclosures.
Ramsey claims that the 'facts' are 'free', i.e. waiting to
be organized in one way or another. Facts never include
a guaranteed interpretative scheme of that which is objec-
tively given. In relation to religious language, it must
be seen as an endeavour to point to that which is more
than the facts and features of the world. When a claim
for objectivity occurs around a disclosure, we can speak

of a religious 'fact'.  In so far as what is disclosed
will always go beyond the facts and features, it is rightly
called metaphysical.  But through the concept of disclo-
sures, Ramsey has grounded the metaphysical in the empir-
ical, and extended the empirical to the vision of "some-
thing which stands beyond, behind, and within, the passing
flux of immediate things, something which is real, and yet
waiting to be realized, something which is a remote possi-
bility and yet the greatest of present facts..."30

## Qualified Models

Closely tied to Ramsey's concept of disclosures is
his interpretation of the use of models. The relations
between the two are most comprehensively set out in Models
and Mystery, presented in January, 1963 as the Whidden Lec-
tures. His purpose is to establish the common uses of
models in theology and science. He relies heavily upon
the insights of Max Black,[1] who distinguishes two types of
models used in science. In what Black calls 'scale' models,
our purpose is to reproduce, in a relatively manipulable or
accessible embodiment, selected features of the original phe-
nomenon. Ramsey refers to this type as a 'picturing' model,
because ideally it is a replica, a copy, e.g., a model rail-
way, or an architect's model. It enables us to bring the
very large or small to a middle-sized and workable scale.

But beyond this picture model is another type, less
workable, not as precise or descriptive, but nonetheless
more appropriate to the mystery of the universe. This is
not to imply that picture models are obsolete or have no
advantages over the second type, which Black labels the
'analogue' model. Obviously picture models are more pre-
cise, allowing for clearer articulation. Secondly, being
replicas, picture models reproduce important and relevant
properties of the original phenomena. Hence such models
are well-favoured by many scientists who seek exactness.

But such precise modelling can also be distortive. As
Black points out too large a model of the common house-fly

will distort its aero-dynamics and the picture model will
never get off the ground. But any 'luggage-tag' applica-
tion of picture models (depending upon only one model for
each phenomenon, applying model to original in a one-to-one
correspondence) is equally precluded by the very diversity
of models. There are, for example, two models of light:
is it a wavelike phenomenon, or more like a flow of part-
icles?

Turning to theological method, Ramsey wonders if the-
ology has ever depended upon picture models exclusively.
It is a matter for debate whether the early understandings
of God as 'Father', 'Judge', 'Shepherd', 'King', etc. were
flatly descriptive in the picturing sense of models. But
as in science, the complementarity, the compatibility of
models is essential. The only other alternative for the-
ology seems to be silence, mysticism--witnessing to the
inexpressible:  for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth;
therefore let thy words be few.  (Eccl. 5.2)

But the possibility which Ramsey wants to sponsor is
built around the second model concept of Black; the 'ana-
logue' model.  Where scale models rely upon identity,
analogue models attempt to reproduce the structure, to
draw parallels between models and original phenomenon by
isomorphism.  Black writes:

> An analogue object is some material object sys-
> tem, or process designed to reproduce as faith-
> fully as possible in some new medium the structure
> or web of relationship in an original ... The
> crucial difference between the two types of
> models is in the corresponding methods of
> interpretation..."[2]

Ramsey prefers to use the term 'disclosure' models,
arguing that the structural similarity, the isomorphism,
the echo of the original--which denies exact picture re-
production--such similarity-with-a-difference evokes a dis-
closure, an insight, a situation where the 'light dawns'.
Ramsey claims that it is disclosure models which science
is increasingly dependent upon in its methodology. He
supports this argument with three theoretical advantages
of disclosure models: (1) It is characteristic of scien-
tific models that they enable a theory, a deductive system,
and/or a mathematical treatment to be given in respect to
previously unmapped phenomena. (2) A theory may be so
complex as to bewilder, making articulation difficult. In
mathematical terms, such a theory can result in equations
which do not easily admit of solutions. In this case a
disclosure model, which focuses upon the fundamental no-
tions of the insight into the phenomenon, helps to clarify
the awkward articulation. (3) Sometimes a theory is re-
quired about a phenomenon too big, too far away, too small,
etc., to be testable. In these cases models can usefully
serve as representative of, or proxy for, such phenomena.

In either the picture model or the disclosure type,
it is their articulation possibilities which are the cri-
teria for good models. In contrast to the precision of
the picture model, however, the disclosure models are
necessarily tentative. Thus where exactness is highly
valued, picture models are preferred. This attitude does
not mean that, being more tentative, disclosure models

should be discarded. Leo Apostel argues that the function of models is to serve as a bridge between theory and observation. Ramsey points out that this bridge must be clearly seen as two diverse types. As bridges between theory and observation, picture and disclosure models serve separate and equally essential tasks.

Beyond precision, then, some criteria for the adequacy of models must be found. In part, this measure is related to the reference of each particular model. A model will be more reliable, the better it echoes, or chimes in with, the phenomenon it portrays. Models are born in some insight when the universe discloses itself. Models are best when they are isomorphous with the phenomena. Ramsey comments, "In this way the universe itself authenticates a model."[3] Further, in scientific terms the model is best which is most prolific in generating deductions which are open to verification or falsification.

Here Ramsey draws a far-reaching parallel between theological and scientific uses of models. In theology, models can be seen as builders of discourse. In the diverse events and concepts surrounding the life of Jesus, models like Logos and Messiah emerged to focus subsequent discourse. Just as science uses models to clarify bewildering theories or mathematically difficult equations, theological models can be used to clarify logically awkward discourse, e.g., talk about atonement or grace, etc. Thirdly, models in theology can disclose what is otherwise inexpressible. Where knowledge by descriptive,

straightforward language eludes us, disclosure models often work effectively.

Likewise the criteria for models in science and theology are to some extent parallel. Theological models must chime in with the phenomena which gave rise to the insight or disclosure. In order to reasonably use the model of a loving father, the universe must disclose itself in a way characteristic of loving fathers. But in contrast to the ease with which scientific models can be applied to experimentation, a theological model is not to be judged by its capacity to generate testable, verifiable deductions or predictions. The distinguishing mark of theological models is that they are judged by their ability to cover a broad range of events, phenomena, situations by their capacity to consistently incorporate diverse aspects of life, rather than by the more precise criteria of scientific models. Such a model is not to find its value in experiment, but in 'harmonising whatever events are to hand'. Ramsey terms this broader sense of verification, 'empirical fit', because it is more like the fitting of a shoe than the more precise 'true' or 'false' of scientific method.

The concept of empirical fit will be given fuller attention below. Such a criterion would, of course, be completely unacceptable to those imprisoned within the circumspect ontology of the positivists. If scientific methodology is taken as the norm for all of human existence, the tentativeness of such confirmation of models rules out the

possibility of theological, but also most disclosure models. Here is an aspect of his thought which clearly demonstrates the tight interweaving of Ramsey's theoretical bases. If empirical fit can stand as a fruitful criterion of disclosure models in theology, Ramsey's broader empiricism has a chance of being a reasonable approach to human existence. Complementing this, the broadened empiricism Ramsey has attempted to establish fully supports the less exact fitting of models he is defending.

In any case, a more general focus for parallels between theology and science can be found in the ontological commitment of their models. This is to hold that the model which is used accurately articulates in some way or other the phenomenon it is designed to disclose. Models in science not only lead to experiments; theological models not only lead to empirical fit; both methods rely upon models which rise out of, and become currency for, a moment of disclosure. Ramsey writes that those scientists who sought ontological commitment in the nineteenth century were on the right track. They were wrong only in seeking to find the accurate articulation in descriptive terms alone.

It is clear, however, that the ontological commitment must break down for those philosophers of science who degrade disclosure or analogue models in their quest for exactitude. Few have faced up to the impoverished, inadequate (and inaccurate) ontology exclusive reliance upon picture models would require. Ramsey mentions the viewpoint of the French physicist, Duhem, who writes of the electrostatic action

model of Faraday that such models were "not built for the satisfying of reason but for the pleasure of the imagination."[4] Against such a view, Black argues for the need of imagination in science.

Ramsey wishes to go further to establish a genuine ontological status for models. Beyond the role of models to point to the need for insight and imagination, the ontological character of their reference calls for the recognition of greater status. In one sense they refer to the observable events in which they **either are** verified or find their empirical fit. But they also arise out of, and become currency for, the insight or disclosure. "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."[5] In other words, models are not so much picture miniatures or replicas, as pointers to mystery. With models, both science and religion attempt to reach out and understand in their distinct ways what is ultimately mysterious.

> "The cost to the scientist is that he must be ready to allow an ultimately mysterious and elusive character to that which he essays to understand; the cost to the theologian is that he must be ready to live with and to make do with theological uncertainties."[6]

Turning to the social science, Ramsey believes that the concept of disclosure models could serve as an 'eirenicon' between those who try to emphasize the human character of social sciences, and those who stress science and seek to model social science after the natural sciences. Here Ramsey

is especially dependent upon Peter Winch. Ramsey cites
the view of Richard C. Atkinson, who advocates the supre-
macy of mathematical models for the social sciences. He
begins by denying that the social sciences are distinct
from the natural sciences because of their subject matter.
Atkinson argues from three basic concepts: stimulus, re-
sponse, and reinforcement. He believes that the proper,
mathematical usage of these concepts in psychology could
greatly benefit the social sciences by making them more
precise. 'Stimulus' is conceived of as any environmental
event acting upon an organism. 'Response' is the act or
movement by which the organism being observed reacts. 'Re-
inforcement' is any environmental event which increases the
likelihood of the response's being repeated.

But the critics of such an approach rightly show those
things which the mathematical method neglects, those dis-
tinctions which it eclipses. To speak of a response as
'an act or movement', for example, is a crude equation of
'act' and 'movement'. To use the term 'act' implies parti-
cipation of the actor; it implies intent, interpretation of
the possible means to accomplish an intention, etc. This
is quite distinct from 'movement' which is extremely appro-
priate for an observational study: movements can be ob-
served, categorized, and to some extent, measured, pre-
dicted, even forced. But the term 'movement' does not in
itself distinguish human from rat. Likewise the word
'organism'. In psychology, this often stands for 'human
being'. Taken together, the missed distinction between act

movement and the careless approach to the human subject
as an 'organism', these mathematical model approaches at-
tempt to destroy a fundamental disclosure at the heart of
psychology, viz. the self-disclosure of the observing sci-
entist. Presumably, while the observer watches for the
muscular twitch of an organism which is being subjected
to mild shocks, the observer is acting with the intent to
study and understand the movements of an organism under a
particular stimulus. There is no hint here of studying
the eye-muscle reactions of the observing 'organism' in
response to the stimulus provided by an acting human being,
who is being subjected to shocks.

But perhaps Professor Atkinson would agree with all
this. Perhaps he would claim that he as a psychologist
is only interested in selected phenomena; those which he
can efficiently observe, chart, measure, etc. Such a
response from this particular 'organism-psychologist' is
possible, but it underscores the inadequacies of Atkin-
son's own approach. In so far as his approach intention-
ally ignores the self-disclosure of the participant-
subject-organism, it thereby shuts itself off from very
significant experience. Without the self-disclosure
corrective it is easy to fall into the 'organism' dis-
course which neglects the whole range of personal part-
icipation implied by the term 'act'; and worse, to begin
to believe that because one's subject matter, observable
movements, is more tangible that one's conclusions some-
how offer a true conception of things.

Recalling his distinction between the two bridges which link theory with observation, Ramsey points to the logical discrepancy between that language which 'democratically' unites human beings with rats and frogs, and the insight given in self-disclosure which all psychological models presuppose. Models which arise from this disclosure, the disclosure of my subjectivity, can never adequately comprehend that which I refer to as 'I'. This is not only an observational difficulty, like watching oneself fumbling in the mirror in tying a tie is different from watching someone else making a bad attempt at it. This is a logical point. There cannot be the subject-object distinction of observer-organism without there existing a <u>subject</u>. More will be said about this below, but for Ramsey, "Here is the meeting place <u>par</u> <u>excellence</u> of models and mystery: In what to each of us is the disclosure of himself." (M and M, 28)

Peter Winch helpfully supplies us with a social corrective. An accurate account of the 'organism' in question cannot rest content with the picture given by the psychologist, but must fill this out with the social network in which the person exists. The sociologist can tell us of the ways in which our identity depends upon whatever social environment we find ourselves in to maintain our sense of self. "One can maintain one's self-identification as a man of importance only in a milieu that confirms this identity; one can maintain one's Catholic faith only if one retains one's significant relationship with the

Catholic community; and so forth."[7] C. A. Mace speaks of a 'network of interlacing hierarchies' in considering the self in his broader social context, much like Wittgenstein wants to examine a word in its logical context.

Winch, too, is greatly influenced by Wittgenstein. Against those who wish that social science were more scientific, more mathematical, he demonstrates the ways in which the individual's responses are significantly more than the movements of 'organisms'. Contrasting a dog learning a trick with an individual learning a rule of language, Winch writes that the dog is learning a mere reaction to a cue, whereas the man is learning to understand a rule which fits into a complex social context--one in which the dog doesn't participate. Of course a man's observable behaviour is easily fit into mathematical models, but this ignores the very meaningful role of the person's understanding of reality in his social behaviour. Winch comments, "A man's social relations with his fellows are permeated with his ideas about reality. Indeed, 'permeated' is hardly a strong enough word: social relations are expressions of ideas about reality...A monk has certain characteristic social relations with his fellow monks and with people outside the monastery; but it would be impossible to give more than a superficial account of those relations without taking into account the religious ideas around which the monk's life revolves."[8]

When this approach is set in contrast to that of Durkheim, the reductionism of the latter is illuminated:

I consider extremely fruitful this idea that
social life should be explained, not by the
notions of those who participate in it, but
by more profound causes which are unperceived
by consciousness, and I think also that these
causes are to be sought mainly in the manner
in which the associated individuals are grouped."9

Winch is not saying that such a pursuit of what is
called 'objectivity' is destructive or necessarily inac-
curate. The view of the social phenomena such an approach
will offer would most likely shake those who are involved
in the social milieu being studied--say the monk in the
religious community--from 'the complacent myopia which
over-familiarity may induce.' But he continues, "what
is dangerous is that the user of these devices should
come to think of his way of looking at things as somehow
more real than the usual way."10 What is at issue here
is not so much the veracity or verifiability of a given
sociological model, as its comprehensiveness. Winch is
arguing that the severely restricted picture models must
be supplemented in the social sciences with more personal
models. He agrees with Karl Popper in so far as he holds
that models are not to be taken as absolute representa-
tions; we are not to look for some ghostly essence behind
the model of the individual. But Winch wants models to
do more justice to persons in relations. He thus argues
for a greater ontological commitment than the instrumen-
talists who see models strictly under the criterion of
their usefulness. Where Popper speaks of institutions
as merely explanatory models which ultimately dissolve
because the individual is the only reality, he ignores

the essential role of institutions in an individual's behaviour. "The ways of thinking embodied in institutions govern the way the members of the societies studied by the social scientists behave".[11] Ramsey explains that there will be models whose 'observable facts' are not, strictly speaking, observable. Like empirical fit, these sociological models will be seen to be most efficient at handling a broad range of events.

But even with Winch's incisive extension of the range of models in the methodology of social sciences, we have not really gone far enough in drawing out the possible applications of disclosure models to human behaviour (although it is likely that we have gone as far as we can within the discipline of sociology). Winch offers an example of sociological models breaking down in the case of a social worker who is to befriend her clients while retaining her prior loyalty toward the policy of the agency by whom she is employed. Such a course makes a mockery of the very notion of friendship. But Ramsey points out that the situation need not distort the idea of friendship; it may merely require the addition of more models directed to the situation from different perspectives. He argues that both scientific and social models are needed here, and in the mixing of the two types we might perceive the emergence of a personal model. Both models directed to the descriptive aspects of the person--the movements of his body--and the more personal models associated with consciousness are demanded by the situation. By the

interweaving of models in such a way, the social sciences can point to the elusiveness of its topic. We are organisms as the descriptive models attempt to survey. But more, we are social units, as Winch argues. But more, we are what is disclosed to each of us in insights into our subjectivity, our selves. Both the sociologist and the psychologist must supply the corrective of their own self-disclosures. In cases where the social scientist is working with many models, the self-disclosing insight in which the models are fulfilled serves to integrate the various strands. In so far as Ramsey sees this integrating insight as given in disclosure, it is, (as we have seen) self-authenticating. In this way he claims to give greater cognitive significance to models than does Black.

Once again we return to the problem of objective reference. We have already seen the relationship of disclosures and objective reference in an analytic sphere. In addition, our discussion of models has touched upon the issue in the question of the ontological commitment associated with models. At this point, however, I would like to integrate these ideas with Ramsey's interpretation of models, and indicate the implications for theology.

The very use of models implies some familiarity with the reference; otherwise there would be no use in talking of distinctions between good and bad, ambiguous and accurate models. But rather than talking in terms of true or false models, Ramsey takes the more instrumentalist line of judging the success or failure of a model to disclose

the reference which is given in disclosure. But if the
reference is known through disclosures, does this not mean
that models are merely decorative? Perhaps models have an
important psychological and even sociological function as
tools, but no real ontological or epistemological signifi-
cance?

First of all, Ramsey points out that such assumptions
can be traced to a confusion of disclosure models with mere
picture models, or with the more psychological term 'images'.
He has taken 'model' deliberately because its connotations
are logical rather than psychological. "I choose model
then, because it is least likely to prejudice discussion
and most likely to direct our attention to logical, epis-
temological, and ontological issues ..."12

Just as there are no guaranteed religious assertions,
so there are no self-authenticating models. Nonetheless
the concept of a disclosure demands some experiential con-
text. It is from these experiences, from these situations
of cosmic disclosures, that discourse will be developed
to articulate the objective reference. Such discourse
will be developed along lines laid down by the models born
in the moment of insight. As Ramsey responded to Ninian
Smart, "Our discourse will be the more reliable the more
models we have surveyed, and the better we have related
the model-based articulation to the world so as to provide
for what I have called 'empirical fit'".13

Although Ramsey argues that only one individuation is
required by a cosmic disclosure because of its all-

encompassing nature, the logical or methodological corollary is the need for many models. Models can never exhaust the mystery disclosed to us; so we will need to bring in new, better models; we will need to judge the effectiveness of our models, and search for what Ramsey labels 'super-models'. This brings us to the question of preference.

A model may have in some way generated a disclosure. More broadly, though, disclosures often 'just happen', and the event serves as the basis for subsequent models of the disclosure. In this second case, one model is to be preferred over others when it highlights a particular feature or the structure of the situation. To this degree, and only to this degree, Ramsey speaks of models in "Talking of God" as self-authenticating. In writing of theological models, Ramsey is using the term in a somewhat technical sense, since the inherent disclosure involved in our apprehension of the objective reference necessarily involves a model.

> A theological model is a way of understanding what has been objectively disclosed in a cosmic disclosure; like all models it is never a perfect replica; but it is further and most importantly unlike ordinary 'picturing models' ... in that its objective reference is never given independently of the model. It is indeed what I have called a 'disclosure model'...[14]

Like the role disclosure models play in science, in theology they are not mere pictures---in fact they are not pictures at all--but are essential to the evocation of the mystery. As there is only one cosmic objective reference, it is this that all models contrive in their separate

ways to articulate. Any model supplied by a particular
disclosure will have to be balanced against others. Each
model must be incorporated into the whole of religious
language. It will be judged by its articulation possibili-
ties in contrast with all other models, i.e. 'father' will
be tested for fit against 'judge', 'king', 'shepherd', etc.
Discourse from each model will necessarily be developed
with attention to other models and their respective lines
of discourse. Broader ranging, more comprehensive, more
flexible models will be preferred. Secondly, the criterion
of empirical fit is applied. Beyond the question of the
model's performance in the whole context of religious
language, each model is judged by its ability to fit the
diverse events and features of the universe. This 'fit'
must be applied in a pragmatic sense rather than a rigid
verificationist method.

Beyond these criteria, Ramsey speaks of 'super-
models', those which must prove their fertility in devel-
oping discourse and evoking disclosures. The models of
loving father, caring shepherd, righteous judge, and so
forth, can be integrated in the more comprehensive model
of personality. P. F. Strawson has called attention to
the logically peculiar status of persons: an individual
is both the subject of descriptive predicates, his physi-
cal movements for example, and predicates of character
and consciousness. This tendency towards the personal
should not be taken to exclude the non-personal, however.

The model of the call of duty, for instance, is both non-personal and comprehensive. Linguistically speaking, Ramsey reminds us that neither the personal nor the non-personal will ever replace the unique performance of the name 'God' in a sentence. Therefore the two kinds will be used in combination to better articulate the elusive character of what is disclosed. Nonetheless, we can see indications of the stratification of models Ramsey is speaking of when he talks of judging a model against others. (It is interesting that in the Riddell Lectures for 1963 he briefly mentions the possibilities of seeing 'power' or 'activity' as a super-model beyond, and integrating, the personal and non-personal models. However, in the Zenos Lectures of March 1966 there is a radical change on this point. Rather than argue for seeing activity as a comprehensive model, he sees it as the one aspect of a disclosure about which we can talk univocally, without analogy or equivocation. "Activity is that of which we can speak--even in relation to God--literally: it is for all our discourse a logical primitive."[15] Although the theological difficulties--and they are manifold--will be discussed in a later chapter, it is clear that Ramsey has here removed assertions about divine activity from the question of models entirely, and wishes to find for it a completely different logical context.)

Given the capacity of theological disclosure models to evoke disclosures of their objective reference, Ramsey asks rhetorically, why call the reference by the name

'God'? His answer to this is itself indirect and analog-
ical. Assuming that for some odd reason the Americans had
not yet heard of the word 'circle', but knew, understood,
and constantly used the concept given in the disclosure of
a polygon with an infinite number of sides. Their geometry
would be every bit as developed as their more articulate
counterparts in Britain, their tins would be just as round;
but where the British used 'circle', the Americans would
always speak of an 'infinite polygon'. But one day, in
interaction with the British, an American geometer hears
his counter-part use the term 'circle'. This is what he
and his fellow Americans have been talking about and using
all these years!

In like manner, Ramsey has us suppose that we had
never heard the word, 'God'. We might refer to the objec-
tive reference of our disclosures as the Absolute or the
One in the Many, or the Transcendent, etc. But suppose we
stumbled upon a black book which included many of the
models we typically used to evoke disclosures of the ref-
erence and to speak of the reference to others. Models of
a loving father, a powerful king, a righteous judge, etc.,
as well as non-personal models of all-knowing wisdom, duty,
and order, etc. are used of this reference. Here in the
book, however, the reference is called, 'God'. The name
fits that which (or who) we already know. Because of its
all-encompassing character, there is no need to search
elsewhere for further names. Without some contextual set-
ting the word 'God' is plainly meaningless. On the other

hand, a comprehensive enough context would include the whole universe. Thus Ramsey can argue 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".[16]

The more linguistic side of Ramsey's conception of models is found in his third Whidden Lecture, "Models and Qualifiers: Understanding and Insight". It will provide a bridge between his understanding of models and his linguistic insights. His first Whidden Lecture spoke of models in the natural sciences. His second looked at the social sciences. Here in the third he turns to the relation of models to the arts and humanities. Max Black reminds us that like models metaphors arise when descriptive discourse fails. Both metaphor and simile have important similarities to those attributes Ramsey has been careful to establish for models. But whereas development from a simile is somewhat limited, metaphor is more prolific. Far from being mere ornament, metaphors in discourse perform like models in theory to disclose what cannot be seen by 'straight', descriptive language.

Ramsey turns to I. A. Richards to describe the workings of metaphor in more depth. Richards writes that metaphor borrows between two contexts or groups of language. A metaphor is a tangential intersection of contexts which benefits from common features or structures of both. In metaphors, 'A' language meets 'B' language in a single point which evokes a disclosure. "Electricity is flowing

through the wire"; "Jesus is the Christ". The first
matches language about electricity with terms drawn from
the context of water. 'Electricity' and 'wire' are straight-
forward enough, but to speak of 'flowing', to draw upon the
context of water is metaphorical, intended to evoke a dis-
closure of the behaviour of one form of energy. The second
draws a parallel between a man known by some who first
heard the phrase uttered with the history of the concept of
Messiah in Judaism.

Such tangible semantics are not to be despised for
their eccentricity, but welcomed for the possibilities of
enrichment they bring. The built-in provision of endless
variation and development itself witnesses to the elusive-
ness and mystery of its subject. To say that 'a library is
a powerhouse', for example, in its integration of language
about volts and language about books, evokes a disclosure
which is capable of further development. This linking of
two contexts generates an unspecifiable number of disclo-
sure possibilities. The two contexts are linked by the
disclosure which comprehends them.

"Metaphors and models, both enabling us to be articu-
late about an insight, are thus the basic currency for mys-
tery, and we can spend our lives elucidating ever more
faithfully the mystery in which metaphors and models are
born."[17] Max Black writes that metaphor aids the imagina-
tion in such a way that a metaphor's translation will gene-
rally fall short. This failure of 'straight' discourse is
not simply because of the aesthetic appreciation of a

metaphor. It is not merely because the translation seems prolix or banal in comparison. Black argues that a metaphor is able to give insight which cannot be expressed by 'flat' discourse. In using models, all disciplines are grounded in insight, imagination, visions of mystery. For Black, all disciplines rely upon imagination to a larger extent than many are willing to acknowledge. But Ramsey wants to go further, to give 'the imagination' greater cognitive significance, by grounding it in a disclosure of the objective referent.

The significance of Black's point for theology is clear: When theologians strive for such precision that they neglect the mystery at the heart of the discipline, their insight, imagination, vision suffers. Theology is born in mystery--in the insight into the universe's self-disclosure around events. Where the model is pedantically mistaken as a picture of the referent, this course must be counteracted by emphasizing the distinction between the model and the situation from which the model arose. If a particular father provides the occasion for a disclosure model of our heavenly Father, we must carefully stress the fact that 'father' is but a model. Otherwise theology falls into the traps of critics like Flew, who expect the reference of models to act and be observable in the same way as the models themselves.

In science, too, the neglect of the essential role of models leads to the stifling of imagination and insight. In science, however, Ramsey argues that this is compensated

for by the discipline's firm grounding in the empirical.
Because it is concerned with verifiable facts, science has
been able to stay reputable and useful. This line of
thought, however, seems to miss the point. Black is argu-
ing that neglect of models leads to the stifling of that
imaginative element which is necessary for further develop-
ment. And, as reliable and useful as attention to a precise
methodology and tangible data can be, it cannot adequately
account for discovery. Here again, the criticism of
Michael Polanyi is more fitting. He argues that the imagi-
nation which is stifled by the debasement of it by science
is recovered in the interests of discovery in quite another
way. The neglect of insight is overcome by the systematic
breaking of the rules of non-committal, non-imaginative,
impersonal knowledge. The positivist debases the imagina-
tion while the working scientist depends upon it.

The imagination is evoked in the use of models. Logi-
cal eccentricity is not only the life-blood of theology,
but of the imagination in general as well. But Ramsey
points out that a plurality of models alone cannot suffi-
ciently point us to a disclosure. Models require what he
calls 'qualifiers'. To portray this need, he gives the
example of a sign that simply says 'Exit'. This is adequate
if the sign happens to be placed above a door, but if it is
in the middle of a wall, some pointer is required. An
arrow directing us from the sign to the exit itself is
needed to make any sense of the symbol. Qualifiers direct
the development of models towards a disclosure. Each

qualifier is fit to its own family of models. These qual-
ifiers act as imperatives or directives to ensure that the
model is not taken as a picture of its reference. Although
he does not discuss them in these terms, models and quali-
fiers together nicely balance the elements of transcendence
and immanence in Christian discourse. As the model echoes
or chimes in with what is familiar to us, it functions in
such a way as to stress immanence. The qualifier, on the
other hand, makes the phrase logically odd, directs our at-
tention to the elusiveness of the reference, and supplies
the element of mystery and transcendence.

One of Ramsey's favourite examples here is that of
'infinitely loving'. The model of loving discloses to us
a particular aspect of the given reference of a cosmic dis-
closure. The referent has a character which can be seen
in the model of a loving father. But to safeguard the
mystery, we cannot rest content with this model--not with-
out falling into logical webs. We must develop the model
to work towards a disclosure beyond finite love. This is
done by starting with fairly commonplace love, working
through examples of those who are quite loving, very loving,
exceptionally loving and so on, hoping that the light will
dawn, the penny will drop. Geometrically, this can once
again be seen in the disclosure which would result from
seeing a sequence of a triangle, a square, a pentagon, a
hexagon, a heptigon, an octogon ... one need not go too
far before the increasing number of sides evokes a disclo-
sure, the penny drops, and the person sees that this

development of sides is leading to a circle. To return
to our model of love, the qualifiers set the direction,
hoping to evoke the disclosure of infinite love. Such
a pattern can be observed in phrases like all-powerful,
all-knowing, perfect wisdom, as well as in negative qual-
ifiers like in-effable, un-changing, etc.

The model-qualifier form is sometimes disguised,
however. The assertion, 'God is a necessary being' is
one example. First of all this cannot be taken as straight
description; it is a logical impropriety. The first task
is to locate the model--in this case, 'being'. 'Being'
can characterize anything from a melon to energy. The
qualifier 'necessary' directs us to develop this model
of 'being' from more to less contingent being. That
the melon exists is clear; but it is not a very necess-
ary being. One might argue that the table upon which
the melon sits is less contingent, more necessary.
'There may not always be that melon on the table, but
the table will be here'. More necessary than the table
might be the dining hall itself, and beyond that, the
existence of the college, the town the college is in,
the county, and the country ... will be seen as more
and more necessary. Ramsey mentions that if the dis-
closure stops at country for example, we shall get
sentiments like "My country right or wrong", and patri-
otism will be turned into a religion. As national
sentiment is fairly comprehensive in its scope, it may
be quite difficult to force the development further, to

show that the necessary existence of one's country is not
quite necessary enough, that the disclosure's reference
is still not transcendent.[18]

The religious man would claim that the ultimate ref-
erence for the model which the qualifier directs us to, is
God.  As the qualifier has directed us, we have moved by
an 'informal inference' process, from the very contingent
melon to the very necessary country, and perhaps to more
necessary being, but I would misrepresent Ramsey were I to
argue that he sees the development from melon to God to be
one of 'informal inference'.  The very notion of disclosure
precludes this possibility, because of its passive char-
acter.

> In so far as I have appealed to a disclosure,
> to something which breaks in on us, to a sit-
> uation in which we pass beyond any and all
> models we have developed to date, when ... we
> 'jump to it', there is involved what might be
> called logical leap, just as there is logical
> leap between seeing '1 1/2 1/4 1/8 1/16 ...'
> and saying '2'.  So, like Kierkegaard, and
> Lessing before him, I too can talk of a
> leap...19

This lack of a straightforward inferential progres-
sion means that models, even fairly clearly qualified,
directing one to mystery, might not work.  This is, how-
ever, another way of saying that models are not self-
guaranteeing.  One reason the disclosure may not happen
is that qualifiers are not often understood in the sense
in which Ramsey sees them.  The logical distinction be-
tween 'infinite' and 'very, very' is not that obvious,
even to many in logic.  Similarly the eccentricity of

theological models is often reduced to the relative rarity

of shepherds with crooks; rather than a firm distinction

being grasped between picturing models and the less direct

'analogue' types. Finally, as he points out in <u>Religious</u>

<u>Language</u>, it is far too much to expect from a model to

think that it will perform the 'semantic magic' required

to develop a near-perfect model with a superb qualifier;

and produce ... God. This thinking again falls into the

approach of flat, descriptive language. What is not verb-

ally odd is devoid of disclosure possibilities. But the

alternative, to stress the indirect nature of model dis-

course is to force upon theology greater tentativeness

in its proclamations than it has thus far shown.

This brings us conveniently into the area of logically

odd discourse as the idiom for religious language.

'God-Talk'

Ramsey's insights into the logical oddness of religious discourse can be broken down into two subsections, each based upon a central article or lecture, and each seen in relation to a philosopher of language. The two fundamental articles are "The Systematic Elusiveness of I" and "Paradox in Religion".[1] The discussion of the former will be related to the work of John Austin; the latter article will be related to John Wisdom.

Any attempt to deal with religious language must walk the fine line between intelligibility on one hand, and safeguarding the transcendence of the reference, the ineffable and incomprehensible nature of God, the wholly other. I have shown how Ramsey's concepts of model and qualifier co-operate to anchor religious assertions in experience by means of models, and to disclose the mystery of the reference by the use of a qualifier to point to the transcendent. The linguistic conclusion that Ramsey himself states in Models and Mystery is that what is verbally straightforward is devoid of disclosure possibilities. Logical oddness is a functional necessity; in order for religious discourse to perform its task of evoking cosmic disclosures, Ramsey argues, it must be odd.

But if religious language is to be odd to safeguard its disclosure possibilities, its oddness risks its claims to intelligibility. If paradox is to be taken as the idiom for religious language, the religious language community

may sever its ties with the larger society, may surrender
any claims to factual assertions  or to meaningful language.
Ramsey's response is to look for 'facts' which are suitably
odd to break the restrictive criteria of the empiricists,
and to look for a case in ordinary language which can serve
as a paradigm for religious discourse.  He finds both of
these needs fulfilled in the issue of personal identity and
the language surrounding self-awareness.

In 1949 Gilbert Ryle published The Concept of Mind in
which he discusses the category blunders growing out of the
traditional Cartesian dualism of mind and body.  He attacks
the dogma of what he calls the 'ghost in the machine', the
category mistake of supposing that the logic of the mind,
and mental activities can be treated in the same category
as the logic of bodily activity.  Two points can be gained:
(1) the self must not be seen as a ghost, as an entity be-
hind or above all the activities of the body; and, from
this point, (2) references to mental activity must be under-
stood in relation to observable physical activity.

Ryle brings this to bear upon the problem of personal
identity, a perpetual thorn in the empiricists' side.  In
his Treatise of Human Nature, Hume had set out the problem
in terms of perceptions.  He wrote there, that whenever he
searched for his self, all he could find was some percep-
tion or other.  It was obvious to Hume that reflection upon
a train of past perceptions can disclose a sense of per-
sonal identity.  But such an experience of identity could
not be adequately dealt with by means of Hume's theory of

distinct ideas and impressions. Hume is conscious of the deficiencies of his account--to give an adequate picture of self-awareness or personal identity, more than perceptions in some way connected will be needed.

Ryle attempts to meet this problem with his concept of 'higher order actions'. These are actions upon actions-- reactions, responses, retaliations, etc. This can be represented in diagram form: (B boxing C) or (Y selling Z) are first or lower order acts. A applauding (B boxing C), or X acting as the customer for (Y selling Z) are higher order actions. Highest order actions involve the thought of other actions. With any action comes the possibility of a higher order action. Being concerned with a past action of mine raises the possibility of an infinite series. With this in mind Ryle argues that self-elusiveness is systematic. Self-description is never complete, since the acting self must the next moment be described: I was describing myself describing myself describing myself ...

Ramsey's basic criticism applies equally to Hume and Ryle. Both of them assume that any object which becomes the subject of a highest order action is unchanged by the process. Hume made this assumption explicit in his search for the self strictly in terms of another perception. Ramsey confesses that Ryle never makes this assumption explicit; but he argues that it is a necessary presupposition as he has stated his position.

In "The Systematic Elusiveness of I" Ramsey approaches the idea that the object is unchanged in the process of

becoming the subject of a highest order action from two sides: (1) what becomes of the subject-object distinction, which is fundamental to much of epistemology; and (2) what account can we give of personal identity with this assumption? Regarding the first question, Ramsey asks us to consider a situation in which 'B is trying to solve a chess problem C', and A is trying to describe everything about B, except for the fact that A is describing B. Here is the lower order action (of B solving C), and the higher order action of A describing (B solving C). For A, there is nothing particularly odd here. A is describing chess problem C, and A is describing the slightly more complex (B solving C) in terms of observables--what A can know of B's mental activity by B's various attempts to solve C. All this is straightforward enough.

The question is radically changed when we try to explore the same situation (B solving C), from B's perspective--self-commentary--I describing (I solving C). This is obviously different, but Ramsey doubts that Ryle's discussion of its distinctiveness is sufficient. He uses the examples of an infinite series of pennies in a line, where we add another penny each time we count the line. Here would be a systematic elusiveness in Ryle's sense. Each time we run through the series of pennies we add another. This would seem difficult enough for some one who is asked for an exact count. But is it odd enough? If the relationship between A describing (B solving C) and I describing (I solving C) is not parallel, we have no right to include the second 'I' within

the brackets as we have done with 'B'. In order for this
parallel to work, 'I' would have to be a matrix of some
events it would have to be as 'objective' as 'B'. One of
Ryle's own examples' "I was laughing at myself for being
butter-fingered" itself shows that the distinction between
'I' and 'myself' precludes the possibility of such a
straightforward substitution of 'I' within the brackets.
In other words, there is a systematic, logical distinction
between the two words. 'I' as subject is distinguished from
'myself' as object.

To neglect this linguistic distinction is to risk de-
stroying the subject-object dichotomy. To break this dis-
tinction is to disrupt our criteria of logical thought and
meaningful speech. The subject-object distinction becomes
no more than a temporary device or worse, an illusion.

> Here then is my first difficulty: If we assume
> that what eludes us now, becomes in the next min-
> ute wholly tractable, then since, at this next
> minute, an earlier situation has been completely
> objectified, what account can we then give of the
> subject-object distinction which is the permanent
> presupposition of all living and talking alike?
> What account can we give of our 'subjectivity'
> 'now'?[2]

Ramsey addresses himself to the second difficulty,
that of personal identity, by reference to the assertion
'I am looking at the bus', portrayed as ('I r B'). From
Ryle's perspective, all we need do to reach a highest order
activity is add 'I r' outside the bracket: I r (I r B).
But as he has demonstrated above, the 'I' within the bracket
is problematic; for Hume the 'I' is a difficult object for
'I's' consideration, since, try as he will, Hume can never

observe anything but the perceptions. To treat the form-
ula in this way, the terms within the bracket would all have
to be objects ($I_n r_n C$). It is impossible to treat $I_n$ if it
is no more than an infinite series of perceptions. Ramsey
recommends that we take a hint from mathematical infinite
series, and see that the logic of the infinite series can-
not be the same as that of the terms of the series. In
Ryle's terms, to treat the logic of the subject of any
highest order action in the same way as that of the object
of that highest order action is to commit a category blun-
der.

In "Biology and Personality", Ramsey refers to the
work of C. D. Broad[3] on personal identity. Broad is crit-
ical of the 'bundle' theories of self, because they confuse
a 'unity of system' with a 'unity of centre'. As we have
seen, for Hume, self is a bundle of loosely, if at all
linked, connections of perceptions. For Broad the self is
experienced as the centre unifier of experience rather than
as the connections between events in a series. Typically
eclectic, Ramsey brings out the Ramseyfications of Broad's
insights. This 'unity of centre' is translated by Ramsey
into a self-disclosure. By drawing upon enough events,
and mapping them like points on the rim of a wheel, at
some point or other a 'hub' or centre will disclose itself.
The relation, the integration provided by the self-disclosure,
is not so much the type that might be seen connecting
event A to B, and B to C, and C to D, etc., but a unity
at the centre of these events.

Given this ontologically odd 'fact', the common experience of personal identity, which Ramsey has thus explicated; how is it possible to speak of this elusive fact? (Here again Ramsey attempts to delicately balance opposing factors: To speak of 'facts' as elusive seems to many to be illogical.[4] The very idea of 'facts which elude direct statement' is an attempt to 'broaden' the rigid confines of empiricism (or break them down), and at the same time to allow language to be flexible or suitably odd to disclose such 'elusive facts'.)

In order to show the ways in which such a 'fact' might be communicated Ramsey turns to five stories, although the examples could easily be multiplied. He talks about the self-awareness of Alice, who, despite all the 'observational' changes would be able to see a 'unity of centre' in her experiences. A more practical example is that of a stage mimic. Although all observables might be exactly alike to the audience, the mimic himself would know who he was. In another writing, Ramsey asks his audience to imagine that by some freak occurrence, Ramsey disappeared and General Robert E. Lee of the Civil War appeared in his place.[5] Certainly from the point of view of descriptive language his audience would be thrown into confusion, the identification of the speaker (R) by the audience (A) would be immensely complicated by Lee's sudden appearance. But Ramsey's point is, that no matter how confused his audience would be by this event, Ramsey himself (R) would at no time have any doubt who he himself was.

Armed with this concept of self-awareness, and the characteristic language of first-person assertions, Ramsey is able to break the rigid criteria of the empiricists, and present a persuasive argument for the need for sufficiently odd logic to deal adequately with self-awareness. He argues that this way of looking at personal identity, while certainly far from Hume's line of thought, would have solved his difficulties had he accepted it. Whatever 'I' stands for, it will not be a mere perception. But on the other hand, Ramsey wants to defend himself from charges that he has simply re-introduced the 'ghost in the machine'. For what there is behind the scenes--either in first person logic or in religious language--must not be taken as descriptive of another, shadowy world, of a transcendent self or soul inhabiting temporarily a 'sinewy container'. If religious language is to mean anything, it must be anchored in experience. It must be what is observed and more, not simply what is observed somewhere else. The logical diversity must not be assimilated or simplistically reduced to a sharp dichotomy in which religious language says nothing about the world; and language about myself says nothing about my physical activity.

Ramsey's interest in the logical intricacies of discourse about one's self-awareness is carried over in his discussions of the character of 'person words'. In a contribution to the Hibbert Journal, (April 1956), Antony Flew discussed the logical peculiarities of person words. He takes Ryle's point, that person words about walking, talking,

joking, etc. are not to be taken as synonymous with the logic of words about bodies. But, against Butler, Flew maintains that whatever distinctive person words refer to, walking, joking, smiling, etc. are all brought to an end by death. As the words relating to the butcher's person: thinking, frowning, etc., are not the same as those relating to his body; when the butcher dies, it is his body alone which is left. A person cannot witness his own funeral, nor even imagine witnessing his funeral. What I might imagine is the funeral of my body, but this is distinct from my funeral. Death, according to Flew, obliterates 'I'.

Ramsey, not surprigingly, rejects this interpretation of person words. He fully agrees that words about persons refer to behaviour; and that, once dead, such distinctive behaviour ceases. But he disagrees with Flew's claim that this is all person words refer to. As he has shown above, (i.e., as he had shown in "The Systematic Elusiveness of 'I'") while descriptive language makes meaningful assertions about my movements, it is doubtful that it effectively handles all that is there in my self-awareness of my own activity. Not that Flew can be caught within this tight ontology. He is not asserting that persons are bodies and nothing more. But, like Ryle, Flew is assuming that persons can be summed up in higher order explanations.

Against this view Ramsey is maintaining that characteristically personal situations can be evoked by suitably odd language. Negatively, this involves the claim that "it

is logically impossible to describe in straightforward perceptual language the kind of situations..." which are characteristically personal; those in which we become aware of a self-disclosure, or come to know intimately another person--the kind of knowledge that personal verbs like 'loving' (or 'hating') are currency for.

Ramsey brings out further aspects of the logical behaviour of 'I'-talk with reference to the argument of P. F. Strawson in Individuals. Strawson calls the word person a 'logical primitive'. By this he means that the concept is something of an irreducible posit for language. In the Austin/Strawson discussion over facts and things, Austin readily admits that we would not ordinarily refer to a person as a fact. The word 'person' can have the same sort of predicates we normally apply to blocks of wood, a table, or a building. They are tall or short, they are lying in the garden or somewhere in the kitchen, they weight ten or fifteen stone. But beyond these physical descriptives are all sorts of assertions we can only make of persons: he is thinking; she is smiling; he is solving the chess problem; or they believe in God. In the problem of knowing another self the question of 'fact' is once again raised. Like Ramsey, Strawson regards the 'facts' here as elusive, problematic. The very existence of the concept of person challenges us to broaden the meaning of the word 'fact'. Ramsey quotes from Individuals, "We may still want to ask what is it in the natural facts that makes it intelligible that we should have this concept?"6 Straw-

son goes on to mention the possibility of connecting these 'natural facts' with activity, recalling both Berkeley's notions, and Ramsey's suggestion that we take activity as a logical primitive.

But to pursue this in the direction of the ontology of personal identity would take us too far from the scope of this section, which is meant to be linguistic. When the issues of personal activity and linguistics are combined it is natural to think of another Oxford philosopher, John L. Austin. Ramsey explicates his relation to Austin in the contribution to Intellect and Hope, which I have presented in discussing the work of Polanyi.

The first section of Ramsey's contribution to Intellect and Hope was concerned to tie together Polanyi's insights into the process of knowing a comprehensive entity and Austin's difficulties in relation to Strawson's contributions to the reference problem. Both of these points were taken up in my discussion of the disclosure concept. The second theme of Ramsey's essay is an attempt to bring out the personal involvement inherent in knowing and speaking to which Polanyi and Austin, in very different ways, gave attention.

In his early work, Austin called attention to what he called 'performatives'. These assertions, or more properly, 'utterances', do not so much state a fact as they actually do something. Austin gives as examples: 'I bid one heart'; 'I sentence you to thirty days in gaol'; 'I promise to bring you a loaf of bread'. How are we to understand 'I bid one heart'? It is neither an explanation

of inner feelings, nor an assertion of a fact, nor an expression of intent, nor a command. It is an act.

Austin contrasted these 'performatives' with straightforward statements, assertions of facts, like 'there is a red barn'; 'there is a table'. These he called 'constatives' to distinguish them from 'performatives'. But Austin had difficulties in finding criteria to make the distinction work. An early attempt was the test provided by inserting 'hereby' into the utterance. "You are warned not to cross the tracks" could in this way be clearly seen as a performative in contrast to 'there is a red barn', which is constative. "You are hereby warned not to cross the tracks" makes sense, whereas, "There is hereby a red barn" is nonsensical.

But this and subsequent attempts to find suitable criteria broke down.[7] Although this at first was taken to imply the failure of the performative theory, since the constative/performative distinction could not be maintained, Austin was able to adjust his position, opening the door to more fruitful approaches. Significantly, it was not that the performatives tended to merge into the constatives, but the reverse; constatives tended to collapse into performatives. Taking three utterances as examples: "There is a train coming"; "I guess a train is coming"; and "Watch out for the train that's coming"--the second is a guess, the third is obviously a performative in the sense that the speaker is not stating the fact that the train is approaching, but is acting, warning. But the

seemingly straightforward statement "There is a train coming" can just as easily be used as a performative. One need not preface one's warning with "Watch out" or "Look out" in order for one's utterance to serve as an act of warning.

In place of the performative theory Austin introduced the theory of illocutionary forces. Under this development all utterances could be seen as 'speech-acts' of one kind or another. Beyond the obvious 'physical' act of sound production, and the 'phatic' act of producing words that conform to basic rules of grammar so that the utterances should make sense, Austin distinguishes three kinds of speech-acts: (a) the 'locutionary act' which is an utterance with a fairly definite reference; (b) the 'illocutionary act'--that act which I perform in my locutionary act; and (c) the 'perlocutionary act' which is the act I might succeed in performing through the locutionary act. Within these categories, the locutionary force guarantees that the utterance have some relation to a thing or person-- some objective reference, some descriptive force. The illocutionary force, besides acknowledging that all utterances are 'acts', helps to differentiate the many kinds of illocutionary force: asserting, warning, exclaiming, directing, commanding, promising, etc. While distinguishing different acts, the illocutionary force also serves to bring out a point Austin had made earlier in a paper, "Performative Utterances". "What we need to do for the case of stating, and by the same token, describing and reporting,

is to take them a bit off their pedestal, to realize that they are speech-acts no less than all these other speech-acts that we have been mentioning and talking about as performatives".[8]

The 'perlocutionary force' of an utterance is a measure of its success or failure to perform the speech-act. Has the person I warned moved off the tracks? Has my hint about a gift I would like resulted in my receiving it? But there is a lack of definiteness about the relationship of the illocutionary and the perlocutionary forces of a statement. Its consequences are loosely connected with the intentions of the speaker. My warning to get off the tracks might be quickly heeded. My assertion that the cat has mange might quickly be accepted as a fact. But the illocutionary force of 'Let's go, boys!' might fail entirely to inspire my side. My hint that the hat is ugly, "My dear, it's the Taj Mahal", might be far too subtle, fly over my wife's adorned head, and fail to prevent an exorbitant purchase destined to collect dust in the closet.

Although Ramsey does not mention the link in "Polanyi and J. L. Austin", where he is primarily concerned to bring out the implications of the illocutionary force, the concept of a 'perlocutionary act' provides helpful support for Ramsey's acknowledgement of the possibility of failure built into religious assertions' 'illocutionary force'--in Ramsey's terms, the evocative function of religious language should never be taken as self-guaranteeing; models and qualifiers may fail to evoke a disclosure. If an utterance

with as strong a 'locutionary force', (as direct a reference)
as "There is a train coming" can fail in its 'perlocutionary
act', the necessity of tentative theological assertions, with
their mysterious and transcendent objective reference becomes
obvious. When the locutionary force (or the reference) is
indirect (by necessity) and the illocutionary force is as
profound as the evocation of a cosmic disclosure, the per-
locutionary act is bound to be problematic.

This ties in, in an interesting way, with a point Polanyi
makes in Personal Knowledge about the amount of personal in-
volvement in assertions. Taking 'p' to represent some asser-
tion such as 'there is a red barn', Polanyi argues:

> 'p is true' declares that I identify myself
> with the content of the factual sentence p,
> and this identification is something I am
> doing, and not a fact that I am observing.
> The expression 'p is true' is therefore not
> itself a sentence but merely the assertion
> of an (otherwise unasserted) sentence, the
> sentence p. To say that 'p is true' is to
> underwrite a commitment or to sign an accep-
> tance, in a sense akin to the commercial mean-
> ing of such acts. 9

In direct opposition to a fact-value dichotomy with
its inherent distinction between 'objective' statements and
'merely subjective' assertions, Polanyi holds that all asser-
tions have some degree of personal involvement. He argues
that where the certainty of the expression is high, the
participation of the asserter will be correspondingly lower
than in the case of assertions of less certainty.

Returning to Austin, Ramsey asks if there are any
utterances which are non-performatives, which are devoid of
self-involvement. Like Polanyi, Ramsey readily grants that

our self-involvement in our utterances takes radically

different forms. There is more participation, more commit-

ment, a higher level of self-involvement in "I take thee to

my wedded wife" than there is in "There is a red barn".[10]

Going beyond Austin, Ramsey insists that not only is 'I-

talk' the logical paradigm for performatives, and a basic

aspect of the illocutionary force of utterances, but that

the person making the utterance, the 'I' is far more complex

than Austin acknowledged. He sums up his point nicely,

suggesting,

> that because Austin was so critical of meta-
> physics of the old brand he did not see what
> was significant about performatives was their
> first-person logic, pointing to their grounding
> in self-disclosure, which then allows for and
> involves, I would say, some metaphysical claims
> in so far as the personal subjectivity given in
> self-disclosure and affirmed in performative
> utterances cannot be reduced to 'objects', to
> impersonal criteria.[11]

Summing up, then, the relations between the linguistic

insights of John Austin and Ramsey's ideas about religious

language, I have argued that the 'perlocutionary force' of

an utterance ties in nicely with Ramsey's insistence that

theological language be tentative, that religious assertions

are not to be taken as self-guaranteeing.

Secondly, as Austin's illocutionary act brings to mind

Wittgenstein's concept of language games, so Ramsey's evo-

cative function of religious language is the primary illo-

cutionary act or language game of religious discourse. Both

Austin's insights into the functions of language and Ram-

sey's explorations into the evocation of disclosures by

religious assertions are radically different from D. Z.
Phillips' interpretation of Wittgenstein's language game
concept. Ramsey and Austin follow Wittgenstein's lead to
explore ways of doing things with words, whereas Phillips
interprets language games along the lines of private con-
texts with logical sovereignty. Although the difference
is subtle, I believe that 'Each illocutionary force has
its own logic' is truer to the language game concept than
to say that religious speaking is independent of scientific
speaking which is autonomous from other language contexts.

Against Ramsey, however, it can certainly be argued
that he has neglected some of the more important 'illocu-
tionary forces' of religious discourse, in his stress
upon the evocative illocutionary act. Finally, the con-
cept of the locutionary force of utterances is related by
Ramsey in two writings to the Austin/Strawson controversy.
Here, Ramsey argues that his disclosure concept provides a
possible reconciling development of both positions. Equal-
ly revealing, however, is a comment he makes about the
descriptive force, in an informal discussion in 1965.[12]
Ramsey there states that Austin's insistence that utter-
ances have some descriptive force is in keeping with the
evocative force of religious utterances, but that the evo-
cative must be primary. Not that Austin would necessarily
disagree: "I promise to bring a loaf of bread" does re-
quire the locutionary force, the descriptive element of
loaves of bread; but its primary force is performative,
making a promise. Likewise "Please pass the bread" needs

the reference to bread on the table, but it is primarily

performative, the act of requesting bread.

> Regarding religious assertions, Ramsey stated,
> I'm
> not saying that they are purely evocative and
> not descriptive at all.  What I'm saying is that
> they have pre-eminently evocative force ... and
> unless this disclosure is evoked, we should look
> in vain for their meaning and significance.  If
> we've got this, then we might begin to look for
> the kind of descriptive force that they have,
> which may be explicated in more descriptive
> ways ...

This ties in well with a comment he makes in the last

of his Riddell Memorial Lectures for 1965.  He stated that

when talking of God, ordinary ways of speaking must be seen

as models, i.e., they must be qualified.  Their logic must

be suitably odd.  But they must also interlock with a part-

icular context.  To take the qualifier by itself is virtu-

ally to guarantee bogus dilemmas and logical webs.  Without

a model to provide empirical anchorage, in Austin's terms,

without any locutionary force, religious assertions are

empty.  Ramsey warns us against assimilating the logic of

'God is up there' with 'John is up there' in flat, descrip-

tive logic.  "The sentence 'God is up there' is much more

like a rule about operators such as $\dfrac{d^2}{dx^2} = \dfrac{d(d)}{dx(dx)}$ from

which all reference to what is being operated on is absent."CD 80

In other words, the sentence 'God is up there' is a

qualifier without a model, a pointer devoid of empirical

anchorage.  It is an illocutionary act with no locutionary

force; the evocative power is impaired.

Here Ramsey demonstrates his debt to Russell, which he

discusses in "Contemporary Empiricism" and elsewhere.

Russell called attention to the distinction between verbal
and logical form. 'Lions are real' and 'Lions are yellow'
are verbally alike in form, but quite different in terms
of logical behaviour. Russell elucidated the logical di-
versity, (in this case between the descriptive predicate,
'yellow', and the much more problematic question of exis-
tence, 'real') that apparently similar forms can disguise.
Turning to religious language Ramsey uses this insight to
describe the logical dissimilarity between 'the leaf is
green' and 'the soul is immortal', in which 'green' is a
simple descriptive predicate, 'immortal' is a qualified
model; or between 'I believe there is a train coming' and
'I believe that Jesus is coming again' in which the illocu-
tionary force of the former is the act of guessing, the
latter, of stating a conviction.

Out of the challenge of the verification principle
came many attempts to tie religious discourse to ordinary
ways of talking about everyday experiences. Much of theol-
ogy, of course, either ignored the threat to the meaning-
fulness of its assertions, or simply accepted the conclu-
sion that theology is non-cognitive. Having traced Ramsey's
linguistic response, I shall here 'sandwich' his experien-
tial reaction between two all-too-brief discussions. One,
the work of a philosopher, John Wisdom; the other, an
empiricist-theologian, John Hick. Fortunately we have al-
ready seen both thinkers' integrative parables; the 'garden'
and the 'road to the celestial city'.

First, Wisdom. It was certainly disheartening to

many empiricist theologians to see what Antony Flew did

with Wisdom's gardener. In brief, the poor omnipotent,

omniscient horticulturalist died 'the death of a thousand

qualifications'. Taking such characteristics in logical

straightforward manner, Flew demonstrated that the theolo-

gical community was forced to hedge its conceptual 'God'

into virtual irrelevance. Thus, it must have been doubly

disappointing to find Wisdom appreciative of Flew's devel-

opment. "Flew presents clearly yet sympathetically the

difficulty he finds in what is said by men of religion."[13]

The initial shock, however, is more than offset by a

fuller understanding of Wisdom's position. D. A. T.

Gasking, in his exposition of Wisdom's work, has traced

four types of questions; taken together these illustrate

Wisdom's inquiry into the nature of philosophy. These

are: (a) empirical questions--these can be approached by

an agreed method, either to verify or falsify some conten-

tion; e.g. is this material flammable? (b) logic questions--

these are requests for an agreed definition or rule, a ques-

tion of correct usage; e.g. if this burns under some condi-

tions but not others, can we still call it 'flammable'?

(c) conflict questions--these questions require a decision

of some sort; there is no agreed-upon convention for refe-

rence; we are in the position of a judge who must weight

the evidence; or rather, like the judge who faces a case

with no legal precedent: however he decides helps to de-

termine future interpretations; he makes the law by his

decision; (d) paradox--here is a question the answer to

which is usually obvious from the standpoint of (a) or
(b); such a question suggests a logical reform. Types
(c) and (d) share the characteristic of initiating some
logical or linguistic change in convention; (d) is a
'boundary-breaking' question.

Following the later Wittgenstein, Wisdom held that
philosophical questions were of these last two types. In
asking a philosophical question, you are not asking for
some empirical confirmation, nor what the existing logical
convention might be. "What you are asking for is a deci-
sion and the reasons for it _in the sense in which reasons_
_can be offered for a decision_--by a council for the plain-
tiff and council for the defendant".[14] In _Paradox and_
_Discovery_, Wisdom explains that such philosophical ques-
tions were once thought to be in direct conflict with the
empirical assertions of science. In actual practice, how-
ever, these paradoxical assertions are more like requests
for precedent-setting decisions. A claim that a particu-
lar empirical assertion is false can be seen as just
another 'move' on the 'chess-board' of empirical discourse,
and can therefore be verified or falsified. A philosoph-
ical question, on the other hand, is a request for a
decision about the rules of chess. It is as if to charge
that the empiricist is no longer playing 'chess' on his
board. A pedantic approach that takes the question as
merely an eccentric move on the empirical chess-board
misses the request's boundary-breaking force.

The core of Wisdom's 'garden' parable is actually a
conflict question about the logic of religious assertions.
His parable is a question of 'seeing-as': what kind of
evidence would count for or against the assertion 'God
exists'. In pointing out, as he did, the difficulties
with the 'matter of fact' evidence traditionally supplied,
Flew caught the gist of what Wisdom was saying. Religious
assertions make poor moves on the empiricists' chess-board.
Unfortunately in his inability to get beyond empirical data
and descriptive logic--'gross bodies' as Butler would say--
Flew also seems to have missed the paradox question. Flew
seems to think that Wisdom's point is exhausted by raising
insuperable problems of playing religious assertions on an
empirical chess-board. That much is true: Wisdom com-
ments, "The existence of God is not an experimental issue
in the way it was."[15] But Wisdom is hardly content to let
it go at that.

The statement just quoted is itself a boundary-breaking
response to the conflict question, one which he picked up in
a later essay, "The Logic of God". Having thus disposed of
questions of type (a) aimed at God, Wisdom posited a new
rule for meaningfulness, one more sympathetic to religious
assertions. "A question is a real meaningful question if
either it can be answered by observation or it can be
answered by demonstration from premises which are either
self-evident or obtained by describing what we have ob-
served."[16] The clause 'or obtained by describing what we
have observed' is the ground-breaker.

Wisdom then proceeds (in "The Logic of God") to take us on a magical mystery tour which unfolds the 'matters of great consequence' whose significance is underscored by Wittgenstein's seeing-as concept. Again the model of the law-court is ideal. The facts stand before the judge just as the garden stands before believer and non-believer alike. Unlike a clearing in a wilderness, the law-court is an everyday experience (at least for the judge); but, more important, it is not merely a 'matter of speculation'. There the judge is called (as we are called in other situations) to take an attitude, give a ruling, make a pronouncement. In paradoxical, precedent-setting situations it is not a matter of more facts; though it is a matter of much significance.

Wisdom offers one suggestion of the kind of evidence which would count for or against a religious assertion. He considers 'Christ was one with God' with reference to two different but related contexts: (a) Christ's alleged statement, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us." (John 17.20, 21) and (b) "What it is about human beings which is referred to by one who says that they are not one with God but could become so and in what way it is alleged that Christ was different so that He was one with God and how this is consistent with those despairing words 'My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me,'"[17] The first (a) is to

consider the linguistic contextualisation of the claim 'Christ was one with God'; the second (b) is its harmonisation with its (admittedly odd) state(s) of affairs.

All of which Wisdom encourages us (or those of us who are not tempted to pursue these claims with descriptive logic pedantry) to face as an imperative or as a situation calling for personal judgment. If we allow our mounting bewilderment to stifle our spirit of discovery we "half deny ourselves that view of the actual that power to place on the manifold of nature those phenomena which seemed anomalous, which a changing conception may give us."18 The new conception, the different 'seeing-as' approach, (the premises gained 'by describing what we have observed'), can be seen as a new appreciation of mystery. 'God created the heavens and the earth' is not a statement that is simply awaiting more facts, further insights of science--although these will not be irrelevant. Rather it is an assertion that calls us to reconsider the evidence, "in case it should happen that having eyes we see not, and having ears we hear not."19

If I may sum up my exposition of Wisdom's contribution in terms obviously directed to Ramsey's concept of 'empirical fit', Wisdom is predominantly concerned with the kind of approach we bring to questions about religious assertions. He is content to allow the empirical approach to stand as it is vis-a-vis its own subject matter. But he appeals to common enough human situations to bring out the inadequacies of such a method when applied to all

of life; especially matters of consequence calling for individual decision or 'participation'. He argues that these questions call for an understanding of meaningfulness which allows for the significance of eccentric questions that transform our perspective rather than the picture itself. His attitude towards currently inaccessible facts is much like Ramsey offers in a work not directly concerned with 'empirical fit'. In "On Understanding Mystery", Ramsey distinguishes between mystery in the sense of a lack of knowledge due simply to insufficient facts, and mystery in the sense of transcendence. Religious mystery in the latter sense refers to that transcendence which is <u>logically</u>, and not just practically, inaccessible. In Wisdom, this acceptance of mystery means that the questions will not be resolved by forthcoming facts, and therefore call for decision. The known facts are thus never irrelevant, but nor are they decisive. Our decision must be reasonable, it must fit the facts; but our judgment might change simply by considering the same facts in a different light.

## Mapping Religious Experience

Ramsey's response to the verificationist challenge
to find ways of matching religious assertions with obser-
vable events and common experience is given in his concept
of 'empirical fit'. In the first lecture of Models and
Mystery, Ramsey compares the realms and methods of science
and religion. He uses the tool of models as the focal
point of his discussion. A major point of contrast is the
way models used in discourse match up to experience. A
scientific model is to be evaluated partly by its ability
to generate hypotheses which are verifiable by controlled
observation. A theological model, on the other hand,

> is rather judged by its stability over the
> widest possible range of phenomena, by its
> ability to incorporate the most diverse phe-
> nomena not inconsistently ... As a model in
> theology is developed, it rather stands or
> falls according to its success (or otherwise)
> in harmonising whatever events are to hand ...
> The theological model works more like the fit-
> ting 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 pre-
> ferred 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 prove 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 over-all
> success in meeting a variety of needs. Here
> is what I might call the method of empirical
> fit which is displayed by theological theo-
> rizing ...[1]

For Ramsey theological discourse is not measured for
meaningfulness by deducing scientifically verifiable predic-
tions, but by its ability to 'map' a wide range of human

experience. This means, for example, that talk of God's love must comprehend evil and the suffering of the world as well as establishing links between God's love and commonplace experience of human kindness. The 'fit' of such a map is pragmatic in a broad sense, not scientific. Ramsey writes that this fit is much more like "the kind of fit which detectives look for between certain new clues and a 'theory' of the crime with which they are provisionally working." (CE, 134)

This example is reminiscent of Wisdom's law-court example, and hence avoids a major stumbling block of the 'garden' parable. In his discussions of empirical fit, Ramsey tries to avoid using phenomena for which scientific method is applicable and observational discourse is appropriate currency. Like Basil Mitchell's 'partisan parable', Ramsey writes of that process of thought by which one might choose an agent for a dangerous mission, or confirm that one is in love. "As we survey such facts about each person as are known to us, there may occur, about one of them, a sense that this is the man. There will have been a disclosure in response to which we have made our decision, our commitment." (CE, 198). Here, as with Mitchell, trust and commitment predominate, rather than strictly verifiable hypotheses.

Ramsey fills out the method of empirical fit with five criteria that we might bring to these decisions of commitment: (a) there must be some pro-factors to which we can point, to support our belief; (b) the possibility

of this particular belief's harmonising with what we already know of God (... of the stranger, of the agent, etc.) with other Christian claims must exist; but (c) contra-factors must be considered as well--e.g. taking the resurrection belief, the possibilities that the disciples stole the body, of historical distortion of the facts, or of psychological factors telling against the testimony cannot be ignored; hence, (d) a reasonable belief must also include the possibility that these contra-factors will cause us to reject our beliefs; (although there is no need to specify in advance the point at which this might occur); and (e) some of the original factors to which we appealed to support our belief may be undermined, and turn out to be contra-factors as well. But Ramsey points out that we can certainly accept these without necessarily abandoning a belief which has been reasonably established upon a broad enough scope. We might find that the agent's most spectacular mission was performed for personal motives of jealousy or greed, etc. But if our confidence in him or her is reasonably established, this new evidence will not necessarily mean that we ought to turn to another agent.[2] Likewise a girl might find that the beard to which she was specially attracted was simply a cover for a double chin without such disappointing knowledge destroying a love and trust firmly established.

Such an explanation makes both religious faith and falling in love more a matter of reasonable judgment than many would feel able to accept. A faith that is reasonable

enough to be rejected if it becomes broadly untenable is far from that faith which is a mechanical reaction to irresistible grace. I find (d) most interesting in its reference to Flew's difficulties with religious belief. Flew had interpreted Wisdom's garden to mean that conclusive countervailing evidence is logically impossible for a perpetually qualified belief. Faith becomes irrelevant because there are no facts that could falsify it. Ramsey comments, "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." (CE, 199). Yet Ramsey does not fall to Flew's reductionist scepticism because he refuses to see the question (of either the 'garden' or the resurrection) as merely a 'matter of fact'. There may be pro- and contra-factors behind my decision, but ultimately the decision is mine; with all the self-disclosure possibilities that such personal choice implies.

The final factor to be considered in Ramsey's links between religious assertions and human experience ably unites these diverse themes—of personal choice and commitment, of the 'odd' sort of facts to which one appeals, and the process of sifting pro- and contra-factors and harmonising the claim in question with other knowledge. It is the concept of 'probability' which Ramsey gained from Butler's Analogy.[3] In that work, Butler distinguished three cases to which 'probability' might be

applied: (a) 'matters of speculation' where evidence is
meagre or hard to obtain, but where the conclusion is, in
any case, of little importance. A claim that Queen Eliza-
beth slept in such-and-such a house might be of this type.
(b) 'matters of practice' in which we act upon that judg-
ment which is the most reasonable. It is not simply a
matter of interest--we are ready to act, cautiously, upon
our judgment--but the aggregate evidence is biased in
favour of our conclusion. Our resolve to act is propor-
tional to the probability of our being correct in our
judgment. (c) 'matters of great consequence' in which our
moral decisiveness outstrips the import of the evidence.
Here we may recall the example of the man walking along
the riverbank. He hears the chatter of the children play-
ing, sees the men fishing, the river flowing, etc. Then,
a splash; the cries of the children; he turns and thinks
that he sees a child in the water, about to drown. Here
the facts are not irrelevant. He considers the strength
of the current, the depth of the water, its temperature;
he considers the possibility that what he glimpsed float-
ing past is not in fact a child, his own swimming ability,
and so on. From the standpoint of the bare facts, it is
unlikely that this man will be able to perform the rescue;
the probability is extremely low. And yet, "A man would
be thought in a literal sense distracted who would not
act and with great application."[4]

For Ramsey, following Butler, religious belief shares
this 'probable' nature with moral actions. Like the

decision of the judge in Wisdom's law-court, theism is
based on the available facts, but demands the personal
backing of commitment. The theistic 'map' is a seeing-
as, an interpretation of the world and human experience
that is 'probable' enough to demand a 'reasonable' commit-
ment. In Religious Language, Ramsey develops the paral-
lels with moral commitment in response to duty, as well
as parallels with other 'maps' to which we grant our per-
sonal backing.[5] He writes of two kinds of commitment:
the personal and moral commitment to spouses, causes,
hobbies, etc., and the universal commitment exhibited by
mathematics. Regarding the first, Butler's 'probability'
demonstrates the reasonableness of such commitments, de-
spite the lack of conclusive evidence. This is further
supported by Ramsey's five criteria for the examination of
such beliefs, and by the relatively loose manner in which
'empirical fit' encourages us to map the claims of these
beliefs upon diverse experiences.

Turning to the mathematical model, Ramsey draws atten-
tion to the 'catholicity' of geometrical models: "what is
true ... of a Euclidian triangle, is true in Oxford and
Cambridge, Moscow and New York, Mars and the moon." (RL, 37).
Religious commitment combines the personal intimacy of the
first type with the comprehensiveness of the second. It is
as personal as a commitment to a spouse, and as all-inclusive
as mathematics. With these two kinds of commitment Ramsey
balances the insights of Wisdom and Mitchell. Religious
commitment partakes of the intense personal trust Mitchell's

partisan held for the stranger, thus avoiding the 'specu-
lative' character of Wisdom's garden. But the theistic
'map' is as all-inclusive as Wisdom's microcosm of the
world with all its manifold and ambiguous evidences.

John Hick's parable of the road to the celestial city
and the key concept of eschatological verification have
been presented above. In a recent article in Religious
Studies, Hick surveys the two decades of comment and devel-
opment of his basic argument.[6] He sums up his earlier
point, writing that

> The theistic conception of the universe and
> of what is going on in human life is capable
> of experiential verification, although accord-
> ing to Christianity the verifying situation
> lies in the final fulfillment of God's pur-
> pose for us beyond this present life.[7]

Hick begins his reconsideration by tracing the devel-
opment (or regression) of the verifiability criterion.
Although attempts to find a solid formula 'petered out at
least a generation ago', Hick hopes to salvage their basic
point, viz., that to exist is to make a difference. To
say that p is true is to say that a p-less universe would
be different than this one with p. Phenomenal variety be-
comes the sole principle of verification. "Accordingly to
say that x exists or that p is the case, but to deny that
the existence of x or the truth of p makes any such in-
principle-experiential difference, would be to speak in a
way that is pointless or meaningless."[8] Hick begins his
new response to this ameliorated criterion by distinguishing
between simple and complex verification; depending upon what
kind of evidence would count for or against (x) or (p).

He argues that 'there is a table in the next room' requires
simple verification; 'John Smith is an honest man', com-
plex. Whereas a straightforward empirical test is suffi-
cient for the first, the latter assertion must be reached
by an accumulation of less direct evidence. He further
refines this response by pointing out that the meaningful-
ness of theistic assertions is not to be reduced to the
verifiability of 'God exists'; rather, propositions direc-
ted to God's activities in terms of his effects on this
(finite) world--in other words the whole complex theistic
map of one's experience of this world as theistic--must
be considered as one (verifiable and meaningful or not).
This body of beliefs, Hick argues, stands or falls on the
issue of eschatological verification. The assertion to
be checked is thus confined to the view that the history
of the universe is moving towards its completion in God.

In a footnote Hick also distinguishes between the
question of the rationality of present Christian beliefs
and the philosophical question of the meaningful status of
Christian discourse. It is strictly the philosophical
question that 'eschatological verification' is designed
to resolve. He further refines the celestial road story
by introducing the idea of a developing or maturing human
personality of fuller God-consciousness, of "an experience
of progressive sanctification ... accompanied by an in-
creasingly powerful and pervasive sense of existing in
the presence of an invisible transcendent power who knows
us, who loves us, and who can be seen to be drawing us

towards a perfection in which we are to dwell in joyous communion with him."[9]

Hick then turns to the issue of the hypothetical verification in heaven. If at that time we still lack firm observational data which verifies God's existence, would this invalidate the verifiability of Christian discourse? This brings the advantages (both theological and philosophical) of phrasing the question in terms of the theistic map as a whole rather than the existence of God per se. Theologically, Hick appeals to the book of Revelation to say that the heaven there depicted includes an 'intimate presence of God' as opposed to a visual confirmation in the sense in which one might verify that 'there is a table in the next room.' At such a point, the philosophical question of meaningfulness is answered by the eschatological verification of the theistic map. All else of the Christian picture having been validated, it would now be unreasonable to doubt the existence of God. The question of verifiability refers to questions in situations in which there is room for reasonable doubt, and answers in situations where rational doubt is excluded. Hick argues that given a heaven in the intimate presence of God continued atheism would be irrational.

Finally Hick replies to the charges of Nielsen and Tooley. They hold that Hick's celestial road shows no way of getting from ordinary ways of speaking to religious discourse; from non-theistic experience to theistic experience. In another footnote, Hick rejoins that such a view

is built upon an archaic concept of experience, that of
the 'registering of bare sense data'. Hick is building
from a broader view of human experience, though he is re-
luctant to be more specific in this article. 'Theistic
experience' is a part of human experience which results in
religious assertions, the verifiability of which is grounded
on the 'map's' eschatological assertions. Although Hick
allows the possibility that the theistic eschatological
verification could in principle occur on this earth, he
chooses to stand upon post-mortem experience. Life ever-
lasting is one of the doctrines by which Christian faith
stands or falls.

Hick's work has two major advantages over the positions
of Wisdom and Ramsey. Unlike Ramsey's empirical fit, which
is dependent upon a far broader concept of verification; and
unlike Wisdom, who does not anticipate future conclusive
facts, Hick's verification is much closer to the original
sense-data framework. Conversely, by positing a verifica-
tion strictly in the future, Hick has both put the matter
out of the reach of scientific measurement and emphasized
the essential Christian attitude of eschatological hope.

It is unfortunate that the full scope of Hick's thought
cannot be considered within this thesis. There is much of
value there, and taking eschatological verification in iso-
lation is potentially disruptive. Nonetheless, from the
standpoint indicated by Hick's reconsideration, it is ap-
parent that, in comparison with Hick, Ramsey was no empiri-
cist. Ramsey's criterion, empirical fit, depends upon an

alteration of the concept of verification; the theistic map must be seen to fit a wide range of experience. In contrast, Hick builds his case upon the anticipation of some conclusive 'facts' which will verify a key theme of that 'map' in a strict sense of verification. Secondly Ramsey attacks the meaning criterion as a linguistic problem--which is what it actually is--in so far as his empirical fit concept is not designed to counter rigid requirements for a meaningful statement. His linguistic response is to be found in his analytical insight into the 'evocative' logic of religious discourse. Hick is not an analytic philosopher. He is concerned to justify the religious experience of the world _as_ theistic, as existing in the presence of God.

Yet there are difficulties with Hick's position that we do not find in Wisdom or in the gentler empiricism of Ramsey. Although he chides Nielsen and Tooley for their myopic view of experience, it is not clear that his own view of it is sufficiently broad. Despite his distinction between simple and complex verification, despite his argument for an intimate presence rather than visual verification, it is the experience of heaven that will confirm (or perhaps falsify) the theistic map.

This raises two problems: (a) whatever the tone of one's experience-concept, Hick's position merely postpones the problem rather than confronting the issue where it matters. The meaningfulness of the entire theistic 'map' hangs on this 'post-mortem proof'. Theologically,

such an eschatology, which can effectively evacuate this
life of all meaning, is biblically questionable, to say
the least.[10]  Certainly from an analytic perspective,
Hick's move of basing the claims of religious discourse
to cognitive status upon a verification beyond this world
is difficult to defend.  If Austin and Ramsey are on the
right track, Hick's position confuses the performative
force of religious assertions in one of two ways; either
of which is lethal.  If, on one hand, an eschatological
assertion exhibits descriptive force, and thus be verified,
then all religious assertions are subject to sensory veri-
fication.  Alternatively, if Hick wishes to argue that the
force of 'we shall see heaven' (for example), is different
from that of, say, 'Christ is risen', he has introduced an
impossible performative bifurcation into religious lan-
guage.  To divide religious assertions in this fashion he
would have to posit some logical reason--other than a mere
difference in tense--to provide for the distinctively de-
scriptive force of eschatological statements.  All of which
can be avoided by a fruitful attack on the problem in the
present; which is what Ramsey's analytic insights provide
for religious language.

Thus (b) Hick's experience concept is inadequate.  By
grounding his religious epistemology on a rigid, almost
sense-data concept of cognition, Hick denies the element
of personal backing or commitment with which religious and
moral experience and knowledge is inextricably bound.  To
allow the positivist conception of fact to stand as is, is

to guarantee a two-worlds theology, a rigid fact-value rift; it is to deny moral experience, and the elements of 'probability' and personal commitment inherent in religious and moral knowledge. Neither Ramsey nor Wisdom is happy with the anticipation of conclusive facts. For Wisdom, it is equally important what the facts are seen as: for Ramsey, the facts are pro- and contra-factors in experience dominated by 'probability' and personal backing.

From an epistemological perspective, then, Hick's position is constricted by his rigidly empirical view of cognition. Reasonable judgments are far more dependent upon facts, upon conclusive evidence than in either Ramsey or Wisdom. When moral judgments are seen as the discernment of a moral dimension through physical experience, an unnecessary bifurcation of experience develops. From this point, it is only too easy to fall into a non-cognitive, emotivist view of moral knowledge. Rather than providing for it, this actually rules out the possibility of religious knowledge in a way that Ramsey's 'broadened empiricism' is able to avoid. Where odd situations, disclosure experiences, are the empirical anchorage for religious language, the view of empirical evidence is broad enough to provide for a cognitive view of religious discourse.

In conclusion, there are some exciting links between these three thinkers. My brief sketch has presented the responses of each to the verification principle, and reasonable judgments about human experience. Wisdom's response defines meaningfulness in a way which allows for

the possibility of seeing what we have observed in a different light. His concern is for the paradoxical asser- tions that cause us to alter our outlook, to see the same phenomena in new ways. He is more willing than Ramsey to let the concept of fact stand as is; but, unlike Hick, does not look for the arrival of conclusive evidence to buttress his criterion of meaningfulness.[11] But this means that his view of religious mystery is close to that of Ramsey. Both hold that religious mystery is distinct from the mystery of presently inaccessible facts. That of religion refers to the transcendence which is <u>logically</u> inaccessible.

Hick's response, on the other hand, dependent upon conclusive evidence not yet attained, is far less sympa- thetic to Ramsey's use of probability to justify the claims of religious assertions as a whole. Nonetheless, his for- mula--that an x-less universe must be different from one with x--fits nicely with Ramsey's empirical fit; once the former is qualified by Hick's distinction between simple and complex verification. Ramsey's five criteria (of pro- and contra-factors) provide for the reasonableness of the theistic map; but do so in a way that is not dependent upon some other-world confirmation.[12] Like Hick, however, Ram- sey is insistent that for x to exist, for p to be true, x or p must make a difference. Ramsey's empirical fit pro- vides a method of verification more sensitive to situations of 'complex verification' and religious commitment than Hick's other-worldly intimate presence. Finally, Ramsey's empirical fit is more sympathetic to the metaphysical

nature of the Christian 'map' than is Hick's more rigid empiricism. It is Ramsey's defence of the metaphysical aspects of Christian discourse that I must now exposit.

Let us start with a list of self-descriptions:

(1) Although 'I' love rock music 'I' almost never go to concerts because of the crowds; (2) although 'I' love motorcycling, 'I' think a motorcycle club or gang negates the very essence of 'biking' pleasure; (3) although 'I' play the French horn well enough to join an informal local orchestra, 'I' far prefer 'doodling' or improvising on the piano; (4) 'I' almost always take a book to read on the trains; (5) 'I' prefer swimming to jogging or team sports because of the tranquility one finds within the rhythmic breathing and body movement; (6) 'I' prefer a quiet pint in a pub to a drinks party; and so on.

Hopefully, it is becoming clear that these are hardly arbitrary. Through the purely descriptive assertions about books on trains, and the interpretive comments about this person's dislike of crowds at concerts, a higher level description begins to emerge like a Gestalt picture from the parts, or (Ramsey's example) like points on a rim begin to define a hub at the centre. These descriptions can be unified by a person 'I', who is clearly 'a loner'. Any of these descriptions can be interpreted in isolation in a way which denies this conclusion. (4) might testify to the very busy life this person leads; or the crowds at concerts might just be particularly noxious; perhaps he or she believes that cycling joy is to be found in hard and fast

cornering rather than streaming down a motorway en masse.
But taken together, a pattern begins to emerge that is
obvious to others as well as to his or her own subjectivity.

Here is one way of approaching Ramsey's insights into
the integrating functions of 'I-talk'. 'The loner' is a
descriptive integrator that unites the diverse self-
descriptions above. Here, too, is an indication of the
loose empirical fit required by metaphysical language
games. If a friend adds that this person greatly enjoys
public speaking, our unifying phrase will stand in need of
some qualification. This might be accomplished by quali-
fying this particular integrating model, but it is more
likely that this characterisation will be qualified by
contextualising it with other integrating terms.

Perhaps it is more important to point out that there
is a logical gap between the six descriptive phrases and
the unifying 'loner'. One could list such facts indefi-
nitely without the subject's being forced logically to
infer that he or she is in fact the person who is the
objective reference of these characterisations. This is
another way of saying that the subjective awareness is
disclosure-given. Conversely, for the speaker, 'I'
functions as a reference term that applies to a self that
is more than any of the descriptions, a subjectivity that
is not (logically) exhausted by the descriptions. Hence
David did not see himself in Nathan's characterisation
until a disclosure occurred around the details.

Ramsey parallels the capacity of 'I-talk' to inte-
grate diverse experiences with the 'mapping' functions of

models. He sees metaphysics as 'linguistic cartography'. By serving to unite diverse experiences and assertions, metaphysical terms map wider and wider contexts. Sensitive to the positivist critique of metaphysics, Ramsey's rendering is severely chastened, and is in no sense to be taken as a 'super-science'. To tie his hopes for metaphysics with the verification criterion, Ramsey points to the integrating functions of languages that _are_ accepted as cognitively meaningful by the positivists: mathematics, logic, and scientific theorizing.

In geometry, for example, a term like 'sphere' unites talk of football, cherries, oranges, the earth, etc. just as talk about squares unites talk of Trafalgar Square in London, Times Square in New York, and carpentry. In a linguistic context, logic serves to map diverse inductive sequences or to tie the commands of a general in the field to the logic of a chef's directions in a kitchen. But the integrative functions of both are limited.

In the context of strictly empirical assertions in science, Ramsey argues that the goal of a single integrative map of the universe within scientific discourse is logically impossible because the integrative process itself stands outside of science. He asks rhetorically,

> Can the language of science give us a completely exhaustive map? The brief answer is, logically, no, ... Fragmentation ... is logically inescapable if we are to be mere scientists. As a scientist, a man is doomed to disappointment if his aim is an over-all scheme. Each generalisation, each theory, has a significance which is never wholly taken over by another. (CE, 155)

Faced with the inevitable fragmentation of strictly empirical discourse on one hand, and the groundless speculation of traditional metaphysics on the other, Ramsey attempts a two-pronged reconstruction of an empirical metaphysics. This is built upon his interpretation of Berkeley's concept of notions and Wittgenstein's puzzling over the logic of 'I-talk', with special emphasis on the latter. As I have shown, Ramsey interpreted Berkeley's 'notions' to refer to the elusive activities of the mind. Ramsey shared Berkeley's suspicion of abstract ideas. Ideas must be grounded empirically. But Ramsey denies that this must spell the end of metaphysics. He argues that 'unity' and 'wholeness' are notionally given. Such relations are products of the activities of the mind; the mind groups things together. If this activity can be demonstrated in mathematics and logic as well as in theories in science, a defence can be built for non-speculative metaphysical groupings as well.

In his discussions of Berkeley's 'notions', Ramsey explicitly ties this awareness of the activities of the mind to self-disclosures. Notions are disclosure-given. Thus when he looks for a logical paradigm for metaphysical mapping, for relating diverse empirical assertions, Ramsey turns to Wittgenstein's musings on the logic of first person utterances. Wittgenstein discerned two ways in which 'I-talk' functions. The first is like third-person assertions in which the object is myself. When the bishop is asked who preached the sermon, he can legitimately reply

"the bishop did' <u>or</u> 'I did'. The logical force is un-
changed. But much of first-person discourse carries a
different weight. Discourse, moral and religious, to
which I give my personal backing, as well as self-
descriptions that taken together disclose 'a loner' or
tie experiences together as memory does, has an eccentric
logic. To some extent this is the same point Ramsey was
making, contra-Hume, in locating the continuity among ex-
periences not in the perceptions themselves, but in the
elusive 'I' in the centre. Here then is the linguistic
counterpart to the experience-integrating self-disclosure.
In such a disclosure we see the unity linking our 'bundle
of perceptions'. In 'I-talk' we tie together various
strands of discourse--descriptive, moral, aesthetic, re-
ligious and other--in an increasingly broad context.

Further, Ramsey argues that our self-disclosure is
matched by the single individuation, the objective refe-
rent given in an all-inclusive cosmic disclosure. 'God-
talk' <u>in</u> <u>this</u> <u>sense</u> is a logical kinsman to 'I-talk' in
that 'God' unites the various contexts: impersonal and
personal, natural/empirical and ethical, etc. Theistic
mapping ties the models of 'first cause', 'unity', and
'wholly other' with fatherly love, servanthood and obedi-
ence; discourse of molecular and organic chemistry in the
context of creation with ethical discourse in terms of
duty, etc.

Here again, Ramsey supports this claim by insisting
that the disclosed reference is objective in that it

declares itself to us in activity as persons sometimes do.
Hence the integrating characterisation, 'the loner' uniting
various descriptions is not inferential, but based on the
'objective' disclosure of a person. Although I did not men-
tion this in my preliminary comments on the logic of the
'loner's' self-description, it is significant that each of
his or her characterisations are reports of activities;
behaviour which, taken in isolation, might be exhausted by
scientific observations. The integrating characterisation,
however, is a disclosure-given image (or model) which can
only be evoked (if at all) by considering a broad survey
of a person's activity. Like any other model, the charac-
terisation 'the loner' must find its empirical fit with a
wide range of the person's activity, and thus provide a
loose map of his personality.

Another link between 'I-talk' and 'God-talk' is the
'probable' nature of first-person assertions and religious
claims about God. Such an assertion as 'I take a book to
read on trains' includes both incorrigible and corrigible
elements. These components can be divided: 'I exist'
(incorrigible, disclosure-given), and '(He) takes a book
to read on trains' (corrigible). Likewise 'God is infi-
nitely good' includes 'God exists' (incorrigible) and
'goodness' (a corrigible model), subject to qualification
and contextualising both empirical and among other models.
'God is infinitely good' is therefore 'probable' both in
the sense of being partly corrigible, partly incorrigible,
and in the sense of being an assertion to which we commit
ourselves.

Turning to the theistic map, it is clear that Ramsey prefers those models which serve to bring together diverse strands of Christian discourse (and those models which link Christian discourse with that which is not distinctively theistic). This he makes explicit in a number of writings. "We shall know better 'what we are talking about'--in one sense of that phrase--the more our discourse, articulated around a dominant model, is integrated and unified." (CD, 87) To this criterion, as we have seen, Ransey adds another: empirical fit.

Some of the middle ground between metaphysics and empirical fit comes from the (at first glance unlikely) sphere of personal freedom. Ramsey argues that in certain situations, without any qualitative difference in the causal background, an individual's personal backing gives to an action a dimension which is not articulated in object-description language. From this angle our approach to the integrating functions of models is radically transformed. The point of personal backing ought to recall the original function of model language; that role with which we began, but which critics of Ramsey tend to forget. In all the talk about empirical anchorage, tying discourse down to the disclosure situations from which it arises, and of articulation possibilities, qualifiers, and the metaphysical integration of diverse contexts by super-models, the original function of models is often left behind. Hence critics who concentrate their remarks upon the concept of models, or on the idea of empirical metaphysics, or the

problems of a single objective referent tend not to mention that the basic, ubiquitous, and constant function of model language is the evocation of disclosures. Just as Ramsey argues that all experience is subject-object in structure, so he would argue that there is no such thing as an objective disclosure; if by that is meant a disclosure without an individual to appropriate it, without a subject who is able to come to self-disclosure in his or her response of commitment.

Not that I agree with all of the above. For instance, one might argue that once metaphysics has been dethroned from its position as a super-science, and once it has been reduced to 'solipsism as the primitive metaphysics'--once the integrative 'glue' of metaphysics has been shown to be 'personal backing'--it is then no metaphysics at all.[13]

Further, I am not sure of the direction in which this might be developed. One could argue, for instance, that the contextualising of models must be done by strict logic to an extent that would obliterate the disclosure-commitment basis of the theistic map. Alternatively if the integration of oranges, footballs, and cherries is possible only if there is a comprehending mind, one could read the beginnings of a reconstructed 'only Geist is real' Idealism. This suggestion may have been welcomed by the early Ramsey; and some would argue that it is another sign that the early Ramsey never really left. I am not suggesting that he did. But if we are to judge by his many-faceted apology for contemporary empiricism, it is difficult to conclude that he

would forget its lessons in so short a time. And, in any case, we are merely considering a <u>hypothetical</u> development of his 'empirical metaphysics'.

I would prefer to develop these personal-empirical metaphysics along lines for which he himself provided more fuel. In brief, its facets are: (a) that disclosure is a personal concept; it is a matching of activity upon (subjective) reception; (b) that the meaningfulness of religious language is judged by its evocative functions, by its ability to evoke a disclosure which I can appropriate; (c) that the personal response of commitment (in which I realise my self or not) is not a matter of inference from more and more data; but (d) probability is the very guide of life in that (1) the crucial 'seeing-as' or 'experiencing-as' perspectives one brings to life are 'grey areas' which must be loosely fit, and (2) such loose-fitting maps are highly determinative of our activity.

The importance of personal commitment to one or another loose-fitting map is brought out in the following passage from Frederick Ferré's <u>Language</u>, <u>Logic</u> <u>and</u> <u>God</u>. He points out that there are many maps which claim comprehensiveness, continued refinement, better fit, etc., but that one must choose:

> There is no question of remaining aloof,
> taking no position on the character of
> reality. The poised and tentative pos-
> ture is the natural one for cloistered
> thought; it is an impossible one for life.
> Every sane disposition for behavior is
> based on what is thought to be the case;
> every 'forced option' which life thrusts
> on one has profound implications for one's
> implicit (or explicit) choice of a model

in terms of which to conceive the ultimately
real.  Agnosticism of the mind in these mat-
ters may be cultivated among a narrow group
of would-be purists, but daily challenges to
action--where even inaction may be a culpable
choice--make agnosticism in life an absurdity.[14]

## God and Ought

> "If God does not exist, everything is permitted"
> (Ivan Karamazov)

> "When a man submits God to moral judgment, he
> kills him in his own heart"   (Albert Camus)

Although it is impossible to provide as full a reading
of the intellectual climate that Ramsey faced in ethics,
some background is necessary.  Fortunately enough of this
environment can be gained from examining the issues which
arise from two critical articles in Christian Ethics and
Contemporary Philosophy; one by Patrick Nowell-Smith, the
other by Kai Nielsen.  The concerns these help to focus are:
the current status of deontological (or duty-oriented)
ethics, the question of the autonomy of ethics, and the
relationship of faith, religion, God to morality.

If it was not obvious in the discussion of Ramsey's
work in the philosophy of religion, a fundamental weakness
brought about by Ramsey's confinement in a stifling philo-
sophical atmosphere becomes explicit in his ethical theory.
Although we can see intimations of a struggle to break free
of that environment, though the seeds that might have burst
above the bog that is logical empiricism are there, Ramsey
never follows them to their conclusion, preferring instead
to develop a worn and outmoded model to a fine and subtle
statement.

Ivan Karamazov's existential cry--picked up by
Nietzsche--required a firm reply by way of a new basis for
ethics.  One such response, humanist ethics, is ably

represented in Ramsey's anthology on Christian ethics[1] by
Patrick Nowell-Smith and Kai Nielsen.  Both contributions,
ostensibly written to 'beat the dead horse' of deontolo-
gical theological ethics, actually typify the difficulties
in founding any ethics apart from God.  On the whole
Nielsen's is the more analytical; thus Nowell-Smith's,
which I shall consider first, is the more fruitful.  My
initial concern will be the general relationship of reli-
gious and secular morality, and Nowell-Smith's critique
of deontological ethics.  I shall turn to more specific
issues:  the relationship of faith to morality, God and
ought, and the logical status of theological terms in an
ethical context, with reference to Nielsen's essay;
although these themes will, of course, overlap.

Nowell-Smith builds a powerful argument to the effect
that religious morality is infantile.  As his case is
built upon a parallel with Piaget's work in psychology,
it is strengthened by the empirical anchorage of his eval-
uations.  Nonetheless his caricature of Christianity is
virtually unrecognizable.  On the other hand, his use of
Piaget provides an incisive critique of 'immature' ethics;
probably moreso than Nowell-Smith himself intends.

Piaget found in an examination of child behaviour at
the game of marbles three distinct stages of personality
development.  At the first stage there is no attention
paid to the rules; but no point to the play, either.
During the second stage, ages five through nine, the child
begins to accept the rules.  But any suggestion that the

rules be changed, even in the interests of improving the game, or adapting it to countervailing circumstances, is inconceivable. The rules are seen as absolutes; sacred and inviolable laws. Piaget terms this attitude heteronomous to mark the fact that the child sees the rules as external, objective. The child knows what the rules are, but cannot see beyond the rules to their intended result. They are absolutes, intrinsically binding, inviolable regardless of consequences. In the final stage it dawns upon the child that the rules are only there to achieve a purpose; namely the orderly playing of the game. The rules are now seen to be provisional; upheld by mutual consent for the purpose of accomplishing a specific function.

Nowell-Smith closes his discussion of Piaget with two points. Some of the children saw wrongdoing simply in terms of quantity: breaking fifteen glasses accidentally was seen as a worse transgression than breaking one cup in trying to steal something. The second insight from Piaget, which together with the first Nowell-Smith terms 'moral realism', is that the young children did not recognize an act as wrong unless it was punished. Nowell-Smith sees great significance in the heteronomy exhibited by both tendencies. One could just as easily interpret the two points to refer to an over-simplification of ethics to consequences alone. But the latter reading does not seem to fit with Nowell-Smith's purposes.

Undoubtedly some of the implications for possible interpretations of some types of theological ethics are clear. Nowell-Smith, however, wishes to argue that a deontological attitude, with its accompanying heteronomy, is basic to the very idea of a religious ethics. He states that the moral act is held to be separate from the question of its rightness or wrongness. It is not the nature of the act, but that the act is disobedience, that makes it wrong. Likewise good acts are not good in themselves, but only insofar as they are obedience to God. Although the application to certain theological approaches is becoming obvious, I shall not attempt to defend every dubious theology against each attack.[2] At this time I am only trying to give an exposition of the relevant material from Nowell-Smith's article.

Along with a deontological approach, Nowell-Smith perceives heteronomy inherent in religious ethics. Citing Abraham as an ideal, he comments that Christianity demands the absolute surrender of the will. He sees faith as essentially heteronomous; demanding unconditional, rather than reasoned trust in someone. The relationship of faith to morality will be explored more fully below. For the moment a reference to Romans 3.28: "For we reckon that a man is to be justified by faith apart from works of the law," should suffice to show that the relation of faith to morality is much more complex than Nowell-Smith implies.[3]

Nowell-Smith's conclusion is that religious morality evacuates man of any responsibility, and is therefore infantile.

"To pass from childhood to adulthood is es-
sentially to pass from dependence into free-
dom, and the price we pay is responsibility.
As adults we must make our own choices and
must accept their consequences ... To many of
us this is a life-long regret, and we search
endlessly for a father-substitute. Surely
'they' will get us out of this mess; there
ought to be a law; why doesn't somebody ...
(CE and CP, 107)

Although the reference to 'father-substitute' raises

the question of the complex logic of 'father' in Christian

discourse, the challenge is so direct that it is impossible

to continue to evade its import. As J. R. Lucas points out,

it is both intellectually dishonest and far too easy to deny

that Nowell-Smith's criticisms have any connection with

Christian ethics. Admittedly, his own application of Piaget

and his 'mature' ethics is often weak (as demonstrated by

his misunderstanding of faith). But while existentialists

following Kierkegaard, and humanists like Nowell-Smith, and

even a meta-ethicist like R. M. Hare have stressed the ele-

ment of personal decision in ethics, it is clear that much

of theological ethics has been oriented towards the virtual

exclusion of the individual's will, volition, intentions, etc.

But Nowell-Smith is more than a little arrogant in press-

ing his point in so selective a manner. Certainly one can

perceive two great traditions of 'radical deontology': the

Roman Catholic reliance on principles and the Protestant

'sola gratia'. But one can trace two parallel strains of

infantile heteronomy in non-theistic ethics: rationalism

and empiricism. The former denies decision by positing the

external certainty of an inferential path from premise to

moral reaction. The latter either continues to grope for

a resurrected naturalist ethics, or follows the emotivist
in washing his hands in despair of finding the 'ought' in
the 'is'. The extent to which both mitigate human freedom--
and hence responsibility--is, I think, obvious. But perhaps
this only indicates the faults of heteronomy as applied to
ethics.

Before returning to Nielsen I would like to complete
my consideration of deontological ethics by touching upon
W. G. Maclagan's book, The Theological Frontier of Ethics,
as it was reviewed by Ramsey.[4] As implied by the title,
Maclagan attempts to find the boundaries between theology
and ethics by pointing out the areas in which theology has
usurped some of the realm of ethics. These are: (1) the
doctrine of 'sola gratia', (2) religious talk of duty  as
'God's will', and (3) the idea that God's grace is a nec-
essity to do one's duty--that dutifulness is inadequate in
itself. Briefly, the problem with the first is that, inso-
far as by this doctrine man is held accountable for what he
cannot help but do, doubt is cast upon divine justice. The
second makes duty, normally intrinsically binding, dependent
upon God's command. Maclagan states "If we are not to use
anthropomorphic concepts, the theory cannot be stated, and
if we are to use them it cannot be defended; and one or the
other we must do."[5] As to the third, that God's grace is
necessary to do one's duty, the first and second criticisms
taken together make the straightforward understanding of
this claim laughable. Because of original sin, we cannot
do our duty, which is only our duty by arbitrary fiat,

except for grace, which irresistably brings out a moral response to God's command. It is a logical equation; all it lacks is man.

In discussing the overlap of points two and three, Maclagan writes that talk of duty as God's command and as a moral demand conflates personal and impersonal logic. Talk of a moral response seems to demand a personal logic, while the deontological elements of moral demand and duty require impersonal logic. Maclagan sees a clear inconsistency here if theological discourse is taken in the logically straightforward sense demanded by the equation of God's will and duty, and preferred by 'radical deontologists'. But he argues that if theologians are more sensitive to the complex logic of their own discourse, the paradoxical relation of personal and impersonal logic can signal a 'lateral enrichment' of ethical contexts.

Two examples of this 'lateral enrichment' can be taken from the points of criticism above. After his scathing treatment of those who would assume that grace empowers man's moral actions like electric jolts stimulate muscle reactions in corpses (my example), it is surprising to find Maclagan return to resurrect the meaningfulness of grace. He sees the relationship of grace to moral response as 'environmental succour'. Likewise, he admits that moral experience, once left on its own, may reveal more than is ordinarily acknowledged; and that this 'more' might be of greater significance.

Although these more tolerant points might be taken as welcome relief from the stringency of his previous criticisms,

they can be used to illustrate methodological flaws in
Maclagan's work. Rather than generously supplying us with
the meagre possibilities for 'lateral enrichment', Maclagan
has substantially undermined his original position with his
qualifications. It now becomes apparent--with these two
references to the moral experience--how restrictive his
method has been to this point. It is both analytical--to
the exclusion of personal experience--and strictly deonto-
logical: even deontological Judaism did not see God solely
as law-giver supreme.[6] (The seemingly straightforward sug-
gestion of taking grace as 'environmental succour' disguises
a subtle compromise of the autonomy of ethics, in bringing
in external motivational elements.) These two points--that
a strictly deontological approach misconstrues the relation
of God and ought, and the reductionist tendency of analy-
tical philosophy--can be brought out with reference to Kai
Nielsen's article.[7] Nielsen's basic aim is to set forth
the traditional arguments which subsume morality under re-
ligion, and then demolish each position. Echoing Moore,
Nielsen gives the stock response to those who would equate
'God wills X' and 'X is good'. Even if we can clearly es-
tablish that God does will X, it is nonetheless a sensible
question to ask 'Is X good?'.[8] Leaving aside the diffi-
culties in clarifying what he means by the word 'good',
it is at least clear that Nielsen has, from the start,
made a fundamental category mistake in both his understand-
ing of the word 'God' and his simplistic interpretation

of the verb 'to will'. As I have stressed throughout the thesis the logic of 'God' is exceedingly complex. It is clear that Nielsen does not even give 'God' the logical respect due to 'Kai', 'Patrick', 'Ian', or 'I'.[9] He naively assumes he is analysing the usage of a descriptive term, 'God'; or at least the descriptive uses of the term.

Although he does/not understand the usage of the terms 'God', 'command', 'will', etc., Nielsen is very helpful in eliminating other misinterpretations of the words 'logical behaviour'. Brunner, for example, argues that the way the word 'good' is ordinarily used bears no relation to the meaning of the word in the mouth of a believer. In his knowledge of God he has perceived the true meaning of the word. Nielsen admits that there is no logical fallacy here, but charges that such a posture trivialises Christian moral discourse by actually proclaiming its irrelevance to ordinary language.

More important for Nielsen's case, Brunner's argument has still not shown how to derive an evaluative statement from a descriptive one. His point is based on the distinction between the descriptive and the evaluative, taking 'God exists' as typical of the non-moral, descriptive statement. His attempts to hold or suitably qualify this fundamental presupposition reveal its weaknesses. He introduces the possible response that 'God exists' must never be seen as merely descriptive. His attack is based on the claim that "a claim about what kind of beings there are in the universe is analytically distinguishable (though perhaps

<u>not</u> <u>in</u> <u>fact</u> <u>separable</u>) from the moral evaluation involved in religious language."[10] (<u>CE</u> <u>and</u> <u>CP</u>)

As Braithwaite argues in his well-known address (also included in <u>CE</u> <u>and</u> <u>CP</u>), such an approach is untenable. Whatever the faults of that lecture in failing to do justice to the transcendent elements of religious assertions, Braithwaite does succeed in putting religious discourse in tight relation to moral language. Religious statements are at least expressions of the believer's intention to follow a particular moral policy. Braithwaite saw moral intention as a possible criterion of meaning for religious language. 'Jesus is Lord' can hardly be construed as a merely descriptive statement.

Nielsen actually makes this point but then demonstrates his incapacity to comprehend it. He argues that if we take away the evaluative force of the term 'God' and isolate its descriptive content, we must still come to an independent judgment about the moral status of the being in question. He raises the rhetorical point that we cannot separate the evaluative and the descriptive forces of the term, only to reply, "we can and we must if we are going to attain clarity in these matters". It is noteworthy that he has here dropped the qualifying phrase that these are analytically separable, 'though perhaps not in fact', so that clarity is to be obtained by ignoring the relationship of logic to reality! Here is the source of Nielsen's category blunder. Undoubtedly the phrase 'Prof Nielsen' has some descriptive force, but the

Professor would hardly consider it flattering to analytically distinguish his moral self, his acting self, his rational self, etc. Somehow, though, when we approach God we are to take the opportunity of slicing up analytically what is not in fact separable in order 'to attain clarity in these matters'.

There are numerous possible responses to Nielsen's 'clarity', some more refined, some more dangerous, than others. Patterson Brown, for example, argues that in our civilisation 'God' is a morally biased term such that to say 'God is good' is trivially true. For the Christian it is more crude logically than to say that saints are good. 'Saints are good' is a truism like 'murder is wrong'. But God is the criterion of good; therefore if Z is God, then by definition we are unconditionally obliged to do what God commands. The weakness of this statement is its partial dependence upon 'head-counting' definition. Presumably 'God is good' is not trivially true for unbelievers like Schopenhauer (Nielsen's example). Another possible criticism of this view is that talk of 'unconditional obligation to do what God commands' slips back into positing goodness as something objective, external to God. Finally, citing the 'Christian' meaning of the term 'God' tends towards the 'private language' position of Brunner.

In similar, but more refined, arguments D. A. Rhees and D. Z. Phillips argue that Nielsen's 'clarity' is a misinterpretation of the terms. Neither writer, however, wants to equate God's commands and goodness in any slipshod

fashion. Rhees states that 'X is good' and 'I ought to do X' are perfectly meaningful apart from God, but that 'God commands X' cannot be correctly understood without understanding 'I ought to do X', 'X is good'. Phillips argues from a carefully balanced position that the criterion of meaning is intrinsic to each language game--without allowing this to develop (degenerate?) into a private-language theory. He states that the logic of God the Father cannot be understood without obedience being good by definition. But while doing the will of God is good, and while duty is simply doing the will of God, Phillips maintains that this duty cannot be treated as a moral concept. The unethical duty of Abraham is the perfect expression of the paradoxical relation of faith and morality. No doubt Nowell-Smith would call this infantile heteronomy; and there is some support for this in Phillips' appeal to Camus' comment: "When a man submits God to moral judgment, he kills him in his own heart."[11] Phillips uses the quote to support his position that religious assent is prior to moral judgment. "To reject God's claim is not to reject one of many competing claims in a way of life; it is to reject a way of life as such."[12]

This differs somewhat from Camus' point; which can be seen by continuing the quotation: "When a man submits God to moral judgment he kills him in his own heart. And then what is the basis of morality? God is denied in the name of justice but can the idea of justice be understood without the idea of God? Have we not arrived at the absurd?"[13]

Presumably, few would be content to follow Camus in The Myth of Sisyphus, and find a foundation for a God-less morality in the absurd. But Camus' ethics is at least genuinely autonomous as opposed to Nowell-Smith's naive trust in man or Nielsen's heteronomous dependence on reason. But again, perhaps heteronomy is not the ab-solute criterion of ethics Nowell-Smith builds it up to be in his attack on religion.

John Lucas provides a fruitful criticism of Nowell-Smith's application of the Piaget/Kantian concept. After agreeing with Nowell-Smith that much of Christian ethics is far too dependent upon external certainty in providing solutions to moral dilemmas, Lucas returns to consider the higher virtues by which Nowell-Smith believes that man stands above the rules--friendship, love, loyalty. Lucas writes, "It seems to me to be the essence of loyalty that one trusts the person one is loyal to beyond the limits of one's own knowledge."[14] In this sense the uncri-tical obedience, which Nowell-Smith calls infantile, is also the loyalty transcending the rules which Nowell-Smith re-veres. To commit oneself in faith to an obedient (or loyal) response is thus an example of that mature respon-sibility that Nowell-Smith advocates.

But is this a sufficient understanding of the para-doxical relation of faith and morality evinced by the story of Abraham? I don't believe it does full justice to the 'teleological suspension of the ethical' as 'Johannes de Silentio' unfolds it in Fear and Trembling. Knowing

that our absolute loyalty is to God and that there is no way that we can logically judge him, we can, by this view, ignore the mundane realm of ethics; thus dissolving the paradox by a direct, objective relationship to our sacred duty. But we cannot judge God (as did Russell, Nietzsche, 'Karamazov', etc.), because this would kill him in our hearts. In that this approach likewise makes nonsense of the question: 'God commands X, but ought I to do it?' it reaches a similar conclusion as Brunner; but by a very different path.

Nowell-Smith and Nielsen make this question nonsense because the first term 'God' is, in their hands, a descriptive, non-moral term which cannot affect the second term, the moral question. Phillips and Rhees makes the question nonsensical 'from above' as it were. Although they see more of the complexity of the question in interpreting both terms as meaningful, they trivialise ethics—though not to the extent that Nielsen charges—because God's will _is_ what I ought to do. Both have their heteronomous elements; the humanists deify ethics, since their concept of X determines what they ought to do. Phillips and Rhees mitigate personal choice by identifying God and ought. Phillips goes far in allowing the logical autonomy of ethics, and in arguing that duty before God and morality are to be kept separate. But his use of Camus' dictum seems to me to indicate his resolution of the paradox and ultimate reduction of 'I ought to do X' to whatever God commands. This signals a return to a constricting deontology.

Perhaps my point can be demonstrated as follows:
(1) The man who does what is right cannot be faulted from deontological ethics, but Nowell-Smith is correct in seeing a certain immaturity in his evasion of responsibility.
(2) The man who is willing to sacrifice his principles to attain the good is in Nowell-Smith's terms responsible in exercising his judgment in the application of the rules. But in that he has still subjugated his judgment to an external (x), he still lacks maturity. (3) The man of loyalty, who performs his duty before God, transferring his allegiance to the infinite is a responsible person of vision. He sees beyond the disclosure of a moral demand to the will to which he is ultimately obliged. As Phillips writes, he sees that in loving his fellow man, he is loving God. He sees doing (X) as doing the will of God.

But the knight of faith (4) arises when Nowell-Smith's responsibility (2) is brought into opposition with (3) the loyalty to the infinite. If one can maintain loyalty to the infinite and to morality by obeying the command to love one's neighbour, what then of Luke 14.26? ("If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brothers and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.")

The knight of faith arises in a courageous response to the paradoxical tension of moral claims:

> ... for in this duty, the Individual as Individual is held in an absolute relation to the absolute. And when, in this connexion, it is said that it is a duty to love God, the statement means something different from the one

which is made here; for if this duty were
absolute, ethics would be reduced to relati-
vity. It does not, however, follow from
this that ethics should be abolished, but
it receives an entirely different expression:
so that, for example his love for God may
cause the knight of faith to give his love
for his neighbour an expression contrary to
his duty in the eyes of ethics.[15]

I have quoted this at length to stress the intention

of the writer that the paradox not be reduced, resolved,

or (his term) 'mediated'. To reduce the good to God's

will, as Barth, Brunner, and others have done is to destroy

the paradox, resolve the tension, and reduce the courage of

faith to a question of loyalty or preference. I realise

that these theological points take us out of the context

of ethics. I would hope, however, that this rather

extensive--some might say excessive--discussion has indi-

cated the ways in which the autonomy of ethics is in some

sense in the interests of Christian faith; but equally the

insights drawn from Camus imply ways in which the logical

autonomy of ethics is an over-simplification of the rela-

tionship between faith in God and 'ought'. The man who

knows that to judge God is to risk killing him is loyal

to God in a responsibility unglimpsed by those whose ideal

of mature ethics is summed up in an infantile heteronomy

of teleological ethics. The knight of faith is he who

trusts in God beyond and through the ethical judgment of

his social sense of morality. The teleological suspen-

sion of the ethical cannot be understood as the annihila-

tion of the ethical without destroying the paradox, miti-

gating the passion that is faith, and reducing God's

will to the commands of an objective, cosmic Sergeant-Major.[16]

Nonetheless annihilate the ethical and posit an objective theological ethics is what much of contemporary theology has attempted to do; thereby assuring its irrelevance.  While many Christians have joyfully followed their theological shepherds--to the delight of 'cultured despisers' like Nielsen and Flew--the radical divorce from reality has seemed a bit extreme to many ethicists, Christian and non-Christian.  A. C. Ewing, for example, argues for the autonomy of ethics, by which he means that ethical terms are distinctive  and cannot be reduced to descriptive terms (biological, sociological, psychological, etc.), or to metaphysical or to theological terms.  If my above analysis is on the right track there is no reason why we should reject this interpretation of the autonomy of ethics.

Unfortunately the predilection of much of Christian moral theology to interpret this autonomy as a threat to the theological basis of Christian morality requires that a more critical approach be applied to the claims of 'theological' ethics.  Whatever his faults, Maclagan has at least shown us the logical difficulties in relating God and ought directly.  My discussion of the complex relation of faith to morality has, I hope, fortified this rejection of 'radical deontological ethics'.  To see God simply as a mechanistic will, (Paley's cosmic clockmaker, Wisdom's gardener, or Kesey's 'Big Nurse')[17] is to

debase faith. It reduces a living relationship of persons to a harsh political/legal code to which we are obliged to conform. For one who has received the unmerited gift of incomprehensible agape the idea of such legalistic duty and zombie response is repulsive. After Christ comes to an individual only the Grand Inquisitor could have the temerity to reintroduce deontology as his basis of ethics.

This is not an area in which we can afford to mince words or utter platitudes about ecumenism. Nor can we assert our power over words and twist gospel into law. I would have thought that all of this would go without saying; but despite the New Testament both Protestants and Roman Catholics have managed to identify Christian ethics with deontological ethics; for, as John Lucas writes, " ... most professing Christians are in fact practising Pharisees, all Christ's own teaching to the contrary notwithstanding."[18] A deontological ethics depends upon reducing the person of God to propositions, twisting the justice of the Kingdom into totalitarian repression, mutating love into legalism.[19]

This said, I hasten to add that man is not an individual; certainly not in the strict Kierkegaardian sense, where the individual completely transcends 'the universal'. Insofar as man is essentially social, deontological elements can find their way into any ethics. They certainly have their place, despite legal positivism, in the boundaries between law and morality. In more empirical terms, man is a social animal; his self is realised in relations

with other selves in social intercourse.[20] Perhaps the
orderly co-operation of men and women inherent in the
survival of society is the kernel of truth in the concept
of natural law. The social self is, in any case, strong
empirical anchorage for these theories; if it is all that
remains of the edifice, however, it is a reasonable ques-
tion to ask if the theory still deserves to be called
natural law. In any case this brief discussion must
suffice to raise the key problems--the question of the
autonomy of ethics, the status of deontological ethics,
the criticism of religious ethics as heteronomous, etc.--
that comprise the background perspective to Ramsey's
ethics.

## Ian Ramsey's Ethics

"Blest are those whose blood and judgment are
so well commingled that they are not a pipe
for fortune's finger to sound what stop she
pleases"                                    (Hamlet)

Typically, much of Ramsey's work in ethics is found
in his dialogues with other thinkers. Despite the con-
stant effort to tie his work to others, Ramsey's 'chas-
tised deontological ethics' exhibits highly original
insights. In discussing his methodology, I shall first
pick up his analytical/linguistic insights from his re-
view of Maclagan's book, and his development of Hare's
position. Second, I shall consider the place of natural
law in his ethics. Then the 'empirical anchorage' will
be examined, both in ethical theory and in social ethics.
Finally I shall attempt to bring out the elements of his
ethics which seem to me to be bursting at the seams of
deontological ethics: the relationship of duty to human
freedom. After exploring Ramsey's ethics, I shall try to
further support these non-deontological elements with a
superseding model.

To recall Maclagan's criticisms, he rejects the three
ways in which doctrines compromise the autonomy of ethics:
the doctrine of 'sola gratia', with its 'causal' under-
standing of the relation of grace to the moral response;
talk of duty as God's will, which compromises the intrin-
sically binding nature of duty; and the idea that God's
grace is necessary to do one's duty. Further, Maclagan

allows for 'lateral enrichment' of ethical experiences if,
for example, grace is seen as 'environmental succour'.
Ramsey raises two caveats which must be recalled in recon-
structing ethics upon such a conservative base:   (1) The
'lateral enrichment' must not be applied in 'causal terms'
without compromising duty once again; (2) Talk of God, his
commands, his will, etc., cannot be taken in straightfor-
ward logic, but must be seen as a 'manner of speaking', or
in Ramsey's terms, qualified models.

(From this point in his article Ramsey turns to con-
sider briefly the points raised by Nowell-Smith and Nielsen
by reference to the responses of Patterson Brown and Dom
Illtyd Trethowan.  For a number of reasons he does not men-
tion his own unique contribution to the problem:[1]  Picking
up point two above, Ramsey might have brought his concept
of qualified models to bear on the relation of God and
goodness.  To say that God is the criterion of goodness,
as Patterson Brown does, is to make him an objective stan-
dard, and to miss the logical relation of 'good' to God.
If, on the other hand, 'goodness' is qualified by 'infinite'
we are less likely to enter into the logical webs which
amount, in one way or another, to judging God--commending
or condemning.)

This said, Ramsey's contribution, a 'lateral enrich-
ment' of R. M. Hare's 'universal prescriptivity' is ex-
tremely fruitful.  Ramsey takes what he needs from Hare
in two paragraphs.  He writes that prescriptivity expresses
the element of personal commendation in moral judgments.

If we believe that an action (A) is good, it means that, given similar circumstances, we intend to follow (A). The 'objective' element is supplied by the universalizability of prescriptives. Not only do we commit ourselves to (A), but we see it as exemplary of a general principle which we commend universally--the 'quasi-factual' nature of ethical judgments when in like situations ceteris paribus, we expect all reasonable persons to share our judgment.

Ramsey's characteristic enrichment begins from arguing that the descriptive element of the moral situation is not sufficient to explain the concept of prescriptivity. The 'more' to which Ramsey appeals is the 'claim-possessing' aspects of the situation. Before I can prescribe a course of action (A) for you, (to say nothing of universalizing it) (A) must have in some way claimed me. Or, in terms recalling his issue with Ryle, Hare has conflated the logic of other-prescriptivity and self-prescriptivity; when in fact the discrepancies between the logic of the two are particularly revealing. While a prescriptive assertion seems to account for my prescribing an action (A) for another person, it does little to explain how I arrived at this judgment in the first place. Further, because the person to whom I commend (A) must discern the claim as I have done, it is not really adequate to explain moral commitment at all. "To be clearer about moral judgment we must make evident the prior claims to which the moral judgment is a response, the claim which arises out of and around the facts of the situation which are considered relevant." (CE and CP, pages 164-165)

Ramsey holds that an account of moral judgments which includes the descriptive elements, as well as the logical character of moral assertions/is nonetheless in need of expansion in the direction he has indicated. Moral assertions are only prescriptive because they are _responsive_ to a prior moral claim. But the question instantly arises: does this account not compromise the autonomy of ethics? To speak of the moral claim as a duty which is disclosure-given is suspiciously close to sneaking God back into the ethical experience.

Ramsey argues that there is no threat to the 'autonomy' of ethics as it is generally stated: the logical distinctiveness of the context of ethical language. His lateral enrichment does not provide _entailing_ reasons for a moral judgment--the claim remains, in this sense, intrinsically binding. If one perceives God in the value-claim, if the situation takes on depth, mediates an 'undercurrent', this is only a legitimate theological development of a duty which would be binding without such an interpretation.

It is not clear, however, that Ramsey has successfully defended his 'enrichment' against this charge. To speak of a disclosed duty is to raise two problems. Insofar as it is disclosed, it requires a discloser. If this discloser is not God, then it must be the situation itself; a conclusion which is perilously close to the naturalist fallacy. More important, however, is the compromise of ethics in the very idea of a value-claim. If the facts, in some way or other, do exert a claim, do disclose a duty

which is intrinsically binding, then the element of per-
sonal decision, the judgment basic to Hare's prescriptives,
is lost. One way out, of course, is to follow Tillich's
theonomous ethics.[2] But this carries with it problems of
its own theologically, to say nothing of its philosophical
legitimacy. While I can agree with Ramsey in saying that
such 'enrichment' does little to compromise the logical
autonomy of ethics as Ewing presents it, his experiential
concept of a claim-possessing situation and the response
of commitment breaks the bounds of a strictly analytical
approach to ethics. Rather than compromising ethics on
Ewing's terms, this throws the very concept of autonomy
into grave doubt; a concept born in the clinical environ-
ment of analytical philosophy and dashed against the rocks
of experience.

Still, when one considers the ways in which theology
has tried to 'usurp some of the realm of ethics' by in-
ferring a 'radical deontology' from exegesis, Ramsey's
earnest attempt to maintain ethics' autonomy is more than
understandable. It is laudable. Ethicists--both Chris-
tian and non-Christian--do far too much 'direct' talking
of God's commands in ways which assimilate the logic of
'God-talk' with the logic of persons with disastrous
results. Ramsey mentions that Richard Robinson seems to
assume that the logic of God the Father is no different
from that of human fathers. Similarly Patterson Brown
falls into saying things like "There is a God, and he
commands y", and "... one can infer by means of reason

alone, _i.e._ _via_ the Natural Law, what God would command."
(_CE_ and _CP_, page 170) To these Ramsey's reply is that
whatever else we may know about religious language, we
know that the logic of God is such that 'God' cannot simply
be substituted for Headmaster or Sergeant-Major in "The
Headmaster wants all the children to do x" or "The Sergeant-
Major commands X".

In the concluding essay in _Christian Ethics and Con-
temporary Philosophy_, Ramsey picks up on an attempt by
Professor H. L. A. Hart to resuscitate the concept of
natural law. Admittedly Hart's version is extremely con-
servative in its claims for the rules of conduct discover-
able by reason alone. His single presupposition is that
the end of man is survival.[3] From this he draws five
reasonable principles:

    a. Law and morality have to restrict the use
       of violence in killing or assault.
    b. There must be a system of mutual forbear-
       ance and compromise--both legal and moral.
    c. There must be a measure of human altruism
       (this would not be needed if men were an-
       gels, nor possible were men devils).
    d. Because of earth's limited resources, there
       must be some minimal form of property.
    e. Sanctions are needed; not as a motive, but
       simply so that those who are voluntarily
       good are not at a loss to those who are not.
(_CE_ and _CP_, pages 387-388, paraphrased).

Ramsey tries to secure Hart's claim that survival be
taken as a basic assumption given by reason. He argues
that survival must be a moral necessity; that is, that my
survival be _naturally_ good--that my eating and resting be
naturally good for me as they are oriented towards my sur-
vival. Disregarding the problems with the very word

'natural' Ramsey continues that perhaps the moral neces-
sity of survival is itself a disclosure; and again, in
the recognition of this moral claim is the possibility of
self-disclosure/self-realization.

Ramsey sees in this rendering of natural law parallels
with Christian ethics.  Like natural law, he writes, Chris-
tian ethics builds certain ideas from key themes.  But
unlike the natural law theory--where pluralism threatens
its claims to fundamental ideas--the diversity of Christian
themes is actually an advantage.  Certain key ideas--re-
demption, incarnation, love, servanthood, and so on--will
be present to some extent in virtually any matching of
moral situation and Christian commitment.  It is clear that
Ramsey envisages a developing, open-ended code growing out
of such a method.  Any resulting code would never ossify
because it would arise from, and be constantly checked
against, concrete situations.

Ramsey concludes that Christian ethics can be seen to
be identical with natural law; or, it can be seen to be
in fundamental agreement, but to supplement it; or, it can
be seen as antagonistic to it.  Ramsey takes the middle
position, though such a supplementary relation is far from
simple.  It remains a difficult task to consider the gui-
dance of natural law or Christian themes, and make a moral
decision when the occasion arises.  If the method is only
seen as a guide, Ramsey believes it will skirt the notor-
ious difficulties with the natural law theory in the past;
as well as avoid the charge of heteronomy, since the final

decision is not external to the actor. The principles
arrived at are never incorrigible, nor to be taken as
absolute rules of behaviour. As each arose out of a con-
crete call, the matching of each principle to each situa-
tion discloses a claim in response to which we can realize
ourselves as persons.

Obviously I cannot pretend to do justice to the issue
of natural law in a brief paragraph. But it is true that
the concept of natural law was hardly central to Ramsey's
ethics. Nonetheless, it is possible to mention criticisms
which spring to mind in the light of Hart's five principles.
The first is, of course, that this is not what is meant by
natural law; that in this form, the concept has 'died the
death of a thousand qualifications'. Secondly, the argu-
ment is based on drawing conclusions from 'nature'. The
'naturalistic fallacy' aside, the inherent ambiguity of
the term 'natural' should suffice to keep anyone interested
in clarity from entering into its web.[4] By it one can
certainly not mean the 'order' of the universe--or the bio-
sphere--for, as Charles Darwin wrote: "What a book a
devil's chaplain might write on the clumsy, wasteful, blun-
dering and horribly cruel works of Nature".[5] Finally, each
of Hart's prescriptions--for they are prescriptions rather
than principles reasoned from 'survival'--can be criticized
for varying degrees of moral bias. They depend on a view
of reason which is heteronomous in any case, and in theolog-
ical terms is dependent upon the view that reason was not
involved in the fall. Those who do not follow Thomas on

this often conclude that reason has fallen--or at least
that it is a mere tool which can be used for immoral as
easily as moral ends. This is clear in Hart's fourth
principle. On the one hand property can be seen as sup-
port for healthy order; but it can as easily become a
means of totalitarian oppression; a bulwark of injustice.

Ramsey's suggestions for a rehabilitated natural law
do, however, demonstrate the methodological approach that
he would bring to ethics--and this is his forte in ethical
theory. In an article written in 1957, "Ethics and Reason"
(CE, pages 48-56), Ramsey attempted to bring out the les-
sons for theological ethics in a marriage of empiricism
and rationalism celebrated by Morris Ginsberg. Ginsberg
raises four questions which are often applied to any asser-
tion 'X is good'. (1) How far does X gather together
certain instincts, attitudes, feelings, etc.? (2) How
far does X arise from a direct and immediate apprehension
centred on the particular situation in mind? (3) How far
does the moral assertion ('X is good') follow from general
principles which are either self-evident or have been in-
tuited in some way? (4) How far has the assertion been
reached by reasoned argument--about both the means and the
ends themselves?

Ginsberg points out that rationalists tend to concen-
trate on the latter two questions, whereas empiricists
give more attention to one and two. This follows from
the fact that one and two are concerned with experiential
aspects of the situation, and three and four are directed

towards ratiocination. Of course, no moral philosopher is entirely rationalist or empiricist. Russell, for example, concentrated on one and two above, but maintained that it is possible to build a science of ethics upon the verification of ethical assertions in the same way as scientific propositions are built up. This mixing of empiricist and rationalist method brings Ramsey to the 'is'-'ought' dichotomy. He asks, "Does not every _situation_ have _both_ its 'facts' _and_ its 'values', so that no matter how differently these can be talked of or treated, there must, _since they belong to the one situation, be some kind of connection between them_?" (_CE_, page 50) If they are not ontologically distinct, why should there not be logical ties? Here then is Ramsey's response to Nielsen's overzealous use of the 'descriptive/evaluative' dichotomy.

But this is not to deny Hume his helpful point. Rational enquiry cannot create morality or derive the moral from the non-moral rationally. But if there is some sort of connection ontologically, then either the empiricist's 'pure is', or the sure-fire inference from the premises of the rationalist, or perhaps both, must be judged as inadequate to explain morality. Ramsey comments:

> In short, I have myself never been over-awed
> by Hume's claim which was the outcome of an
> empirical theory of knowledge where 'facts'
> were supposed to be no more than cosmic tiddly-
> winks with 'values' housed somewhere else if
> (and the alternative is significant) housed
> anywhere at all. To separate 'facts' from
> 'values' may lead to a high view of ethics:
> it may equally lead to no ethics at all.
> (_CE_, page 50)

Ramsey's own position, then, is less concerned with bridging the 'is-ought' dichotomy than it is with bridging the empiricist-rationalist dichotomy. We have already seen the ways in which he sees situations as value-laden; duty is disclosed in and around 'the facts' of the situation. Here is an empiricist's sense of duty. Thus the ethicist's task is to bridge the instincts, attitudes, feelings, etc., arising from a disclosure in the situation with the general principles and reasoned argument about the suitable means etc., of the rationalist. Ethics must bring the rational to the empirical 'facts' without expecting a moral response to follow by deductive logic.

The empirical anchorage is essential. But given this, Ginsberg argues that ethics must be sufficiently ordered, its methodology must be rational enough, to find some pattern, some conformity in the varying situations, by which we can mark out the good (X) that is common to all of them. He provides five suggestions for this methodological reasoning: Any morality is the better:

    a.  ... the more it sees goodness as self-
        sustained and independent of external
        sanctions;
    b.  ... the more it can be universalized;
    c.  ... the more it allows for comprehensive-
        ness, flexibility--higher systems allow
        for greater spontaneity;
    d.  ... the more it belongs to a system ex-
        hibiting coherence, systematic connections;
        and
    e.  ... the more it shows the capacity for
        self-criticism and self-direction.

Further, reasoning has at least three functions with relation to ideals. Reason must clarify and define ideals, elucidate their relations to one another, and formulate

the conditions under which they can be realised. Ginsberg points out that the third has already begun to move in the direction of empiricism. Thus Ginsberg looks to the marriage of reasoned approach and empirical anchorage to develop and criticize ethical principles which can be brought to bear on problem situations.

Before going on to Ramsey's own application of Ginsberg's argument, some comparisons must be drawn to the foregoing discussions. In the first place, we see here a non-theological empirical-rational method much like that of which Ramsey spoke in his consideration of natural law. Ginsberg's insistence on the place of reason in clarifying the good, in integrating the insights gained in a comprehensive and universalizable ethics gives careful enough attention to general principles to free his approach from being based upon the situation. On the other hand, his empirical concerns allow him to be sensitive to the complexities of the situation.

Secondly the five criteria above must not be thought to favour one particular approach. Each ethical method will be stronger in some areas than in others; in fact strengths in one area often militate against high marks in others. Taken together, the five criteria match well with much of contemporary ethics. Ensuring that goodness be kept free of external sanctions, and recognizing that higher systems allow for greater spontaneity comes close to the responsible ethics that Nowell-Smith advocates. Likewise the capacity for an ethics to be universalizable

parallels Hare's meta-ethical insights. The question

which Ramsey must face is: Can a Christian ethics meet

these criteria in sufficient strength to avoid the charge

of infantile heteronomy; or of subjectivity; or lack of

coherence; or ethnocentricity (lack of universalizability)?

Ramsey replies in the affirmative; and expands Gins-

berg's position to provide a distinctive Christian ethical

method. Though he does not dispute the autonomy of ethics

in the sense of a unique language game, he does agree with

Ginsberg that the distinctiveness of ethics can be over-

stressed as well; ethics can be set too far from the

empirical data or it can deny the possibility of 'lateral

enrichment'. Thus Ramsey feels compelled to add to Gins-

berg's five criteria: (1) The necessary anchorage in

empirical data; and (2) that the ethical judgment depends

upon more than the empirical information. A moral situa-

tion will exhibit the familiar 'descriptive data--and

more'.

Here again, Ramsey stretches the case of the other

member of his manufactured dialogue. While agreeing with

Ginsberg that any rational ethics will conclude that given

the same empirical data the same ethical judgment should

follow, Ramsey takes this one step farther. He argues

that, given the same moral judgment, it does not follow

that the same moral response will emerge. Here again his

'lateral enrichment' actually compromises the autonomy of

ethics (assuming ethics is taken to include more than

simply the distinctive language game--assuming it considers

not only the judgment, but the intentions, motivations, consequences and so on that also make up the ethical situation). He suggests that a Christian ethics "might well inform moral behaviour with that power which <u>enables</u> appropriate action, moral <u>responses</u>, to follow moral <u>judgments</u>." (<u>CE</u>, page 55) If ethics is merely a cognitive pursuit--which stress on the moral judgment implies-- then it is difficult to see how ethics could fail to be autonomous. Ivan Karamazov's cry 'everything is permitted' must then be taken as madness. But to bring in the account of the moral response, in whatever terms, breaks down the claims for ethical autonomy by including both the discernment, the decision, and the act. I take the fact that Ramsey did not press these points, and in fact held to the 'autonomy of ethics' as he did, as evidence of his inability to break out of the constricting bounds of analytical philosophy.

In like manner, his expectation that a claim of duty should arise from a matching of general principles and empirical data can be cited as an indication of his confinement within the deontological model of ethics; despite his subtle, empirically based rendering of it. Although he is careful to safeguard the autonomy of ethics from an exegetical-deductive approach, and thus keep the good free of external sanctions, Nowell-Smith's linking of deontological ethics and heteronomy remains a strong criticism of his ethics. One who writes that any rational ethics must expect that, given the same 'facts' any two

people will intuit the same value-claim certainly cannot be accused of situationalism; but the charge of infantile heteronomy can easily be applied to such dependence on the empirical data and upon reason to make one's moral decisions. Equally, the intrinsically binding duty disclosed through and around the facts seriously impinges upon human freedom.[6] Not that Ginsberg, Nowell-Smith, or Nielsen, et al., are in any better shape in this regard. In fact, Ramsey's insistence on moral discernment, moral response, and self-realization in the action itself shows some signs of breaking free of the deontological model. Nonetheless duty, obligation to rules, principles, laws, remain his dominant motifs.

In applying this ethical method to Christian social ethics, Ramsey contrasts his method with the simplistic 'linear-systematic' or 'exegetical-deductive' approaches. The latter depends upon an over-simplification of the data upon which a rough categorization is superimposed. Ramsey writes that the method takes key doctrines or verses, and develops by deduction some generalization which is then taken to be the Christian approach to the social problem. One example he offers is original sin; from which is deduced 'Whatever you do makes things worse', and hence, an extremely negative attitude towards social reform. Another key doctrine might be Natural Law, from which virtually anything might be deduced.

Ramsey attacks both the grounds of such moral theorizing, and the foolhardy logic by which such grounds are

developed. To take a particular verse or doctrinal posi-
tion which seems appropriate is to fragment the diverse
totality of the Christian biblical thought and history.
The faults of treating the logic of religious discourse in
straightforward interpretations has already been made clear.
Ramsey's criticisms are summed up in three points:

1. Theological over-simplification: in
   selecting some principles, perhaps only
   one, and taking even these in a limited
   context.

2. Carelessness in argument--confounding
   inference and psychological association,
   or inference and mere consistency, or
   even supposing lack of clear inconsis-
   tency to be the same as positive impli-
   cation.

3. Empirical over-simplification--of the
   situation to be judged.[7]

Obviously this is an anti-type; though it is a sober-
ing thought how much of Christian ethics falls under its
scope. In contrast to the 'linear-systematic' approach
Ramsey offers his 'empirical-exploratory' method. This
involves four steps: (1) Beginning with an actual problem
situation, all the information which can be gained from the
social sciences will be helpful in providing an empirical
base from which to work. The interdisciplinary nature of
Ramsey's method is emphasized in that this first step is
the realm of 'the experts'. It is futile to search for bib-
lical expertise in genetics in making a decision about social
engineering or abortion, for example. (2) The language and
situations brought to light by 'the experts' will hopefully
echo biblical and theological themes, doctrinal positions,

social situations in Christian history, etc. The theologians' task is to be expert in their own field, and to draw upon these themes. The theological input is thus legitimated by its empirical anchorage in past situations in Christian history. (3) Hopefully, this matching of themes and situations will show itself in some insight, some disclosure. As with theological models, the matching is never guaranteed to produce a disclosure, but any insight will show itself in some ethical judgment. The decision will be a Christian response by virtue of its grounding in Christian themes and insight. (4) This is a never-ending process. A moral judgment will transform the situation, which will in turn raise its own problems, its own sociological data. This will again echo biblical and theological themes ... In this way a genuine spirit of exploration is maintained by the continuous generation of moral responses.

Ramsey sees the inherent tentative nature of this method as a benefit; making the Christian social ethics more sensitive to the complexities of contemporary moral dilemmas. Further, it avoids the fragmentation and reductionism of approaches which would subsume all Christian answers under one basic theme. In this way he differs from both Hart's Natural Law, with his sole basis of human survival, and 'situation ethics' with its absolute integrating concept of love. With the latter he shares the concern for the complexities of the actual situation. But his method of matching the social problem with parallel empirical grounding in Christian history, giving rise to a disclosure of duty is unique, and distinctively Christian.

I have indicated ways in which Ramsey's ethics was stifled by both the analytical philosophy and the deontological model under which he worked. It is time that these points were given fuller attention. Fortunately the points at which Ramsey's ethics seem to warrant expansion can be brought out with reference to Ramsey's reflections on the relation of freedom and duty in _Freedom and Immortality_, the Forwood Lectures of 1957. In his discussion of freedom, Ramsey points out that much of the debate has taken place within the scope of observable behaviour. Those who believe that freedom is an essential part of human nature generally point to more features of the behaviour in question to illustrate the actor's freedom. Those who favour the deterministic view point to more and more causal factors behind the act in question.

Ramsey relies upon his 'broadened empiricism' to provide a new approach to the old problem. He argues that the freedom that many perceive and try to point to is not to be found by adding more facts to the account of the action, but by drawing attention to the 'and more' exhibited by such situations. Here is where arguments for free will are to find their empirical anchorage. Among others, he gives the example of a duty-bound ticket clerk at a British Rail window. The man is bound to the routine ticket sales until one day the face at the window, asking for a single to King's Cross, happens to be a man wanted by the police for questioning, say, in a murder case. In a moment the routine selling of tickets takes on

depth, the situation 'comes alive'. As we have seen,
Ramsey argues that a duty is disclosed: the civic duty to
report the man. This is the sort of 'and more' to which
we should point  if we want to talk reasonably about free
will. Whereas we would not want to call the routine sales
of tickets 'decisive activity', the ticket clerk's response
to this particular customer is ontologically peculiar.
There may be nothing in the observable facts to indicate
this; in fact, for the clerk's safety, it would be best
if he could show no sign of recognition. But there is
nonetheless a response by the clerk that demonstrates his
free decisive activity.

Ramsey comments that the free response to a challenge
of duty such as this one is backed personally; it is a
response demanding a personal commitment to a particular
course of action. It goes beyond 'observables' in two
senses:  the objective claim of the situation is disclosure-
given; secondly the subjective response and the self-
awareness given in it are not limited to the describable
'facts'. But more important, the 'and-more' is a disclo-
sure of the freedom of the individual in the decision to
meet the challenge. Although there are empirical bases
for the decision, these cannot account in any causal sense
for the action of the individual.

As sensitive to human experience as this discussion
may be, there is not one word thus far about logical be-
haviour, evaluative force, or universalizability. But
if the foregoing discussion is not confined to analytical

philosophy, it is quite close to other, diverse approaches
to ethics. Sartre, for example, writes that responsibility
means "consciousness (of) being the incontestable author
of an event or of an object".[8] The ticket clerk, in re-
sponding to the moral claim of the situation realizes, to
some extent, his 'authorship' of the events that follow.
If he lets the man go, he will get on the train, travel to
London, and perhaps escape. If he acts prudently, he will
be able to alert the authorities in time to apprehend the
man. Certainly Ramsey would not go as far as Sartre in
claiming that I am responsible for everything, including
the definition of my own nature, and, by extension, human
nature. Ramsey is too sensitive to the environmental con-
ditions into which we are thrust. In his Ethics Bonhoeffer
writes that we do not create the conditions to which we
respond. In this sense the moral agent is dependent upon
the concrete man in the concrete situation. His conduct
is not pre-established.[9]

Probably the strongest parallels can be found between
the moral freedom, demonstrated in the case of the ticket
clerk, of Ramsey's ethics, and H. Richard Niebuhr's
'responsible self'. Niebuhr writes that whereas the
teleological ethicists approach a situation asking 'What
is the goal or end of this action?', and deontologists ask
'What is the rule or principle involved?', the responsible
self asks 'What is going on? What is the fitting act in
this situation?' To ask first what is going on closely
coincides with Ramsey's 'empirical-exploratory' approach.

Crudely fit into the previous example, we might say that the goal of the situation at the ticket counter is for the travellers to get to their destinations. The rule or duty is for the ticket agent to sell them tickets. But when the empirical 'facts' present themselves, when it is clear that 'what is going on' is an attempted escape; then the 'fitting' action is one which is not given in the rules, not covered by the 'goals' of the ticket window, and not reducible to the observable 'facts' of the situation.

But if the 'fitting act' is God's will; can we not speak of the fitting act as our duty? This is certainly the way that Ramsey would see it; but with his characteristic warnings about guarding the odd logic of the assertions made. God's will must be seen as 'lateral enrichment' of the logic of the duty claim. In other words, the duty would remain with or without its theological basis. Ramsey gives three examples of the ways in which we can create these duty-disclosing situations (echoing the above quotation from Sartre): Moral obligations can arise out of ordinary, every-day interaction. In making a commitment we obligate ourselves to fulfill our commitments. Bonhoeffer writes of 'deputyship' that here the image of the isolated individual as the primitive of ethics is shattered. The basis of ethics is not the individual in his isolation, but the responsible person in all of his or her deputyships. He cites as three helpful examples: fatherhood, statesmanship, and the role of teacher.

This coincides with Niebuhr's stress on the social solidarity intrinsic in any ethics. Sociology has demonstrated the social basis of the self. The ethical self, no less than the aesthetic or consumer self, must be taken from the start as a social being. Niebuhr writes: "To be a self in the presence of other selves is not a derivative experience, but primordial. To be able to say I am I is not an inference from the statement that I think thoughts nor from the statement that I have a law-acknowledging conscience. It is, rather, the acknowledgment of my existence as the counter-part of another self."[10] This social solidarity provides the deontological elements of responsible ethics in further elucidating the conditions which are 'given'; those to which, and from which, we must act.

Ramsey's second example is promise-making and promise-keeping. Once he has promised his son to buy the new Dinky toy when it comes out, Ramsey states that he has opened himself up to a duty. This duty will be disclosed when the new toy is displayed in the shop window (or possibly when there is a tug at his coat pocket.) Here Bonhoeffer is helpful at drawing out the ethical implications of the primary status of man in ethics. He argues that the end of things (and ideas) must always be man; that when ideas, such as scientific knowledge, are directed towards some other end, not only man, but the object itself (science) is ruined. Thus ideals like goodness, honesty, integrity, beauty, etc. should never be exalted. They are most revered when their fundamental subservience

to man is respected. Referring back to Ramsey's example of promise-keeping, his duty is not to his promise, but to his son.

Finally, Ramsey mentions the self-disclosing possibilities of conflicting duties. Free will arises, as Ross points out, in situations of conflicting prima-facie duties. My promise to buy my child a new toy may be superceded by my responsibility in my deputyship as father to provide the child with food or new shoes. But the very fact of conflicting duties demonstrates the inadequacy of the deontological model.

Bonhoeffer writes of the law of being inherent in every entity, every being. Responsibility demands attention to these laws; but as the scale of complexity increases, the capacity for the law to exhaust its character is dramatically reduced. Bonhoeffer states:

> The more closely the particular thing with
> which we are concerned is connected with
> human existence, the clearer it will become
> that the law of its being does not consist
> entirely in a formal technique, but rather
> that this law renders all technical treat-
> ment questionable.[11]

Sartre, building upon the fundamental dictum "existence precedes essence", argues that man is indefinable because he defines himself as he goes along. Man appears on the scene, and only later does he define his essence. To say this is only to say that man has a greater dignity than a stone or a table. Man's freedom both requires and provides for an ethics built upon responsibility rather than deontological or teleological ethics. Freedom

requires it because laws are laws of human behaviour; they are based upon predictable, observable behaviour--and this is their helpful function in any ethics. Freedom provides for an ethics of responsibility by man's capacity to act creatively.

Michael Polanyi writes of the greater depth of knowing a person as opposed to the knowledge of a stone:

> Persons and problems are felt to be more profound, because we expect them yet to reveal themselves in unexpected ways in the future, while cobblestones evoke no such expectation. This capacity of a thing to reveal itself in unexpected ways in the future I attribute to the fact that the thing observed is an aspect of a reality, possessing a significance that is not exhausted by our conception of any single aspect of it. To trust that a thing we know is real is, in this sense, to feel that it has the independence and power for manifesting itself in yet unthought of ways in the future. I shall say, accordingly, that minds and problems possess a deeper reality than cobblestones, although cobblestones are admittedly more real in the sense of being tangible.[12]

This corresponds nicely with Niebuhr's preference to talk of accountability rather than consequence when examining the moral act. Whereas consequences are observable, strictly physical, to speak of accountability means that we make moral decisions in light of expected responses to our own response. An action which concentrates on the duty or the goal to the exclusion of the anticipation of the others' responses is, in this sense, not the 'fitting act'. In like manner Bonhoeffer writes: "Responsibility differs from violence and exploitation in that it recognizes the other man as a responsible agent."[13]

All of which seems to have left the deontology of
Ramsey behind. But has it not left Ramsey behind entirely?
I think not. In Freedom and Immortality Ramsey emphasizes
the moral response as nowhere else. Although he still
wants to talk of morality in terms of duty and the moral
law, he is equally if not moreso, concerned to bring out
the personal element. Recall that he spoke of the free
response to a duty claim as one which demands 'personal
backing'. Likewise, in speaking of one's response to the
Moral Law, Ramsey comments, "The logic of 'My action is
determined by the Moral Law' is much more like 'I am
responding to his love and affection' than it is like
'I am reacting to his stimuli and his treatment'."[14] Fur-
ther, in discussing the relationship of human freedom and
divine omnipotence, Ramsey writes, "To the 'all-powerful-
ness' of God, as to obligations of duty, we respond 'freely'.
Our response has our personal backing." (F and I, page 59)

In these ways, then, I believe that both the empiri-
cal and the personal emphases in Ramsey's ethics can be
seen as indications of a theoretical approach more sensi-
tive to the 'responsible self' ethical model than the
analytical and deontological structures within which he
worked. This is not to deny that the deontological model
was the dominant, integrating term of his ethics. But I
am suggesting that his ethical theory was stifled within
this framework. Although there is no possibility of doing
justice to the implications of the supercession of the

deontological model by the responsible self, I must at least try to tie this conclusion to that of previous sections, and summarise the discussion of his ethical theory.

It is obvious how tightly integrated his theological viewpoint and his philosophical background are with his ethical theory. Here again, the concept of disclosure is central. Just as cosmic disclosures are mediated through other disclosures so that every disclosure can eventually bear the name God, ethical disclosures are as common as the obligation to fulfill a promise or to tell the truth. Likewise the religious self-disclosure given to David in the moral condemnation by the prophet Nathan is here matched by the subjective disclosure evoked by the objective disclosure of duty. I have tried to indicate the ways in which this view of self-realization through decisive action exhibits sympathy with the ethics of existentialists.[15]

But there are other connections as well. In discussing the disclosure concept I emphasized the essentially passive nature of the concept as opposed to the more active 'comprehension' built upon tacit knowing by Michael Polanyi. Here again, although the 'active element', the moral response is given careful consideration, it is the disclosure-given duty which predominates. As the ethics are dependent upon disclosures of duty, it leaves little or no room for man's active role in ethics: in perceiving injustice, in defining values, in the freedom of his response. Certainly Ramsey would not agree with Sartre's conclusion, "(Ontology)

must reveal to the moral agent that he is <u>the</u> <u>being</u> <u>by</u> <u>whom</u> <u>values</u> <u>exist</u>."[16]

This ethics, essentially passive despite its extremely active aspects, is in line with both deontological ethics and theological views of revelation. It is, for these very reasons, unable to give God and man the primary status within it which ethicists like Niebuhr and Bonhoeffer stress. I believe that the reason for this is to be found within its excessive dependence upon both analytic philosophy and deontology.

As I have already made clear, I see the experiential and the personal aspects of Ramsey's ethics as the strong points. But far too much of the personal features of moral relations (with man and with God) are neglected by restricting ethics to the legal model. This said, it is of course easier to do logical/analytical 'under-labouring' on the legal model than either the teleological or the responsible models.

In <u>Freedom</u> <u>and</u> <u>Immortality</u>, Ramsey uses a mathematical model to demonstrate that 'God' has a more comprehensive scope in ethics than 'duty'. Thus, like he saw the term 'God' in Christian discourse as a central integrating term, he sees 'God's will' as a more comprehensive way of speaking about ethics than 'duty'. This, however, seems inconsistent with the analytical talk of 'God's will' as 'lateral enrichment'. Whatever else it is, 'lateral enrichment' which in no way compromises the autonomy of ethics can hardly be called 'central'. Far more central, it seems,

is the disclosure of duty. The method Ramsey applies
to this, the 'empirical-exploratory' approach, is equally
sensitive to the complexities of moral situations and dis-
tinctively Christian. But again, the central aspects of
the method are to match as complete as possible a know-
ledge of the empirical data with Christian themes in the
hope of generating a disclosure of one's duty. Again
'God' seems to be relegated to 'lateral enrichment'.

The autonomy of ethics, as he has defined it, is a
strong concept; contradicting as it does so much irrele-
vant theological ethics. But by stifling those aspects
of his ethics more sensitive to the personal element in
moral responses, this analytical insight was far more
restrictive than necessary. By bringing out the personal
elements, and emphasizing the experiential basis, Ramsey
might have accomplished an empirically based and God-
centred ethics. Likewise I do not question the propri-
ety of using deontological motifs in a Christian ethics
dominated by the model of response to God through the
concrete situation. But such motifs are provided by the
sensitivity to the empirical data. Niebuhr writes:
"When I view my life from its existence in responsibility
I am not so much aware of law in the form of demand as of
the action of other beings upon me in anticipated and
predictable ways".[17] Here natural law drifts inevitably
into treating God's will like that of the Headmaster or
the Sergeant-Major. I do not believe that Ramsey reduced
'God and ought' to the will of the Sergeant-Major or the

Nurse; his ethics certainly exhibit a struggle to break

out of a duty-bound legalism:

> The logic of 'My action is determined by
> the Moral Law' is much more like 'I am
> responding to his love and affection' than
> it is like 'I am reacting to his stimuli
> and his treatment'.  (<u>F and I</u>, page 38-39)

## Social Ills

Ramsey's work in ethics took him into two areas which might be loosely connected: social unrest and Britain's penal system. There is a wealth of published material which evinces Ramsey's views and methods in these areas. Ramsey addressed the House of Lords with speeches on subjects like social problems in Southern Africa, violence in contemporary society, and prison sentences. Further, Ramsey co-chaired a committee under the Church Assembly Board for Social Responsibility which produced a publication, Punishment, in 1963.

On 12 February, 1969, Ramsey spoke to the House of Lords on the subject of 'Violence in Contemporary Society'. Violence is a complex issue; one which, in itself, is probably too broad to be appropriate for the abstract treatment of a discussion in the House of Lords. Ramsey's own speech suffers from a dangerous ambivalence. In his attempt to be sensitive to social realities and theological values, Ramsey makes several points; any one of which might have been effectively developed and advocated. But they are impossible to hold together without a confusing and muddled end product.

At first Ramsey presents a strong case against violence. He searches for a broad, agreed definition. "As we all know violence means unreasonable force, the exercise of which inevitably converts persons into things."[1] Within the context of Ramsey's insights into personality his point is comprehensible in a way impossible to fill out within the limitations of a speech. In an academic lecture Ramsey would

have been able to elucidate his point by arguing that persons are realised in subjective disclosures in response to a moral or religious claim. Violence, however, crushes any possibility for personal responsiveness by destroying rather than creating, by forcing rather than reasonably persuading. Hence, Ramsey argues, it leads to "irrationality, oppression, disorder, anarchy, nihilism, death."[2] Further, violence often leads members of groups to act in ways which no single individual would consider.

After establishing this firm critique of the use of violence, Ramsey attempts a sudden turnabout in order to justify those who must resort to violence. Drawing upon the documents of the 1968 Lambeth Conference to which he had contributed, Ramsey describes institutionalised violence:

> Knowledge and power can be used to oppress, and
> to satisfy human greed or pride. In political
> or economic matters, excessive deference has
> been paid to conventional wisdom and outdated
> institutions. Man is in danger of losing his
> human dignity and becoming depersonalised.
> Often he feels himself limited and voiceless
> in a world where others make the decisions
> that affect his daily life.[3]

Thus Ramsey asks the noble Lords to consider a situation in which the oppression is so institutionalised that recourse to violence becomes justifiable; in fact, a Christian duty. Although Ramsey proceeds to qualify this stance by denying that such use of violence can ever be creative, he holds that in extreme cases violence might be the only way to break the oppressive stranglehold of tyranny. Further, Ramsey implies that violence might be

an inherent aspect of social reality; one to be faced
boldly and honestly rather than to be glossed over by
abstract ideals.

The ambivalence noted above has become explicit. Ram-
sey cannot afford to combine his able case against the use
of violence with this firm justification of it. His attempt
to do so diffuses the persuasive power of both arguments.
In theological terms Ramsey has exposed the sinful charac-
ter of violence in its tendency to injustice and inhumanity.
Likewise to see violence as an unfortunate but intrinsic
aspect of social change is to tie it to a broad under-
standing of original sin. To turn from this critique to
the advocacy of violence is not so much sensitivity to
concrete situations as it is contradictory theology. It
is a betrayal of Christian non-violence, of the redeeming
way of the cross. By trying to remain sensitive to the
complexity of the situation Ramsey succeeds only in pre-
senting a confusing and muddled speech.

Despite this flaw, Ramsey's practical suggestions
are helpful. He argues that violence is a symptom of
more basic social ills. Needs of individuals are being
neglected. Institutions, instead of providing persons
with opportunities for self-fulfillment, are proving to
be static and oppressive. Law and order which gives some
a sense of security is for others absolutely oppressive.
In these conditions outbreaks of violence witness to our
social failure to provide for the spiritual needs of per-
sons. Finally unemployment creates a frustrating feeling

of impotence; one for which violence is an imposing, though ultimately specious, anodyne. Ramsey asks, "What can we do constructively, beyond making the criticism of violence which undoubtedly must be made? Violence will be eradicated only when we have institutions which better develop and satisfy the spirit of man."[4]

Aligned with the problems of violence in society are those created by political injustice. From mid-1969 through 1971 Ramsey took an outspoken stance on Southern Africa and British policy in that region. His speeches and activities directed towards issues arising in this area contradict any charges of ambivalence, or of the lack of any sharp directive produced by the empirical-exploratory method. The issues demonstrate a major advantage of his method in its capacity for avoiding lofty, but unworkable goals. Rather than following ideals and principles to spectacular but unrealizable goals, Ramsey allows the 'harsh facts' to serve as a limiting factor for the pragmatic application of his ethical insights.

Two events form helpful foci for an explanation of Ramsey's work in the political unrest in Southern Africa. These are his speech to the House of Lords in December, 1971, on the subject of the settlement proposals for Rhodesia, and his work as chairman of the Co-ordinating Committee Against Arms for South Africa. In beginning his comments on them, Ramsey voiced his opposition to the settlement proposals:

> I honestly look in vain for concrete evidence
> of a radical change of heart on the part of

the Rhodesian Government. Yet, in my opinion,
without that change of heart, the proposals
before us are bound to be stultified. Indeed
... they embody many vague phrases and quali-
fications which are as sinister as they are
plausible, so that initial uncertainties and
doubts which necessarily belong to a situa-
tion as unpromising as this was, and the
recent history of which is so depressing, are
deepened rather than removed.[5]

Ramsey supports his criticisms by drawing attention

to the disparities between optimistic readings of the pro-

posals and the grim realities of the actual conditions.

He refers to one of the loftiest phrases in the First Prin-

ciple, which promises to maintain and guarantee "unimpeded

progress to majority rule". Ramsey contrasts this with

the social, educational, economic, and vocational needs of

the Africans. He argues that programmes directed towards

these needs will be meaningless unless they are accompanied

by real progress towards integration; an integration which

the proposals are designed to neatly side-step. In like

manner Ramsey attacks a section on employment, (for which

colour was still a major factor), land rights, (which,

while impressive, can be wiped out at the stroke of a pen),

and a section granting some powers to the Africans, except

for considerations of 'an over-riding character', (a phrase

which leaves enormous legal loop-holes.)

Ramsey states that such harsh words for proposals

that bring some hope to a grim situation did not come easily

to him. He makes it clear that he appreciates the labours

of those committed to peaceful solutions in Rhodesia. But

in grounding his ideal solutions for the problems in the

facts of the situation, Ramsey sought some guarantees of a

change of heart away from the separate development ideology.
He found only evasive phrases which made it necessary for
him to expose the practical loop-holes within the theoreti-
cally promising proposals.

Far from a continuing academic interest, Ramsey saw
the injustices of Southern Africa as a crisis, a call for
firm Christian response. Thus when Mr. Heath's Government
considered the sale of helicopters to the Union of South
Africa in 1969, Ramsey was one of the leaders of the poli-
tical opposition to the move. On 25 August, 1969, The Co-
ordinating Committee Against Arms for South Africa was offi-
cially formed, with Ramsey as chairman. Despite a diary
crammed with speaking engagements in the States and else-
where, bishop's duties, and publishing deadlines, Ramsey's
contribution was far from that of a figurehead. Soon after
the announcement of the committee the Prime Minister was
approached about the possibility of discussing the situation
with a delegation. At the same time, the committee began
to organise a Trafalgar Square demonstration opposing the
sale of arms.

The committee sought to organise the many political
groups who opposed the move for one reason or another.
There were thirteen supporting organisations backing up
the three-fold purpose of the Co-ordinating Committee
Against Arms for South Africa:

> 1. To demonstrate the width of opposition to
>    the proposal and to broaden its basis.
>
> 2. To maintain a lobby of moderate opinion
>    which will enable the Government to recon-
>    sider the proposal free from party acrimony.

3.  To develop a more powerful impact by
    co-ordinating their activities.[6]

On 7 November, 1969, a delegation led by Ramsey met
with the Prime Minister.[7]  In a statement to the press,
Ramsey voiced the committee's objections to the sale of
arms.  "It is bound to be interpreted as a measure of
approval for the South African Government--if not for
apartheid, certainly for the injustice and oppression by
which apartheid is maintained."[8]  The committee also sug-
gested that the sale of arms might further alienate African
Christians in its seeming support for apartheid.[9]

The stance of the delegation on an issue as controver-
sial as this was not universally acclaimed.  Ramsey's notes
include many letters which counsel him to confine his ef-
forts to the religious responsibilities of a bishop.
Another, more sarcastic, suggests that he go to join the
freedom fighters as a 'gorilla priest' (sic).  Still others
evince a desire to discuss the situation reasonably, despite
strong differences in opinion.  Ramsey's response to one of
these last provides a good summation of his application of
the empirical-exploratory approach to the problem:

> My own argument against the sale of arms to
> South Africa does not at all rely on, while
> it does not ignore, arguments of a legal,
> economic, or strategic kind.  It is basically
> a moral argument, for I see the sale of arms
> as a symbolic action which would declare our
> support for a government which not only prac-
> tises a policy of apartheid, but supports
> this policy by the most unjust oppression
> and restriction.[10]

In a speech to the House of Lords in 1972, Ramsey con-
trasts his method with that of the South African élite.  He

charges that the attempt to justify racist practices de-
pends upon biblical ethics that are illogical, morally

shameful, and politically disastrous.  In words which echo

his attack on the 'linear-systematic method' Ramsey states:

> By choosing highly advantageous texts, perhaps
> I need not say from the Old Testament, and by
> combining that partial selectivity with the
> crudest of all ideas of revelation, against
> that most unpromising background the permanent
> subordination of the native Africans to be
> hewers of wood and drawers of water and the
> exclusive domination of the white man is sup-
> posed to be given a Christian justification.[11]

Ramsey's response to the political situation in South-

ern Africa is sensitive to both the facts of the social

climate and Christian ideals.  Further, it demonstrates

that his method is capable of yielding pointed moral direc-

tives.  Unfortunately, this example does little to illus-

trate a third advantage of the empirical-exploratory method,

i.e., its capacity to generate new ethical questions emer-

ging from a changing social environment.  This aspect can

best be seen in Ramsey's response to the question of the

abolition of the death penalty.

On 17 December, 1969, the House of Lords considered

the Murder Act of 1965, in order to decide whether or not

to retain the death penalty.  Here again, Ramsey responds

to the situation by demonstrating the complexity of the

issue.  In this case, unlike his speech on violence, Ram-

sey's sensitivity results in an eloquent consideration of

the total situation.  Far from the isolated treatments of

hanging an individual for murder, Ramsey's speech directs

our attention to:

> the motives and responsibility and behaviour
> of the offender, the circumstances and reac-
> tions of the victim's family, the intricate
> court proceedings as a means of establishing
> justice in these cases, what actually is in-
> volved in terms of the prison setting, the
> preliminaries, the hanging, the post-mortem
> details, the effect on prison staffs and
> prisoners.[12]

Ramsey begins with the broad, and hence more readily agreeable, area of the reaction of society to violence in general and murder in particular. Society, Ramsey argues, is rightly shocked at cold and malicious killings of po- licemen, prison officers, bank clerks, or old ladies. Such crimes obviously demand a stiff penalty in order to fully register society's disapproval, even revulsion. While the demand for capital punishment can be authoritarian, intol- erant, and vindictive, Ramsey agrees that it is more prop- erly called 'vindicative', in so far as it is evidence of the moral revulsion to murder that demands a counter- balance, demands appropriate moral condemnation.

Likewise it is agreed that it is natural to react to murder with the determination that everything will be done to prevent its reoccurrence. Here the deterrent capabili- ties of the death penalty are brought under consideration. Ramsey includes in this context the statistics available on popular opinion: 84% (or thereabouts) in favour of the retention of the death penalty. By regarding this sta- tistic as a sign of society's moral revulsion to murder, Ramsey cleverly breaks down the potency of the statistic, which could otherwise be taken as a clear prescription for the retention of capital punishment in the interests of 'will-of-the-people' democracy.

With this firm foundation of common agreement set,
Ramsey is able to develop his more debatable points. It
is here that his sensitivity to the broad situation comes
to fruition. While hanging undoubtedly expresses unequi-
vocal condemnation, its other effects--not often considered--
are often deleterious. What, for instance, is the effect on
prison officers? On other prisoners? Ramsey quotes from
the Board for Social Responsibility booklet to argue that
the prison officer might be called to suppress any human
sympathy, any sensitive imagination that he might have.
More generally, the conditions for all concerned during the
two weeks before the hanging, and on the last day itself
are hardly likely to add weight to arguments advocating
this form of punishment.

> What if there are features just like those
> which we see in our wider society; violence,
> not necessarily better for being done in cold
> blood; insensitivity; the degrading of person-
> ality which, outside that prison, all of us
> would condemn?[13]

The broader features of the situation become more
significant in considering the deterrent argument, though
Ramsey treats them in a paradoxical way. If deterrence is
the aim of hanging, then it would perform this function all
the better were everyone informed more fully of all the
gruesome details.

One possible logical extension of the deterrent argu-
ment would be the reinstatement of public executions. "Yet",
Ramsey quotes from Punishment, "public executions were
stopped partly because they proved to be morally offensive
and called forth more sympathy for the hanged than moral

condemnation of his crime."[14]   Executions are offensive

in public, but their deterrent function is limited when

they are conducted privately.  More disastrous for the de-

terrent case is the question why a private hanging should

be considered morally desirable while public executions

are offensive.  Certainly there are aspects of human inter-

course that are moral when done in privacy but immoral in the

marketplace.  But it is doubtful that punishment should

qualify under these considerations.  Whether one takes a

retributive stance or sees punishment as primarily directed

towards deterrence, or a combination, the penalties are no

more moral for being enforced in private.  If hanging is

retributive, it is society which is responsible for the

'vindicative' disapprobation.  It may salve our consciences

to have our will executed within the prison walls, but we

are no less responsible for the means of punishment.  As

for the deterrence argument, the effectiveness of private

hangings has already been disputed.  Certainly from a moral

standpoint society could find less destructive means of

deterring others from murder.

Finally, Ramsey considers a more common approach in

the case against capital punishment:  the possibility of

error by an imperfect judicial process.  Society, as well

as individuals, can make faulty judgments resulting in

retrospective regret.  Subjecting an innocent individual

to long years of imprisonment would be most unfortunate.

But only one who has a naive belief in a perfect system of

justice  invulnerable to error, could countenance such a

chillingly irrevocable penalty. "Even one mistake, one person being hanged in error, when hanging has to be set in the context in which I have tried to set it, seems to me far too high a price to pay, when that price is measured in terms of a human life...."[15]

Thus while Ramsey demonstrates full sympathy with the moral revulsion and the desire for just retribution that murder inspires, he believes that capital punishment is "negative, inconsistent, and entirely devoid of creative possibilities". It encourages that authoritarian intolerance, that insensitivity and devaluation of personality which can only obstruct attempts to reform the criminal and develop a humane society.

Ramsey is not content to rest with his firm criticism of the penal system. In a sense the problems only begin with the end of capital punishment. Ramsey relates an incident in Durham in which the then chief constable, Mr. Alec Muir, stated that he would prefer 'quiet liquidation' to consigning convicts to long terms of imprisonment. While others expressed outrage at his seeming insensitivity, Ramsey perceived that Mr. Muir had raised a key problem for those who would see hanging abolished. If society discontinues executions, an alternative means of expressing appropriate moral condemnation must be found. Ramsey argued that those who vote to end the death penalty face the difficult task of devising means of punishment more suitable to the complex social situation.

In his theoretical work in ethics, Ramsey had
claimed that each solution to social ills raises new
problems to pick up, new difficulties to be faced.  Soon
after the fight to abolish the death penalty was, for the
time being, won, Ramsey began to attack the fresh problems
that arose.  He concentrated his attention upon a likely
consequence of the abolition of hanging:  the problems
raised by an influx of long-term prisoners.  He drafted a
Motion for Papers to provide a forum for practical sugges-
tions and criticisms of lengthy imprisonment.  Unfortun-
ately, the motion was postponed and delayed, so that over a
year elapsed until the matter could be given the attention
of the House of Lords.

On 17 February, 1971, Ramsey delivered a long and
carefully considered paper to introduce the topic "Long-
Term Prison Sentences".  He draws upon a wealth of material
published after the abolition of hanging to illuminate the
plight of 'Category A' and 'Category B' prisoners.  Ramsey
appeals to an article in New Society by Stanley Cohen and
Laurie Taylor.  Its chief concern is a research project
into long-term prisoners' sense of time, but the article
mentioned the fear of deterioration shared by these pri-
soners.  The inmates realise that such deterioration would
occur gradually, creep up on them; and thus they are con-
stantly on the look-out for signs.  They are greatly con-
cerned about the possibility of becoming obsessional;
they want to guard against "becoming like the old sexual
offender who spent hours merely cleaning and filling the
tea-pot."[16]

Ramsey is aware that some, however, would argue that prisons are hardly meant to be vacation spas; that long sentences would be a better deterrent were the conditions in prisons better publicised.[17] In response Ramsey appeals to the publication People in Prison to argue that the loss of liberty and the prison régime are punishment enough-- prisons would be unlikely to deter any better if the rack or the treadmill were re-introduced. Such barbarous views deny the prisoner any human dignity or self-respect, and hence stand in the way of any effective reform or rehabilitation. Although he does not quote directly from it, Ramsey has a letter to The Times from a former prisoner, Jack Jacobs, who writes that he has had no experience of anyone being reformed by inhumane punishment or intolerable conditions. But Jacobs has seen many respond favourably to humane conditions and enlightened treatment; and emerge rehabilitated and aware of their responsibilities in society.

Ramsey points out that while punishment represents the moral condemnation of the convict's crime, society must ensure that the means of punishment are not morally repugnant. The imprisonment demanded by society must both register moral protest and uphold the value of the prisoner's personality. A horrid spell under a brutal prison régime may serve to exercise society's retribution, but it negates the possibility of personal reform in the prisoner and in this sense fails to deter the prisoner from returning to crime. Ramsey argues that what is needed is first to provide the best security against escape and then to make the

conditions inside as conducive to the development of
personality as possible. "People are sent to prison as
a punishment, not for punishment. They are sent to prison
for restoration."[18] But the high security brings its own
costs in terms of prisoners' mentality. When the cage
into which the person is placed is smaller than those for
animals in the zoo, the human spirit is inevitably degraded.
The continual locking, unlocking, and re-locking of barred
doors is psychologically oppressive. Ramsey comments,
"When I saw in one prison room two budgerigars in a cage,
I dared not ask whether the birds were ever allowed the
freedom to fly around the room."[19]

Thus Ramsey turns to the prisoners' state of mind
with the aim of doing everything possible, within the
security restrictions, to mitigate the psychological
oppression. He argues that to prevent deterioration and
disintegration the prisoner must both have opportunities
to relate creatively with others, and to find his or her
own identity. Ramsey begins his practical suggestions
with the challenge of finding better means of regulating
visiting. The importance of a visit to a long-term pri-
soner cannot be over-emphasised. Without visitors the
chances of finding creative relationships with members of
society are meagre. Obviously, since many of the visitors
have criminal records themselves, tight security precau-
tions are required. But it would be morally reprehensible
to deprive prisoners of the only friends they have for
this reason. Ramsey points to the case of a woman prisoner

who was unable to visit her husband, himself a prisoner,
because ironically, she was not serving a long enough sen-
tence. If security could be tightened up in other ways,
visitations could be more relaxed.

But the primary difficulties in establishing healthy
attitudes towards social relationships lie within the pri-
son walls. To place high security wings within general
prisons create problems by the stratification of inmates.
This division, however, occurs also within the long-term
prisoners themselves. Ramsey quotes from an article in
the TV Times, in which a former prisoner, Jimmy O'Connor,
talks about the special treatment given to offenders against
children.
O'Connor writes of the brutalities to which these offenders
are subjected. He is likely to receive a sly kick in the
groin in the van before he even arrives at the prison.
Once inside, O'Connor writes:

> he'll know his fate when he gets that first cup
> of cocoa. There will almost certainly be salt
> in it, or someone's spittle. A taste of what
> they think of him, and what they are going to
> do to him; a surly overture to 14 years of
> viciousness and degradation ...[20]

Ramsey comments that this raises a nest of problemms
around effective and just distribution of prisoners and
about the building of prisons. Recalling his suggestions
for inter-disciplinary approaches to moral ideas, Ramsey
asks, "How far ... when prisons are built are there round-
table discussions between architects, prison staffs, social
workers, and the rest?"[21]

Ramsey turns to the question of prisoners' work. He gives a fair stratification of work drawn from discussions with prisoners themselves. He lists as preferred: "handicraft, decorative iron-work, cooking, the study of symbolic logic, and not least a service for society in providing Braille books." Laurie Taylor and Stanley Cohen, in the New Society article referred to above, comment :

> It is not much use hoping that a man in Parkhurst's 'tag-shop' will become involved in his job of sticking metal ends into the length of green string which keep files together. It is even less reasonable to expect a man facing 20 years in jail to become enthusiastic about repairing a sewing machine.[22]

But Ramsey is after more than simply finding interesting things for men to do to fill their 20 years. He demands a planned programme for each individual prisoner into which his jobs can be fitted. Merely giving the prisoners manifold hobbies to stave off boredom in a sentence which is indeterminate actually undermines any reform. Ramsey states that it tends to break down the man's moral fibre, reporting that a long-term prisoner had told him just that.

Two final issues centring round the life of the prisoners draw Ramsey's attention. Recognising the role of religious beliefs in providing the prisoner with a sense of purpose, Ramsey finds the fact that top security prisoners are denied any religious services scandalous.[23] Characteristically, Ramsey frankly confesses that Durham Prison once had a top-security wing chapel, but that it was smashed by the prisoners and never refurbished. But

he confidently proposes that the men who want a chapel
should be allowed--even encouraged--to furnish one for
themselves. At the very least high security prisoners should
be allowed to go to the general chapel; under tight guard,
and perhaps only once every month. But their freedom to
worship should in all events be given more respect.

The second problem deals particularly with the prisoner's sexuality; and, more generally, with the need to treat
each prisoner as an individual. Two men with identical
crimes, sentences, backgrounds, etc., can react to their
imprisonment in totally different ways. Ramsey prescribes
a much more thorough study of each case, in terms of a total programme, in terms of vocational as well as non-
vocational education, and, not least, in terms of his or
her sexuality.

Ramsey illustrates the kind of pressures that are
brought to bear upon one returning from long isolation from
society with his own experience upon emerging from eight
months in hospital during his undergraduate years. "I
can still recall what a profound shock it was for the
first few weeks to return to the normal interchange of
common life. How much more shock to a man after 10 years
in prison?"[24] Within this context, Ramsey is disturbed
at the statistics reporting that out of 45 prisoners,
only one marriage seemed to survive the enforced separa-
tion. Here is a demand that hostel schemes be enlarged.
Ramsey goes so far as to suggest that here might be a use
for all the redundant vicarages.

Ramsey concludes with four broad strokes. First, the need to educate the public is raised. A change of attitude towards prisons and prisoners is needed. The security walls are a practical necessity, but unfortunately they also aptly symbolise the tendency of society to salve its conscience by hiding its 'social failures'. Secondly, Ramsey suggests a reconsideration of staffing prisons. It would be better for all concerned if links between society--social workers, legislators, clergymen, etc.--and prison staffs could be strengthened. Thirdly, Ramsey suggests that this might prompt the inter-disciplinary approach he has advocated, at various centres which could co-ordinate diverse inputs to solve some of the more pressing problems. Finally, Ramsey comments that there are few truly new ideas, but that there is a singular tendency to stop short of fulfilling these ideas in practice. Thus he raised the question before the House partly in hopes of hearing practical suggestions that could be expected to be carried through.

Although there is no time to provide an up-date on the state of prisoners and prisons since this 1971 speech, some criticism of Ramsey's views on the penal system must be attempted. Neither his attack upon capital punishment nor comments on long-term prisoners is subject to the ambivalence of his reflections on violence. He is much more forceful against hanging, but perhaps this is because the issue is that much more pointed. Also, many of his points against hanging are novel, or applied in a new fashion. For example, although various facets are bound to arise in

any discussion within the general area of capital punishment, Ramsey stresses the necessity of granting the question a broad context. It cannot be reduced to an efficiency question about deterrence, because it is a moral question as well. It cannot be exhausted by discussing the victim and the condemned man, or by debating the relative merits of various means of killing murderers, because hanging involves the courts, who are acting on behalf of the public, and the total prison environment--including officers, administration, and prisoners--in short, as it is society that seeks retribution and protection, as it is society who condemns, the question cannot be isolated from the total social environment.

Secondly, rather than vascillating between abstract ideals and actual data, Ramsey tends to concentrate on the data. This means that his theoretical moral insights are generally implied or tacit rather than explicitly stated. However, his handling of the actual data leaves little ambiguity about his moral commitments. His insights into personality provide critical tools to apply to the treatment of prisoners. In his numerous comments about the degradation of locking and unlocking, of caging human beings, of restricting their opportunities (both vocational and non-vocational), as well as their relationships (in general, and in particular their sexual relationships)--in all these points can be discerned a real commitment to human freedom. Ramsey sees freedom as a pre-requisite to moral, responsible existence. Further, the morality of punishment demands

that the offender be treated as a person; and not a
guinea pig, a mindless machine, an animal, a number, or
a statistic.

Finally, Ramsey's speech is not lacking in practical
suggestions: educating the public, drawing up consulta-
tive committees to study problems specific to this area,
provide for the religious and sexual needs of inmates, as
well as work to ease the transition back into community
life, to name a few.

But Ramsey seems to come under the scrutiny of his
own criticisms of other suggestions. How realisable are
such suggestions as using old vicarages as hostels and
allowing top-security prisoners to attend chapel? In both
cases Ramsey has underestimated the security demands of
Category A prisoners. It is, however, equally unreason-
able to argue that Category A prisoners have rejected and
will reject religion. Despite the incident at Durham
Prison's security wing chapel, the argument treats indivi-
duals as a statistic and is difficult to square with the
facts. One final criticism: Ramsey's dependence upon
commissions and committees to provide answers is difficult
to defend--at least to the lengths that Ramsey takes it.
It would be difficult to reckon the optimum number of such
committees in each decade; one each year would seem too
frequent, because the sort of problems that could arise in
that span can be handled without resort to a 'high-powered
inquiry'; perhaps twice in that ten year period would be
about right, but then one could not depend much on the

administrative help provided by such commissions. I am
not ruling out his suggestion--as far as it goes it is
helpful at bringing together diverse approaches. But
merely from the perspective of time, while the commission
meets for two weeks per decade, the crucial day-to-day
running of prisons by administration and staff on hand
must continue throughout the ten years. For this funda-
mental task commissions are simply too bulky, too compre-
hensive. As a result, most commissions--like Ramsey's own
committee on punishment--are much more adept at raising
inconclusive questions than providing general guidelines,
let alone crucial, on-the-spot decisions.

On the whole, however, Ramsey's treatment of the
problems of punishment deserves praise for its unyielding
confidence and positive vision in the midst of Ramsey's
ability to stare most facts in the face. On one side
Ramsey avoids falling into liberal optimism by insisting
on the retributive aspects of punishment, and by stressing
the need for tight security. But his suggestions battle
against the pessimistic tendency to treat prisoners in a
dehumanising manner by emphasising the moral treatment
due to all persons. He is neither drawn in by this
pessimism, nor imprisoned by its reductionism.

Euthanasia

Few issues in social ethics commanded Ramsey's con-
tinuous involvement as did euthanasia. He contributed to
both pamphlets of the Church Assembly Board for Social Re-
sponsibility published a decade apart, (1965 and 1975). He
chaired the committee for the second of the two publica-
tions (On Dying Well) until his death. He also spoke on
the subject, addressing medical, academic, and political
audiences.[1]

There is neither the space nor the necessity of ex-
positing the two Board for Social Responsibility publica-
tions. Much of the legal discussion and case studies
would do little to aid our understanding of Ramsey's eth-
ical method in this area. Nonetheless a few helpful
points of both similarities and differences between the
two must be considered. Decisions about Life and Death
(henceforth Life and Death) begins by introducing the moral
problems directly. Questions are raised such as: How far
is medicine expected to go to prolong life? To what extent
is sympathy for the patient compromised by learning from
the patient's illness while maintaining his existence by
extreme measures? Who ought to make such a decision to
bring about the end of a patient's life?

In contrast, On Dying Well (1975) begins by narrating
four cases which seem to advocate legal tolerance of vol-
untary euthanasia. For the ethicist, this procedure lessens
the tendency to deal with the issue in the abstract. True

to Ramsey's empirical-exploratory ethics the approach is
firmly grounded in experience before moving onto any crit-
ical analyses. For the layman, the approach has the advan-
tage of drawing him or her into the problems without ali-
enating or intimidating the layman with sophisticated
questions distilled from lengthy analyses of principles
and data.[2]

A second difference between the two is manifested in
the ethical approaches used to answer the questions raised.
Life and Death is sensitive to the difficulties then cur-
rent with ethics themselves. In a time of competing values,
Life and Death considered euthanasia from a traditional
Christian approach, from a Utilitarian approach, and then
provided some constructive criticism of both. In On Dying
Well, however, this ambivalence is gone, and the method is
firmly tied to the empirical-exploratory method. The
difference in moral approach is largely due, no doubt, to
a changing philosophical atmosphere (from 1965 to 1975) in
which religious ethics was less subject to the stifling
criteria of empiricist claims. In any case, for the lay-
man, On Dying Well provides a more secure stand by elimi-
nating the philosophical battles of an earlier era.

Despite these contrasts, the positions taken on
euthanasia by the two committees are essentially uniform.
Life and Death indicates two values to be preserved:
1. the value of human life, and 2. the value and dignity
of human death. Life and Death holds that the withdrawal
of extreme means to maintain the life of the cerebrally

dead, or the denial of antibiotics to a hopelessly coma-
tose patient might enhance the value of death. But these
measures are seen as passive co-operation. Life and Death
explicitly rejects the possibility of actively aiding the
process of dying. Whereas, Life and Death claims, a Util-
itarian would find it reasonable to aid the process when
recovery was deemed impossible, the Christian is forced to
draw the line between passive co-operation and deliberate
activity to end the patient's life.[3]

This position is refined in On Dying Well. After re-
viewing the legal situation, On Dying Well states its
objection to the phrase 'right to die'.[4] On Dying Well
pinpoints three distinct situations to which this might
refer: 1. that the patient has the right to decide when
to live and when to die; and if he chooses to die he has
the right to enlist the aid of the medical profession in
that aim; 2. that doctors should be enabled to end the life
of a patient when control of pain is no longer possible;
and 3. that (a) a patient in extremis should not be sub-
jected to distress-causing treatments which cannot restore
health, but merely prolong existence, and (b) doctors can
use pain-killing drugs even at the risk of shortening life.
The objections raised by the committee to 'the right to
die' expose the vague meaning of the phrase. (1) involves
a greater scale of deliberate killing than (2). (3), how-
ever, does not involve deliberate killing. On Dying Well
argues that in (3b) the doctor is practicing indirect
euthanasia but not strictly voluntary euthanasia.

Life and Death drew a contrast between the Utili-
tarian approach which assumes that humanity has the re-
sponsibility of deciding when to live and when to die,
and the Christian view which holds that life is a gift
from God. On Dying Well further clarifies the position
of Life and Death by arguing that human responsibility is
not to be denied, but that in the specific case of the
process of dying the burden of choice is too great. As
in the case of suicide, a decision for voluntary eutha-
nasia would be closer to defiance of God than acceptance
of his grace. Insofar as death signifies man's absolute
dependence upon God, dying ought to be passively accepted.

It is at this point in the line of thought that On
Dying Well departs radically from Life and Death. Where-
as Life and Death used an occasional example to illustrate
a point, On Dying Well uses case histories as a platform
or foundation for the discussion. Thus On Dying Well
returns to the case studies to make suggestions about
actual situations. Each of four cases which seem to de-
mand voluntary euthanasia out of compassion is reconsidered
for positive alternatives. The committee writes that a
comment like "I wish I were dead" often makes a plea that
one's living situation be improved. Hence a series of
further case histories--equally hopeless, but with better
care, and a more positive approach--seem to confirm the
moral guidelines set out by the committee for passive co-
operation with the process of dying.

Certainly the committee can be accused of 'stacking the deck', of contriving the sequence of case histories. But the examples do not seek to prove the point; rather, they serve as the empirical platform for discussion. Both groups of examples are open to points which oppose or support voluntary euthanasia. Also, the number of examples allows the committee to acknowledge the exceptional cases in which voluntary euthanasia would be morally justifiable. Yet these cases do not occur in sufficient number to warrant the legalisation of voluntary euthanasia. On Dying Well concludes:

1. such cases are very few, and would be fewer still if medical, and in particular hospital, practices were sounder;

2. a change in the law would reduce the incentive to improve these practices;

3. the legalisation of euthanasia would place some terminal, and even non-terminal, patients under pressure to allow themselves to be put away--a pressure which they should be spared;

4. it would also, in practice, be likely to result in recourse to euthanasia in cases in which it was far from morally justifiable, and performed for unsound reasons;

5. in the rare cases (if such there are) in which it can be justified morally, it is better for medical men to do all that is necessary to ensure peaceful dying, and to rely on the flexibilities in the administration of the laws which even now exist, than to legalise euthanasia, (which would have to be subject to rigid formalities and safeguards) for general use;

6. although there may be some patients whose relationship with their doctor would not suffer, we believe that for

> the great majority of patients their
> confidence in doctors would be gravely
> weakened. (p. 62)

In reviewing the legal situation, On Dying Well
pointed out that the relevant bills were rejected in 1936
and 1969. The major difference between the two bills is
that the 1969 bill allows the individual to declare in
advance a desire for voluntary euthanasia if he or she
had an illness which caused distress or rendered the
patient incapable of rational existence, AND was thought
to be incurable. The 1969 bill had added the phrase 'or
rendered him incapable of rational existence' to the
wording of the 1936 criteria. Likewise the term 'incur-
able' signified a shift from the 1936 bill, which re-
quired that the disease be thought to be 'fatal'.

In his 1969 speech to the House of Lords on eutha-
nasia, Ramsey addressed his comments specifically to the
written declaration of a desire for voluntary euthanasia.
Ramsey's objection to the provision is that while it
might seem appropriate in the 'cool hour at Westminster'
the legal declaration would create more problems than it
would solve in different circumstances. Here again Ram-
sey adroitly tempers the theoretical optimum with harsh
reality. He searches by this means for a path that is
less spectacular theoretically, but more promising from
a practical viewpoint; and ultimately, a course which is
more fruitful.

His greatest concern is about the ways in which such
legislation might be applied. While the provision is

intended to allow for those who might want to make a
declaration of their wishes in the event of incurable
illness, Ramsey fears that the legalisation of some ac-
tion is often seen as encouragement, indeed, as the pre-
scription of a duty.  A second concern involves the dis-
crepancy between the individual's state of mind at the
time of signing the declaration, and at some later time
when debilitating illness sets in.[5]

Beyond the pressures on individuals, Ramsey points
to the burden such a declaration would place on the medical
profession.  The patient might demand that the doctor act
at a time which the doctor feels is premature; or the
relatives might plead with the doctor not to honour the
wishes of the patient.  Regardless of circumstances, sus-
picions would be an inherent factor.  Yet another concern
voiced by Ramsey is that most often it would be the nurse
who would be called upon to administer the drug.

Ramsey closes his speech to the House of Lords with
four positive suggestions:  1. He points to the need for
education about drugs and terminal illnesses.  2. Likewise
there is a great need to improve the care of the old and
those with terminal illnesses.  Attacking this problem,
Ramsey believes, will greatly lessen the number of those
who wish for voluntary euthanasia.  3. Medical education
ought to give greater attention to the medical social
problems for which there should be training.  4. If there
is any doubt about the legality of indirect euthanasia
(the withdrawal of extreme measures  or choosing pain-

killing over life-extending drugs) this confusion ought
to be clarified.

In an address delivered to the British Medical Asso-
ciation in April 1972,[6] Ramsey explicitly traces the appli-
cation of his ethical method to euthanasia.  Such moral
dilemmas are the medical type of a more general social
problem:  How to provide moral direction for powerful
technology when morality is itself under attack?  As he
does with other issues, Ramsey begins with the empirical
data--in this case medical techniques, new experiments,
progress in understanding, etc.  From his examination of
prima facie medical concerns, Ramsey filters out the
moral pre-suppositions, the ideals, the principles
involved.

As an example Ramsey considers the principle of
respect for life.  The principle must be defined as clearly
as possible.  Obviously, only respect for human life is
relevant to this issue.  The principle can be defined fur-
ther by specifying that we mean by human something more
than a biologically functioning unit of the species Homo
Sapiens Sapiens.  Here one's interpretation of persona-
lity becomes significant.

Likewise the meaning of 'life' can be explained in
more depth.  The question of when life ends becomes impor-
tant.  Here Ramsey demonstrates his sensitivity to devel-
opments in medical understanding by suggesting that a
multi-parameter approach be applied to the question.
Rather than talk of pulse, or respiration as isolated

indicators, Ramsey suggests a numerical measure based on scores on five standards: (a) cerebral (EEG), (b) cardiac (ECG), (c) character of reflex actions, (d) respiratory behaviour, and (e) circulation details.[7] The concept requires more work, but it does provide an improved estimation of the survival possibilities of borderline patients. It is, in a preliminary way, an answer to the question of life or death which Life and Death had raised seven years earlier. At the very least these suggestions of Ramsey demonstrate ways of clarifying key principles.

But in approaching euthanasia Ramsey is not content to rest with the clarification of key principles. He explains that in some situations this would be all that would be needed for clear moral direction. Other situations require a number of principles. But a few are problematic; and for these the empirical-exploratory method is ideally suited. In these cases the prima facie pre-suppositions conflict. A basic example in the dilemma of euthanasia is the delicate balance between the respect for life and a sense of an honourable and dignified death. While the prolongation of life is a worthy pursuit, it must be matched with an admonition against using desperate measures which neglect the personal needs of the patient.

Here the distinctive Christian attitude towards death is raised by Ramsey. The idea of a death in which one finds the grace of God means that death is not something to be avoided at all costs. Rather, it is consistent with the

created order; something for which we can, and ought to, prepare. But Ramsey concedes that if we did believe that death annihilates all, we might choose to prolong life whatever the costs, whatever the quality of that life.

Euthanasia focussed for Ramsey the moral problems raised by developing technology. Certainly it demonstrates his empirical-exploratory method to its best advantage. In euthanasia Ramsey finds a problem especially suited to an approach which is grounded in empirical data and human experience. The method handles euthanasia with sensitivity rather than with ease. It shows that the problem is knotty, but capable of yielding answers to reasonable approaches.

On the other hand, euthanasia reveals certain weaknesses of the method. Although it is sensitive and reasonable, one searches in vain for a direct 'yes' or 'no' to a closely defined question of voluntary euthanasia. Ramsey's personal opposition to a deliberate ending of a patient's life can be gleaned from his comments to the House of Lords and the British Medical Association. But the method itself grants too much--many would charge--to empirical details and competing principles. It is significant that On Dying Well ignores the question of the exact moment of death, without detracting from the handling of euthanasia. Ramsey, on the other hand, becomes involved in multi-parameter criteria and technical medical procedure. This over-sensitivity to empirical data results in a digression from the major questions of euthanasia which obscures the crucial moral priorities.

Likewise many would object to his concessions to
competing principles. Some would argue that the layman
requires sharp direction rather than the intricate mazes
a professor might devise for his students. In this sense,
Ramsey's consideration of the logical ramifications of the
belief that death is final is misleading and unnecessary.
If we are to approach euthanasia from a Christian stand-
point, the pre-supposition that death is final would seem
to be excluded.

But not everyone would agree with these criticisms--
some would, in fact, see some of these points as actual
strengths of the method. There are some situations for
which a single principle provides sharp moral direction;
and, in fact, there are situations for which the empirical-
exploratory method gives sharp direction. But the com-
plexities of the euthanasia problem exclude any easy,
direct approach. The empirical data, and human experience,
is too multi-faceted; and too many key principles are in
conflict. Because of his concern for the empirical data,
Ramsey's conclusions are conservative rather than spec-
tacular. But they are both reasonable, (being developed
through a systematic method) and capable of being put
into practice (as they are developed with actual experi-
ence in mind). Likewise Ramsey's tolerance of divergent
pre-suppositions is actually cautious, lest a valid
principle be unjustly ignored. This makes the process a
difficult rather than a direct one. But it is more likely
to gain sympathy in medical, academic, political bodies,

and other social arenas not characterized by specifically
Christian pre-suppositions. Certainly one might follow
the method and conclude that voluntary euthanasia was
morally justifiable. But at least the empirical-
exploratory approach would build some common ground
from which to examine the theoretical and experiential
terrain crossed in reaching such a conclusion.

Conclusion


My copy of <u>Religious</u> <u>Language</u> is a fairly well-
thumbed paperback which I bought in 1976. There was a
stack of them, equally worn, in Haslam's New and Used
Books back in the section for used religious books. I
suppose it might be reading too much into that pile of
paperbacks to infer that the book, its thesis, even its
author, are considered passé by the current theological
and philosophical communities. But it is a haunting
image and a sad evaluation of the book's worth. It is cer-
tainly true that particular aspects of Ramsey's work were
directed towards now-defunct philosophical issues. One
purpose of this thesis has been to distinguish these ele-
ments of Ramsey's work from his contributions of enduring
value to Christian ethics.

In the theoretical section above, key concepts were
isolated for examination under epistemological, experien-
tial, linguistic, and ethical categories. While this
fragmentation may have been analytically helpful, it was
also potentially distortive. Here some attempt at inte-
gration is necessary. Studying disclosures as an epis-
temological concept can be a sharp critical approach, but
it can also divert our attention from the point of the
concept in the whole of Ramsey's scheme. This example
reveals a basic difficulty in trying to analyse any parti-
cular concept: Ramsey was an apologist. His description
and usage of basic concepts must be seen in relation to

his specific audience. His remarks about religious dis-
course or theological methodology will exhibit a different
point when addressed to 'cultured despisers' from that
addressed to theologians. Likewise, the specific use
Ramsey intended for a concept in each context must be
considered. In this sense what he meant by disclosures
in a discussion of religious experience is somewhat diffe-
rent from his intended meaning of the term in a linguistic
or ethical context. I am not implying that Ramsey was
inconsistent, but stressing the importance of the parti-
cular audience and context he was addressing for any
examination of his work. In what follows then, I will
briefly review Ramsey's contributions in terms of their
significant functions in specific contexts. I will con-
clude with some integrative comments about Ramsey's
insights into Christian ethical methodology.

As I have argued above[1] if we approach the concept
of disclosures from an epistemological perspective, it is
empty; it is too vague. Secondly, when applied to reli-
gious experience it has seemed either too common or too
rare. Regarding the first criticism, endless examples of
disclosures will not suffice to clarify their epistemo-
logical functions. The concept stands in need of the
support which I have suggested might be supplied by Michael
Polanyi.[2] Polanyi's concepts of indwelling and tacit know-
ing provide a much-needed experiential foundation for
Ramsey's disclosures. Both Ramsey's disclosures and
Polanyi's comprehension exhibit a strong empiricist bias

as both rely upon an experiential backdrop. Although
Ramsey disputes the vectorial character of Polanyi's tacit
knowing, the complementary aspects of their work form a
fruitful marriage in the field of religious epistemology.

The second criticism, however (that disclosures are
either too common or too rare), is self-contradictory.
Here the disclosure concept has the advantage of being
particular enough to apply to a learning situation like
finding the right piece in a jig-saw puzzle, or coming to
know a person. Yet, it is universal enough to provide
insights into epistemology in general. As Butler's prob-
ability extended from matters of speculation to those of
great consequence, so disclosures can be as trivial as
solving a puzzle or as profound as a cosmic disclosure.

Such epistemological criticisms, however, tend to
obscure the theoretical point of the disclosure concept,
viz., to draw attention to the kinds of human experiences
that give religious language its point, its claim to
meaningfulness. The disclosure experience is the key link
in Ramsey's explorations towards a fruitful criterion of
meaning for religious language. Thus, the disclosure con-
cept was not intended as a complete epistemology of faith,
but as a cog in a linguistic criterion of meaning.

From another perspective, a theological one, the con-
cept of disclosures has important implications for doc-
trines of revelation. When the epistemological disclosure
concept is applied to this doctrine, Ramsey stands in
stark contrast to traditional views of revelation such as

those that flatly reject natural theology or those that
view revelation from a propositional perspective. Con-
sidered in relation to these, the firm empirical grounding
of disclosures is original. As I have argued this ground-
ing supplies a large area of commonality for communicating
the disclosure or revelation experience to persons with-
out a theistic world-view. Yet the empirical elements are
not so great as to reduce faith to a knowledge of spatio-
temporal phenomena. The facts of the situation are
neither conclusive evidence for, nor irrelevant to, a
reasonable commitment of faith.

In terms of religious experience, disclosures are
meant to be mentally receptive__passive rather than active.
Because a disclosure is dependent on some external, objec-
tive certainty, the concept is both fitting in the theo-
logical context of revelation and extremely sensitive to
the empiricist tradition. However, while the concept is
both helpfully passive and firmly anchored in experience,
it does not sell out to an outmoded fact-value dichotomy.
His five criteria for reasonable commitment and his inter-
pretation of religious language along the lines of the
'evocative function' evince a concern for a sufficiently
broad range of human experience--a scope that defies the
constrictions of the verification criterion. Thus the
disclosure concept is a cornerstone of an understanding
of our apprehension of the 'beyond in the midst' far pref-
erable to those views that distinguish empirical fact from
religious value.

Nonetheless, in his five criteria for reasonable com-
mitment, Ramsey exhibits similarities to Hick's formula
(x must make a difference); the two are closer than many
would suppose. Although not all pro- and contra-factors
involved in a decision of faith are measurable, verifiable,
or even fully describable, religious experience and commit-
ment are never entirely devoid of such phenomena. Hick,
however, remains with the confines of strict empiricism in-
sofar as the difference implied by his formula is empiri-
cally defined. Further, this difference provides for Hick
conclusive evidence in support of some commitment. This
framework rules out a realm of experience for which empiri-
cal data, while not insignificant, are hardly conclusive.
Ramsey, like Wisdom and Mitchell, is more concerned with
mapping this experiential area in which the difference made
by x is not reducible to empirical terms. He is less inti-
midated by boundaries marked by inadequate verificationist
criteria of meaning. Ramsey's contribution to our under-
standing of religious experience gives proper significance
to the kinds of experience which are better characterised
by choice and commitment than by accumulated data and
statistical probabilities.

When we turn to consider the articulation of religious
experience, Ramsey's strengths as an analytical philosopher
shine, but so do his limitations as a theologian. As a
post-positivist philosopher of religious language, Ramsey
was a pioneer. His insights into the logic of religious
discourse exhibit a fine balance between visions of

transcendent mystery and empirical anchorage. Theologians who ignored the challenge of empiricism would find Ramsey's explorations too conservative, too confined by an oppressive definition of meaningfulness. Radical empiricists, on the other hand, would find his understanding of religious language reckless. But, at the very least, his mapping of the evocative logic of religious assertions provides a firm foundation for future theological discourse.

The cornerstone concept, the qualified model, is a sharp analytical tool for unravelling the webs of religious discourse. It is the linguistic counterpart to his balanced view of experience. Further, in his concentration on the evocative functions of models, Ramsey's own practice is remarkably consistent with his theory. In his own use of models throughout <u>Religious Language</u> and elsewhere, Ramsey is chiefly concerned to evoke in the reader an appropriation of some insight; whether into experience, method, language, or ethics. Here again, the model concept is aimed at the articulation of experience marked by commitment rather than conclusive data.

Ramsey's understanding of religious language along the lines of the qualified model results in his call for a tentative approach to theologising. Here he is far more a theological technician than a systematic theologian. As a philosophical point, the necessarily tentative character of religious discourse is commendable. It is the consistent application of his claim that there are no guaranteed articulations of disclosures to his understanding

of religious language. But its theological ramifications give cause for concern. The basic problem is the way that this understanding distances Ramsey from the ordinary believer. Ramsey sees religious assertions as 'evocative'; the ordinary believer sees them as descriptive statements of fact. Although Ramsey is certainly correct in his claim that to speak descriptively of God is bound to result in talk that is blasphemous, this does not solve the problem of the breach between analytic philosopher and believer in the pew. However, the rift is mitigated by a better understanding of Ramsey's position. He does not deny descriptive force to religious assertions entirely, but stresses the key logical force of them, i.e., as the evocation of disclosures. Theologically this is close to that understanding of revelation which finds objective certainty in the Word of God, which is distinguished from human articulation of that revelation.

A second theological shortcoming--one in which I believe Ramsey was too cautious--is that his advocacy of the evocative function neglects other important forces carried by religious discourse. Praising, for example, is one religious language game which is not primarily descriptive, but whose logical force can be misunderstood if approached from Ramsey's logical analysis. That there may be some evocative force is not in doubt, but to analyse "Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory" from an evocative perspective before all others is potentially distortive. Perhaps this is because evocation, like

description, can be best mapped from within an epistemological context. But though epistemology might have been an appropriate arena for Ramsey's battle with the verificationists, there are more suitable contexts for mapping religious language games which are not primarily evocative. Praise, like supplication, confession, and other games, is not primarily epistemological, but personal, spiritual, emotional. Perhaps all that is needed is to approach these diverse games from an evocative perspective which is not epistemologically weighted. But Ramsey does not take such a course.

This said, however, an evocative analysis of religious language is far preferable to flat, descriptive interpretations. Though his interpretation may seem narrow in its reliance on one logical force, it is a fruitful methodological tool in tracing logical paths through confusing claims to a more lucid articulation of Christian beliefs. Ramsey humbly summed up his work in religious language:

> It may seem that I have only stressed the obvious, and in one sense I grant that what I have said is something whose conclusions everybody knew all along. But what I have tried to do as a frontiersman, constantly challenged to give a reason for the faith that is in me, is to give such an account of the language we habitually use as makes it appear to the unbeliever less of a jungle of criss-crossed verbiage than it is wont to do. What I have tried to do has been to try to show better how we have been talking when we have been talking theologically and to suggest points where it would have been better if we had stopped. And here, for the moment, I do. (CE, p. 97).

Turning to Ramsey's work in ethics, we find a curious mix of revolutionary methodology and antiquated schemes.

Although his explorations into the autonomy of ethics and his deontological framework may seem outdated, Ramsey's writings in these areas are not without their value for current theological ethics. As I noted in the ethics section above, Ramsey develops deontological ethics to a fine statement--one which is extremely sensitive to the empiricists' demand for meaningful discourse. Here the concept of disclosures proves to be a valuable tool in the meta-ethical inquiry into the sources and operations of moral insight. When the disclosure of a moral duty is aided by Butler's concept of probability, the resulting ethical methodology is both reasonable and consistent with empiricism. It is reasonable because, like Ramsey's five criteria for reasonable commitment, 'probability' demonstrates the need for decisive action despite a lack of conclusive evidence. It is consistent with empiricism because Ramsey's disclosure of a moral duty exhibits the same drive for external certainty in ethical experience as the empiricist seeks in spatio-temporal phenomena.

Ramsey's discussion of the autonomy of ethics provides some interesting views of the relationship between Christian faith and moral insight and activity. From a meta-ethical perspective, faith, and seeing moral duty as God's will, is merely 'lateral enrichment'; not an integral part of ethical method, but an optional broadening of the picture. The linguistic counterpart is again Ramsey's model concept--to speak of a moral duty as God's will is to use a qualified model with the eccentric logic

characteristic of religious language games. Here, however,
a dangerous discrepancy develops within Ramsey's work. In
his attempt to reconstruct an empirically chastened meta-
physics, Ramsey stressed the integrating functions of cer-
tain models; metaphysics is used to categorise and inte-
grate experience. Turning to religious language, Ramsey
stressed the integrating functions of 'God'. But though
the integrating work of ethics is acknowledged in the
function of principles, the theological input is seen as
mere 'lateral enrichment', an optional broadening. Per-
haps in ethics the term, 'God', must be seen as an inte-
grating term for social norms. But it is more likely that
Ramsey was unable to apply his insights into the integrating
functions of God-talk in metaphysics to ethical discourse.
Thus he found it necessary to accept the claim of philo-
sophy that morality is independent from religion. His
advocacy of the autonomy of ethics--itself a fairly defunct
philosophical issue--is one element of his work in ethics
which is clearly passé.

This said, Ramsey's analytical explorations into the
relationship of God and ought, of God's will and the dis-
cernment of a moral claim, are far preferable to those
radical deontologists who conflate the two and run slip-
shod over the logical distinction advocates of the
autonomy of ethics were concerned to establish. What can
be salvaged from his analytical work in ethics is his
sharp critique of the simplistic logic often employed by
moral theologians in their identification of God's will

and duty. The positive value that might be gained by an application of his concept of the qualified model to ethical discourse is left by Ramsey for some one else to draw out.[3] If the eccentric evocative logic of religious moral discourse were elucidated, it could provide logical mapping of a theological ethics which would not jeopardise the logical distinctiveness of ethical discourse, would not conflate duty and God's will.

Turning from the analytical, meta-ethical aspects to Ramsey's own ethical methodology, his value as a Christian ethicist becomes clear. To assess his work in the connections between theory and practice is to assess Ramsey's 'empirical-exploratory' method. Here his insights into religious experience, his disclosure concept, and his linguistic expertise crystallise into a powerful and highly original ethics. Originally, in beginning my research, I had planned to present Ramsey's doctrinal positions, to offer a sketch of his systematic theology. After having set this out, I would have demonstrated his method of applying these doctrinal positions to ethical issues. This would have been a straightforward tracing of the connections between theory and practice. But then the empirical-exploratory approach asserted itself as the centre of the thesis. Such a straightforward linking of theory and practice as I had envisioned is not Ramsey's way of doing moral theology, of applying his faith.

Basic to Ramsey's ethical method is the ethical disclosure. Just as other disclosures--and especially cosmic

ones--are comprised of a matching of the objectivity of that which declares itself to us with the subjective response of commitment, so an ethical disclosure is marked by a moral claim and a matching commitment to a moral response. Certainly Ramsey, as a chastened deontologist, is more comfortable in the context of the objective disclosure of a duty; while I am more concerned to emphasise the existential elements inherent in the moral response. But this is not to imply that Ramsey has nothing to offer in the latter context. Indeed, in _Freedom and Immortality_ Ramsey stresses the ways in which the individual can 'author' a moral claim.

But whether one stresses the objective disclosure of a moral claim or the personal elements in a committed response, the distinctive mark of Ramsey's ethics is his sensitivity to the empirical anchorage of ethical situations. Ramsey refuses to do ethics in a theoretical vacuum. He recognises that it is when principles are developed rationally, without granting due significance to the facts of the situation, that the meaningless verbiage despised by the empiricists results. His ethical method is an activity that begins with a full account of the facts, then moves to ethical reasoning. This reasoning is itself limited by the empirical elements to ensure the practicality of resulting prescriptions. Finally, ethical activity is continuous, characterised by a return to the actual situation rather than enthusiastic rational development of a given solution. The metaphysical aspects serve

as a helpful guide, a map of terrain already traversed,
to be used to generate further disclosures in actual moral
dilemmas. These meta-physical elements are not intended
to be a 'super-science' or a warehouse of ready-made solu-
tions. Regarding the empirical side--the 'facts' of the
situation--I must underscore the point made in the ethi-
cal section of the thesis that, for Ramsey, a comprehen-
sion of the facts of the situation is never value-free.
His view of experience eliminates the possibility of
examining a 'pure is' before attempting to posit an 'ought'.

Some implications for Christian ethics are clear:
while I have charged that Ramsey was stifled within a
deontological approach, his distance from radical deonto-
logist theologians is obvious. He excoriates those who
believe that their direct linking of preferred doctrines
or verses to moral prescriptions is legitimate ethical
method. Likewise, his insistence that God's will is to
be found in the disclosure to those sensitive to the
actual situation is far from those who rely upon the
'timeless ethical truths' of God's commandments (what-
ever a 'timeless ethical truth' might be). But perhaps
the biggest contrast to too much of theological ethics
is that Ramsey's empirical-exploratory approach is prac-
tical. Because of his systematic sensitivity to the
empirical data, Ramsey's method is bound to be efficient
at generating workable proposals for meeting ethical
dilemmas.

While its grounding in empirical data (in the 'harsh facts' of the situation) make it an effective method, I believe the method has more significant implications for moral theology. Because the moral directive is contingent upon a moral disclosure, and the moral response upon personal involvement, ethics is not merely a matter of logically applying ideals or rationally inferring prescriptions from principles. Rather, ethics done by the empirical-exploratory method is an activity demanding discernment, commitment, and an involvement within the situation that draws the disclosure from the matrix of principles and empirical data, beliefs and facts, theory and practice. This means that a distinction between moral knowledge and moral practice is mistaken in the sense that moral knowledge is an activity. It prompts greater involvement within the social context being considered ethically as opposed to 'cool-hour objectivity'.

As it is not directly inferential, the empirical-exploratory method is to be welcomed in that no contribution is to be despised off-hand for being irrational. 'Rational' proposals might in fact be rejected for being unworkable, out of touch with the practicalities of the situation. A distinct advantage of the method is its inter-disciplinary basis, including the insights of the social sciences as well as incorporating biblical exegesis, Christian history, and systematic theology. Further, there is an explicit demand for contributions from non-academics. This inter-disciplinary approach is not

designed to further muddle an intricate process, but to
generate proposals which are sensitive to the actual
situation and are practical.

One final question remains: How consistently did
Ramsey apply his theory to his practice? How closely
does Ramsey's own work in social problems match his theo-
retical insights into ethical methodology? Certainly my
own bias regarding the question is clear. The examples
of social issues above were chosen partly for their suc-
cess in demonstrating Ramsey's ethical method in actual
practice. Each illustrates his initial concern for estab-
lishing a clear picture of the whole situation, as well
as his continuing involvement in assessing the practical-
ity of proposals. Some examples show his openness to
contributions from all quarters, while others emphasise
his anticipation of future developments. No evaluation
of his contribution to Christian ethics could pretend to
be final. Ultimately his worth as a thinker and a stew-
ard does not depend upon our judgment. We, like Ramsey,
can only appropriate the prayer of the Psalmist as our
own:

> Establish thou the work of our hands upon us;
> yea, the work of our hands, establish thou it.

## Appendix

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| CD | <u>Christian Discourse</u>: <u>Some Logical Explorations</u>, London: Oxford University Press, 1965. |
| CE | <u>Christian Empiricism</u>, ed.., Jerry H. Gill, London: Sheldon Press, 1974. |
| CE + CP | <u>Christian Ethics and Contemporary Philosophy</u>, London: SCM Press, 1966. |
| F + I | <u>Freedom and Immortality</u>, London: SCM Press, 1960. |
| ITR Notes | Ramsey's personal note-folders, including both published and unpublished materials, available in the Archdeacon Sharp Library, the Library of Durham Cathedral. |
| L + D | <u>Decisions about Life and Death</u>, Church Information Office, 1965. |
| M + M | <u>Models and Mystery</u>, London: Oxford University Press, 1964. |
| MDA | <u>Models for Divine Activity</u>, London: SCM Press, 1973. |
| OD | <u>On Dying Well</u>, Church Information Office, 1975. |
| RL | <u>Religious Language</u>: <u>An Empirical Placing of Theological Phrases</u>, London: SCM Press, 1957. |

FOOTNOTES

Chapter One

1. There is a wealth of material in this area. See the bibliography, as well as the specific works cited in this chapter. For Ramsey's relation to the issue, see especially Jerry H. Gill, _Ian Ramsey: To Speak Responsibly of God_, London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1976.

2. This discussion of the development of empiricism if drawn from "Contemporary Empiricism", and "Facts and Disclosures", both in Jerry H. Gill, ed., _Christian Empiricism_, London: Shelden Press, 1974, (henceforth _CE_). Also helpful was a lecture series given by Ramsey in Copenhagen, "Empiricism in England", which can be found in Ramsey's personal notes, (henceforth ITR Notes).

3. "Contemporary Empiricism", _CE_, p. 3. Quoted from: William Wallace, _Prolegomena to the Study of Hegel's Philosophy_, Oxford University Press, Second Edition, 1894.

4. _CE_, p. 4.

5. For a philosophical discussion of the methodology employed by Moore and Wittgenstein see "Mace, Moore, and Wittgenstein" in John Wisdom, _Paradox and Discovery_, Berkeley, CA. (USA): University of California Press, 1965.

6. A. J. Ayer, _Language, Truth, and Logic_, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1946.

7. Gill, _Ian Ramsey_, p. 21.

8. Ian T. Ramsey, _Religious Language: An Empirical Placing of Theological Phrases_, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963, p. 62. (Henceforth _RL_).

9. Ludwig Wittgenstein, _Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus_, London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, Ltd., 1922, 6.5222.

10. _CE_, p. 6.

11. _Ibid._, p. 7. (Quoted by G. E. Moore, _Mind_, Vol. LXIII, (January, 1954), p. 9).

12. _Ibid._, p. 12, (in italics in the original).

13. Cambridge University Press, 1955. Page numbers cited refer to the edition in Ian T. Ramsey, ed., _Christian Ethics and Contemporary Philosophy_, New York: Macmillan and Co., 1966. (Henceforth _CE + CP_).

14. _CE + CP_, p. 53.

15. <u>CE</u> ± <u>CP</u>. p. 58, see further the footnote.

16. <u>Ibid</u>., pp. 61, 62.

17. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 68.

18. John Wisdom, "Gods", <u>Logic</u> <u>and</u> <u>Language</u>, <u>Pro</u>-<u>ceedings</u> <u>of</u> <u>the</u> <u>Aristotelian</u> <u>Society</u>, 1944-1945, pp. 192-193.

19. Antony Flew and Alasdair MacIntyre, eds., <u>New</u> <u>Essays</u> <u>in</u> <u>Philosophical</u> <u>Theology</u>, London:  SCM Press, Ltd., 1955, pp. 98-99.

20. R. M. Hare, "Theology and Falsification", in Flew and MacIntyre, <u>New</u> <u>Essays</u> <u>in</u> <u>Philosophical</u> <u>Theology</u>, pp. 99-103.

21. Basil Mitchell, "Theology and Falsification", in Flew and MacIntyre <u>op</u> <u>cit</u>., p. 104.

22. Mitchell, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., p. 105.

23. John Hick, <u>Philosophy</u> <u>of</u> <u>Religion</u>, Englewood Cliffs, NJ (USA):  Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973, p. 91.^

24. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 96.

25. Obviously this issue must be dealt with in further depth.  For the moment, however, Mitchell's parable illustrates a fundamental dichotomy:  for the non-believer evil is a good reason not to believe.  For the believer, it is an interesting issue because of its possible inroads into knowledge of God.  For the non-believer it is a helpful tool in the destruction of claims for the existence of God; for the believer it is a challenge to his fundamental trust, as opposed to a denial of affirmed doctrines.

26. D. Z. Phillips, <u>Faith</u> <u>and</u> <u>Philosophical</u> <u>Inquiry</u>, New York:  Shocken, 1971; also, ed., <u>Religion</u> <u>and</u> <u>Under</u>-<u>standing</u>, New York:  Macmillan Company, 1967.

27. Alasdair MacIntyre, <u>Metaphysical</u> <u>Beliefs</u>, London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1957, p. 174.

28. MacIntyre, <u>Metaphysical</u> <u>Beliefs</u>, p. 182.

29. In literature, this case is argued by Ivan Karamasov in Fyodor Dostoyevsky, <u>The</u> <u>Brothers</u> <u>Karamasov</u>, in the chapter, "Rebellion".

30. MacIntyre, <u>Metaphysical</u> <u>Beliefs</u>, p. 183.

## Chapter Two

1.  Ian Ramsey, "Models and Mystery", (response to a discussion by R. B. Braithwaite, J. Millar, and T. Bas-t on) <u>Theoria</u> <u>to</u> <u>Theory</u>, vol. 1, 1967, pp. 263-269.

2.  David L. Edwards, <u>Ian</u> <u>Ramsey</u>: <u>Bishop</u> <u>of</u> <u>Durham</u>, London: Oxford University Press, 1973.

3.  ITR, "A Letter to the Editor", <u>Theology</u>, vol. LXVIII, no. 536, February, 1965, pp. 109-111. Also reprinted in <u>CE</u>, pp. 237-239.

4.  Joseph Butler, <u>The</u> <u>Analogy</u> <u>of</u> <u>Religion</u> <u>Natural</u> <u>and</u> <u>Revealed</u> <u>to</u> <u>the</u> <u>Constitution</u> <u>and</u> <u>Course</u> <u>of</u> <u>Nature</u>, Introduction: Section 4, ed., J. H. Bernard, The Works of Bishop Butler, Vol. II.

5.  <u>RL</u>, pp. 28-29.

6.  ITR, <u>Models</u> <u>for</u> <u>Divine</u> <u>Activity</u>, London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1973, p. 60. (Henceforth MDA).

7.  ITR, "On Understanding Mystery", <u>CE</u>, p. 66.

8.  ITR, <u>Christian</u> <u>Discourse</u>: <u>Some</u> <u>Logical</u> <u>Explor-ations</u>, London: Oxford University Press, 1965, p. 88. (The Riddell Memorial Lectures, the University of New-castle, November 1963; henceforth <u>CD</u>).

9.  The quote is from the first draft of an article, "Berkeley and the Possibility of an Empirical Metaphysics", found in Ramsey's personal notes, (henceforth ITR Notes). The article was later published in <u>New</u> <u>Studies</u> <u>in</u> <u>Berke-ley's</u> <u>Philosophy</u>, ed., W. E. Steinkraus, Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1966.

10. ITR, "Freedom and Immortality II", <u>CE</u>, p. 226.

11. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 227.

12. ITR, "Facts and Disclosures", <u>CE</u>. p. 174.

13. Gill, <u>Ian</u> <u>Ramsey</u>, p. 59.

14. ITR, "Polanyi and J. L. Austin" in <u>Intellect</u> <u>and</u> <u>Hope</u>: <u>Essays</u> <u>in</u> <u>the</u> <u>Thought</u> <u>of</u> <u>Michael</u> <u>Polanyi</u>, ed. T. A. Langford and W. H. Poteat, Durham, NC (USA): Duke University Press, 1968. ITR quotes Polanyi from: Michael Polanyi, <u>Personal</u> <u>Knowledge</u>, London: Routledge and Keegan Paul Ltd., 1962, p. vii. I am especially grateful to Jerry Gill for much of the discussion which follows.

15. Michael Polanyi, <u>The</u> <u>Tacit</u> <u>Dimension</u>, Garden City, NY (USA): Doubleday Anchor, 1967, p. 6.

16. <u>Ibid</u>., pp. 29-30.

17. Professor T. F. Torrance has kindly supplied me with a copy of this unpublished address, "The Place of Michael Polanyi in the Modern Philosophy of Science", p. 7.

18. Michael Polanyi, op. cit., p. 19.

19. See note 9, above, (this chapter).

20. Polanyi, Personal Knowledge, p. 36.

21. Polanyi, The Tacit Dimension, p. xi.

22. Søren Kierkegaard, ed., Concluding Unscientific Postscript, trans. David Swenson and Walter Lowrie, Princeton (USA): Princeton University Press, 1968, p. 169.

23. ITR, "Facts and Disclosures", CE, p. 165.

24. The address, "Facts and Disclosures", from which the following discussion is drawn, is published in CE, pp. 159-176.

25. Ibid., pp. 160-161.

26. Ibid., p. 168. ITR quotes from Strawson's address, printed in the Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Vol. XXIV, p. 135.

27. ITR quotes from the chapter, "Unfair to Facts", in J. L. Austin, Philosophical Papers, ed., J. O. Urmson, and G. J. Warnock, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961. ITR's use of the quote is found in Langford and Poteat, Intellect and Hope, p. 137.

28. ITR, "Facts and Disclosures", CE, p. 173.

29. See the discussion of the relationship of God and goodness below, chapters 6 and 7.

30. One of ITR's favourite Whitehead quotes, found in CD, p. 66; quoted from A. N. Whitehead, Science and the Modern World, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1933 ed., p. 228.

Chapter Three

1. Max Black's insights can be found chiefly in Models and Metaphors: Studies in Language and Philosophy, Ithaca, NY (USA): Cornell University Press, 1962. ITR also acknowledges his debt to Peter Winch, principally, The Idea of a Social Science: and Its Relation to Philosophy, London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, Ltd., 1960.

2. ITR quotes Black in _Models and Mystery_, London: Oxford University Press, 1964, p. 9. (Henceforth M ± M); from Black, _Models and Metaphors_, p. 227.

3. ITR, _op. cit._, p. 13.

4. _Ibid._, p. 19.

5. _Ibid._, p. 20.

6. _Ibid._, p. 21.

7. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, _The Social Construction of Reality; A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge_, Garden City, NY (USA): Doubleday Anchor, 1967, p. 155.

8. Peter Winch, _The Idea of a Social Science_, p. 23.

9. Quoted by Winch, _op. cit._, p. 24.

10. ITR, M ± M, p. 34.

11. _Ibid._, p. 37.

12. ITR, "Talking of God: Models, Ancient and Modern", in _CE_, p. 120, n. 2.

13. ITR, "A Letter to the Editor", _CE_, p. 238.

14. ITR, "Talking of God", _CE_, p. 132.

15. ITR, _MDA_, p. 61.

16. ITR, _CD_, p. 82.

17. ITR, M ± M, p. 53.

18. See further Paul Tillich, _The Dynamics of Faith_, New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1957, in which he speaks of faith in terms of 'ultimate concern'. Citing patriotism as a false 'ultimate concern', he points out that nationalist faith can be dislodged only by a more ultimate object of faith. It is interesting that Tillich here defends the ultimacy of God along lines very similar to ITR's defense of disclosures. For Tillich 'ultimate concerns' eventually break down because of their incapacity to get beyond an object of worship to a subject of activities directed towards man. Compare ITR's insistence that the objective reference is guaranteed by our awareness of being acted upon.

19. ITR, "On Understanding Mystery", _CE_, p. 72.

Chapter Four

1. ITR, "The Systematic Elusiveness of 'I'", The Philosophical Quarterly, St. Andrews University, vol. 5, no. 20, July 1955; "Paradox in Religion", The Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Vol. XXXIII, 1959. Both can be found in CE, to which page numbers used below refer.

2. ITR, "The Systematic Elusiveness of 'I'", CE, p. 22.

3. C. D. Broad, The Mind and Its Place in Nature, London: 1925, especially chapters IV and XIII.

4. See R. B. Braithwaite's criticisms of Models and Mystery, and ITR's response in Theoria to Theory, vol. 1 1967, pp. 263-269. See further Robert C. Coburn's comment, quoted by ITR in "On Understanding Mystery", CE, p. 61: "It is 'far from obvious' claims Coburn, that 'the notion of facts which elude direct statement' makes sense."

5. ITR, "On Understanding Mystery", CE, p. 65.

6. ITR quotes Strawson in "Biology and Personality", CE, p. 34.

7. The 'hereby' test fails in the case of an utterance like "I state that I am a citizen of Great Britain". Here is a constative that makes sense in the 'I hereby state' form. See further the discussion of Austin's linguistic work and its implications for religious language in James Wm. McClendon, Jr., and James M. Smith, Understanding Religious Convictions, Notre Dame, IN (USA): University of Notre Dame Press, 1975. In the Intellect and Hope contribution ITR offers a possible criterion the transformation of performatives to first person indicative. "You are hereby warned" becomes "I am hereby warning you". Although this produces fruitful parallels with ITR's insights into first person logic, it, too, fails as a criterion, as "I hereby state that I am a citizen of Great Britain" demonstrates.

8. J. L. Austin, Philosophical Papers, p. 236. My discussion of Austin follows closely that of McClendon and Smith, Understanding Religious Convictions, chapter 3.

9. Michael Polanyi, Personal Knowledge, p. 254. From ITR, "Polanyi and Austin", Langford and Poteat, op. cit, p. 192. See further the Berkeley quotation emphasised above, chapter 2, p. 46: "Notions and ideas were mutually implicating elements of every genuine assertion".

10. Here ITR refers the reader to W. Zuurdeeg, <u>An</u> <u>Analytical</u> <u>Philosophy</u> <u>of</u> <u>Religion</u>, London: 1959, also Nashville (USA): Abingdon, 1958. Briefly, Zuurdeeg sees convictional language as a distinct set, not reducible to indicative or emotive interpretations. In his review of the book (<u>Hibbert</u> <u>Journal</u>, vol. LVIII, no. 2, January 1960, pp. 192-193) ITR judged it to be an excellent attempt to grapple with the problems of the inter-relations of conviction sets. Zuurdeeg's attempt, which analytically examines the situational context surrounding convictional assertions, avoids "the pitfalls of imagined objectivity or convictional bias and apologetic".

11. ITR, "Polanyi and Austin", Langford and Poteat, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., p. 197.

12. Jerry Gill has kindly supplied me with a transcript of this discussion which took place in Seattle, WA (USA), 20 July, 1963--questions put to ITR by Dr. Gill.

13. Wisdom, <u>Paradox</u> <u>and</u> <u>Discovery</u>, p. 43.

14. D. A. T. Gasking, "The Philosophy of John Wisdom" in Renford Bambrough, <u>Wisdom</u>: <u>Twelve</u> <u>Essays</u>, p. 10 and in <u>Australian</u> <u>Journal</u> <u>of</u> <u>Philosophy</u>, (1954).

15. John Wisdom, "Logic and Language", in <u>Philosophy</u> <u>and</u> <u>Psycho-analysis</u>, Oxford: Blackwell, 1953, p. 187.

16. Wisdom, "The Logic of God", <u>Paradox</u> <u>and</u> <u>Discovery</u>, p. 8.

17. Wisdom, "Paradox and Discovery", <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., p. 124.

18. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 126.

19. Wisdom, "The Logic of God", <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., p. 22.

### Chapter Five

1. ITR, <u>M</u> ± <u>M</u>, pp. 16-17.

2. Just such a situation is depicted in Jean-Paul Sartre's play, "Dirty Hands". A member of a resistance party is suspected of accomplishing a difficult mission purely for reasons of personal jealousy. Ironically, though, he is vindicated, the party's treatment of the agent causes him to reject his original faith in the party.

3. ITR discusses this concept in <u>RL</u>, pp. 15 et seq., and also in <u>Joseph</u> <u>Butler</u> <u>1692-1752</u>: <u>Some</u> <u>Features</u> <u>of</u>

his Life and Thought, Friends of the Dr. Williams Library Lecture no. 23, London: Dr. Williams' Trust, 1969.

4. ITR, quoting Butler, RL, p. 18.

5. The implications for ITR's metaphysics will be discussed in this chapter, while the links with his ethics will be picked up below, chapter 7. At this point I am chiefly concerned to describe the kind of commitment involved in faith and how it serves to connect theological assertions with human experience generally and personal experience in particular.

6. John Hick, "Eschatological Verification Reconsidered", Religious Studies, vol. 13, 1972, pp. 189-202.

7. Ibid., p. 190.

8. Ibid., p. 192.

9. Ibid., p. 196.

10. I can only mention the work of two German theologians Gerhard von Rad and Jurgen Moltmann. For both thinkers eschatology is conceived in terms of the historical activities of the God of the promise. See further von Rad, The Theology of the Old Testament, Vol. I, London: SCM Press Ltd., and Jurgen Moltmann, The Theology of Hope, New York: Harper and Row 1967.

11. It is true that ITR chides Wisdom (perhaps unfairly) for misconstruing the logic of Elijah's prayer. When Wisdom comments, "The existence of God is not an experimental issue in the way it was," ITR takes this to be an unfounded jibe at the work of science. Although Wisdom stresses that the facts are not irrelevant, this is not as sympathetic to the insights of science as ITR would urge. ITR can hold his position without sliding into a dichotomy of science and religion because he is more adept at illuminating the metaphysical aspects of science. Likewise his own metaphysics is supported by a science-affirming empirical anchorage. On the other hand, it is apparent that ITR has missed the boundary-breaking significance of Wisdom's insights into 'what kind of evidence counts for or against the existence of God'. This discussion, however, should not obscure my basic point: that ITR and Wisdom share the affirmation of mystery in showing ways of seeking to understand it without relying upon the future arrival of conclusive evidence.

12. Although Hick argues that his verification could occur on this earth, an intimate awareness of God's presence which excludes rational doubt is sufficiently foreign to this existence to make the verification conditions

other-worldly; and hence his meaningfulness criterion remains meaningless in this context.

13.   ITR can be accused of a similar distortion in his discussion of natural law; (see below, Chapter 7).

14.   Frederick Ferré, Language, Logic, and God, London:  Eyre and Spottiswoode (Publishers) Ltd., 1962, p. 165.


Chapter Six

1.   ITR, ed. Christian Ethics and Contemporary Philosophy, London:  SCM Press Ltd., 1966.  P. H. Nowell-Smith's contribution, "Morality:  Religious and Secular", was first published in the Rationalist Annual, 1961.  Kai Nielsen's article, "Some Remarks on the Independence of Morality from Religion", is from Mind, 1961.  Subsequent references to these articles will use page numbers from CE ± CP.

2.   For a helpful discussion of the logical difficulties in relating goodness and God's will, see G. Stanley Kane, "The Concept of Divine Goodness and the Problem of Evil", Religious Studies, 1975, vol. 11, no. 1.

3.   Against this charge of heteronomy, Tillich argues that obedience to the moral demand of the will of God is not heteronomous in that it is true to the inner law of our being.  Obedience to this law is thus both internal and intrinsically binding.  Hence Tillich claims that the moral demand is unconditional but not heteronomous.  There are interesting parallels to ITR's subjective disclosure matched by an objective claim.  See further, Paul Tillich, Theology of Culture, NY (USA):  Galaxy Book, 1964.

4.   W. G. Maclagan, The Theological Frontier of Ethics, London:  Allen and Unwin, 1961.  Reviewed by ITR in Mind., April, 1963, vol. LXXII, NS, no. 286, pp. 294-298.  ITR uses his review in his contribution to CE ± CP, "Moral Judgments and God's Commands", which I shall discuss below.

5.   W. G. Maclagan, op. cit., pp. 68-69; quoted by ITR in CE ± CP, p. 152.

6.   These points are brought out from a different perspective by Brian A. Davies in "God and Language--Some Comments on the Meaningfulness of Theism", Downside Review, 1975, vol. 93, pp. 27-38.  Davies argues that Maclagan's analytical criticisms of the application of words like 'will', 'command', etc. depend on the words' having a more precise meaning than they actually exhibit.

7.   Kai Nielsen, "Some Remarks on the Independence of Morality from Religion", CE ± CP, pp. 140-151.

8. Nielsen appears to believe that he is being generous in allowing us to be clear about what God wills, (if God wills X), but he is actually assuming more than many theologians would allow. Such a direct revelation of God's will ignores the odd logic due to God's inscrutability and commits us to a deontological understanding of God and ought. If Nielsen cannot make this assumption his argument is wasted. Here ITR's insights into disclosures--that the articulation of a disclosure is never guaranteed, that cosmic disclosures are mediated through more direct disclosures--should cast doubt upon Nielsen's fundamental premise. That many Christians would accept this premise leaves them to sort out the logical webs that Nielsen is able to construct.

9. For a discussion of ITR's insights into the logical oddness of first-person utterances see above, ch. 5.

10. The quotation is from CE + CP, p. 144, emphasis mine. Stanley Kane argues in the above-mentioned article against those who understand 'God wills X' in any way that makes goodness external to God. He helpfully elucidates the logical complexity of 'God wills X' while denying the 'objective' interpretations of Brunner, Barth, Calvin, et al.

11. Des l'instant ou l'homme soumet Dieu au jugement moral, il le tui en lui-meme." (l'homme revolte, Gallimard, 1951, p. 83). Albert Camus, The Rebel, trans. by Anthony Bower, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1971, p. 57. Camus echoes the existentialist/nihilist tradition summed up in Stendhal's phrase, "The only excuse for God would be for him not to exist", which proclaims the ultimate failure of all theodicies. Camus' purposes are, however, somewhat different, as I shall try to show.

12. D. Z. Phillips, "God and Ought", CE + CP, p. 139.

13. Albert Camus, The Rebel, p. 57: (l'homme revolte, p. 83).

14. CE + CP, p. 130. J. R. Lucas' suggestion has the additional benefit of moving our discussion out of the constricting deontological perspective: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against which there is no law. (Gal. 5.22,23).

15. "Johannes de Silentio", Fear and Trembling, London: Oxford University Press, 1939, p. 100.

16. A. Of course the possibility remains that the individual, in judging God, will kill him in his heart,

and fall from courageous faith to un-belief. But faith
must not be thought to make no demands on the passion
(Kierkegaard) or courage (Tillich) of the intellectually
honest. Compare criterion (d) of ITR's five criteria for
reasonable commitment, CE, p. 198, above, ch. 5, pp. 124-125.

B. It may, however, be objected that the idea that
man might judge God from human morality or justice is ab-
surd. (See above, note 13). It is certainly not logical.
But the judgment, the evaluation, is more a matter of atti-
tude--loyalty, betrayal; trust, suspicion--than it is a
question for ratiocination. It is an operation of the
'reasons of the heart'. The individual who has come this
far will not secure his faith by the reasonable reflection
that man has no place to stand from which to judge God
good. Camus knew this much. A fundamental distrust will
find such logic an evasion, as it begs the question. Rather,
the individual might strengthen his faith in a reconsidera-
tion of his commitment along the lines of ITR's five cri-
teria; or perhaps the paradox of God's will and the ethical
will reawaken the passion of his original commitment.

17. "The Big Nurse tends to get real put out if
something keeps her outfit from running like a smooth,
accurate, precision-made machine. And she don't relax
a hair till she gets the nuisance attended to--what she
calls 'adjusted to surroundings' ... she wields a sure
power that extends in all directions on hair-like wires
too small for anybody's eye but mine; I see her sit in
the centre of this web like a watchful robot, tend her
network with mechanical insect skill ... What she dreams
of there in the centre of those wires is a world of pre-
cision efficiency and tidiness like a pocket watch with
a glass back." Ken Kesey, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's
Nest, London: Picador, 1973, p. 27.

18. J. R. Lucas, CE + CP, p. 127.

19. "It looks as though the way out from the con-
fusing multiplicity of possible decisions is the path of
duty. What is commanded is seized upon as being surest.
Responsibility for the command rests upon the man who
gives it and not upon him who executes it. But in this
confinement within the limits of duty there can never
come the bold stroke of the deed which is done on one's
own free responsibility, the only kind of deed which can
strike at the heart of evil and overcome it. The man of
duty will end by having to fulfill his obligation to the
devil," Ethics, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, London: SCM Press,
Ltd., 1955. See also, "After Ten Years" in Letters and
Papers from Prison, London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1953.

20. Two of the many sources that might be consulted
are: S. Strauss, ed. The Social Psychology of George

Herbert Mead, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956;
and Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, The Social Construc-
tion of Reality, New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1966. In
the latter work Berger and Luckmann speak of 'reality-
maintenance' by which they refer to the consistent, con-
ventional background that sustains the subjective sense
of reality and against which the self develops.


## Chapter Seven

1. I believe that this is partly to be explained by
the topic which focuses the relationship between God and
ought on commands thus emphasising the deontological ele-
ments of religious ethics. ITR does attack the problem
in Freedom and Immortality in the form: Is X my duty be-
cause it is God's will, or is it God's will because it is
my duty. His response is that it is, in fact, a pseudo-
question, since talk of God's will is 'lateral enrichment'
and hence a more comprehensive way of saying the same
thing. Although similar to Patterson Brown, it is more
logically precise and thus avoids the difficulties raised
by Kane. (See note 10 in ch. 6 above).

2. (See note 3, ch. 6 above).

3. The following is a response to H. L. A. Hart,
The Concept of Law, London: Oxford University Press,
1961.

4. See further, H. P. Owen, "Nature and Morality"
in G. R. Dunstan, ed., Duty and Discernment, London:
1975. Owen offers an excellent discussion of the logical
possibilities for interpretations of the relations between
nature and morality. Owen's conclusions are far more
sympathetic to natural law theories than I am; but per-
haps this is due to the analytical character of his ap-
proach to the issue.

5. From a letter to his friend, Joseph Hooker,
13 July, 1856, More Letters (of Charles Darwin), eds.,
Francis Darwin and A. C. Seward, Vol. I, London: 1868,
p. 94.

6. I shall pick up the relation of freedom to duty
below in my discussion of Freedom and Immortality.

7. ITR, On Being Sure in Religion, (F. D. Maurice
Lectures 1961) London: Athlone Press, 1963, p. 34.

8. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, trans,
Hazel E. Barnes, New York (USA): Pocket Philosophy Books,
1966, p. 707.

9.  Bonhoeffer, <u>Ethics</u>, p. 233.

10.  H. Richard Niebuhr, <u>The Responsible Self</u>, New York (USA):  Harper and Row, 1963, p. 71.

11.  D. Bonhoeffer, <u>Ethics</u>, p. 237.

12.  Michael Polanyi, <u>The Tacit Dimension</u>, pp. 32-33.

13.  Bonhoeffer, <u>Ethics</u>, p. 234.

14.  ITR <u>Freedom and Immortality</u>, (the Forwood Lectures, the University of Liverpool, 1957), London: SCM Press, 1960, pp. 38-39.

15.  As such labels as 'empiricist' or 'rationalist' are limited in their application to ITR's philosophical foundation, so his ethics exhibits features which cannot be termed 'deontological'.  (See Chapter Two, p.  37, above).

16.  Sartre, <u>Being and Nothingness</u>, from an excerpt, "Ethical Implications" reprinted in eds., W. T. Jones, Frederick Sontag, et al.  <u>Approaches to Ethics</u>, 2nd ed., New York (USA):  McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1969, p. 537.

17.  H. R. Niebuhr, <u>The Responsible Self</u>, p. 78.

## Chapter Eight

1.  Great Britain, Parliament, <u>Hansard's Parliamentary Debates</u>, (House of Lords), NS, Vol. 299, 12 February 1969, col. 460.

2.  <u>Ibid</u>.

3.  <u>Ibid</u>., col. 463.

4.  <u>Ibid</u>., col. 465.

5.  <u>Hansard</u>, 326, 1 December 1971, col. 348.

6.  These aims were released to the newspapers along with the announcement of the formation of the committee. The statement of purposes in the form given here can be found in ITR Notes:  Race Relations in South Africa, (Packet 2).

7.  In addition to Bishop Ramsey, the delegation included:  The Archbishop of York, Sir Robert Birley, Neil Wates, Sir Anthony Buzzard, and Mr. Alex Lyon, M. P. for York.  Mr. Alex Lyon had a large share in the organisation of the committee and the delegation.  Sir Anthony Buzzard, former director of naval intelligence, had

written to The Times advocating the strategic advantages
of withholding arms from the Union of South Africa.

8. From ITR Notes, ("Race Relations in South Africa")

9. According to correspondence, this point was strong-
ly suggested in a letter to Bishop Ramsey from the Arch-
bishop of Canterbury.

10. From ITR Notes, a letter to T. W. Barnes,
9 January 1971.

11. Hansard, 327, 19 January 1972.

12. Hansard, 306, 10 December 1969, col. 1152.

13. Ibid., col. 1154.

14. Church Assembly Board for Social Responsibility,
Punishment, London:  Church Information Office, 1963, p. 31.

15. Hansard, 306, col. 1156.

16. Stanley Cohen and Laurie Taylor, in New Society,
31 December 1970, pp. 1156-1159.  (There is a copy of the
article in ITR Notes:  Punishment).

17. ITR is here drawing upon a letter of Group Capt.
G. H. Tebboth to The Times, 14 November 1970.  Tebboth
writes, "It seems to be forgotten by some of your contri-
butors that most ... prison inmates are there because they
volunteered to be there--no one compelled them to rob a
bank, commit an assault, or embezzle."  (p. 13).

18. Hansard, 315, 17 February 1971, cols. 594-595.

19. Ibid., col. 595.

20. Ibid., col. 597.  (a copy of Jimmy O'Connor's
article in TV Times is contained in ITR Notes:  Punishment)

21. Ibid.

22. Cohen and Taylor, op. cit., ITR Notes:  Punishment.

23. This point was suggested to Archbishop Ramsey by
a Roman Catholic woman who had worked in prisons and was
discouraged by the failure of the church to speak out on
the situation.

24. Hansard, 315, col. 601.

Chapter Nine

1. ITR was also involved in the 1959 publication of the Church Assembly Board for Social Responsibility, Ought Suicide to be a Crime? London: Church Information Office. Also relevant is an address "Moral Problems Facing the Medical Profession at the Present Time", the Inaugural Lecture at the 15th Annual Meeting of the British Medical Association, Nicosia, Cyprus, 12 April 1972. See further his speech to the House of Lords, Hansard, 25 March 1969, cols. 1179-1185.

2. The significance of the layman's involvement will be clarified in discussing his speech to the House of Lords, below, p. 223.

3. Church Assembly Board for Social Responsibility, Decisions about Life and Death, (henceforth L + D), London: Church Information Office, 1965. L + D allows the possibility of prescribing pain-killing drugs which may shorten the life of the patient as a side effect, but stops short of condoning voluntary, active euthanasia.

4. The use of the word 'right' brings the moral discussion of 'active' or 'passive' cooperation into a context which is more directly legal.

5. One of the more powerful examples in OD is of a man who, already ill, declared his wish to die when he degenerated to the point of a patient who was in the next bed. Yet doctors stated that the man's will to live survived long after he had reached the condition of the other patient.

6. "Moral Problems Facing the Medical Profession at the Present Time".

7. ITR gained this insight from correspondence with Dr. Vincent I. Collins, Director of the Division of Anesthesiology, Cook County Hospital, Chicago, IL (USA) (Included in ITR Notes: Euthanasia).

Chapter Ten

1. See Chapter 2, p. 37ff above.

2. See Chapter 2, pp. 56-60, above.

3. See Chapter 7, p. 167, above.

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Ian Ramsey played a major part in the group which produced the Report The Family in Contemporary Society (1958) one of the preparatory reports for the 1958 Lambeth

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bility.

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Society, Supplementary vol. XXXIII, pp. 195-218,
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