

## **GESTIMMTHEIT: ATTUNEMENT AS A DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURE-GRACE RELATIONSHIP IN RAHNER'S THEOLOGY**

BOYD TAYLOR COOLMAN

*Karl Rahner uses the language of attunement (Gestimmtheit) in his Christology and in his theological anthropology to describe human nature's relationship to grace. An analysis of this term's use prior to Rahner, especially in the thought of Martin Heidegger, illuminates the meaning of this key term in Rahner's thought.*

IN HIS PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION of the second edition of Karl Rahner's *Hörer des Wortes*,<sup>1</sup> J. B. Metz summarizes Rahner's thesis: the human person is that being whose most basic posture is one of listening for a possible word of divine revelation, for an encounter with a self-communication of God. Metz describes this posture, intriguingly, as an "attunement." The human person is that creature who is always "questioningly attuned" to a possible word from God in history.<sup>2</sup> That such language should emerge in a summary of Rahner's theological anthropology is not surprising. Rahner himself uses the term "attunement" (*Gestimmtheit*) and, for reasons to be explored below, it emerges as an apt characterization of his understanding of human nature's relationship to grace. Rahner's use of this term, however, is more than a theological description; it also provides a link to the philosophy of Martin Heidegger, whose influence on Rahner is often noted,<sup>3</sup> and whose use of

BOYD TAYLOR COOLMAN, with his Ph.D. from the University of Notre Dame, is assistant professor of theology at Boston College. His area of special interest is 12th- and 13th-century theology. He has recently published "Hugh of St. Victor on 'Jesus Wept': Compassion as Ideal *humanitas*," *Theological Studies* 69 (2008); and "The Medieval Affective Dionysian Tradition," in *Re-Thinking Dionysius*, ed. Sarah Coakley and Charles M. Stang, *Modern Theology* 24 (2008). Forthcoming are his monograph, *The Theology of Hugh of St. Victor: An Interpretation* (Cambridge University, 2010); and *Trinity and Creation*, edited with Dale M. Coulter, for the series Victorine Texts in English Translation (Brepols, 2010).

<sup>1</sup> Karl Rahner, *Hearers of the Word*, 2nd ed., trans. Michael Richards, pref. J. B. Metz (New York: Herder & Herder, 1969).

<sup>2</sup> Metz, preface to Rahner, *Hearers of the Word* viii.

<sup>3</sup> For a description of Heidegger's influence on Rahner, see Thomas F. O'Meara, *God in the World: A Guide to Karl Rahner's Theology* (Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical, 2007) 26–27.

*Gestimmtheit* is similar to, but not identical with, Rahner's. Beyond this link to Heidegger, the notion of attunement in Rahner's thought intersects with a broader, late-modern concern with affectivity, which only seems to be growing.<sup>4</sup> Increasingly, it seems, there is an appreciation of the *ethical*, the *epistemological*, and the *mystical* significance of human affectivity (i.e., feeling, emotion, heart).<sup>5</sup> My aim here is to provide a modest contribution to this much larger discussion by shedding a bit more light on how Rahner's notion of attunement might contribute to that growing conversation.<sup>6</sup>

Rahner's description of nature's attunement to grace in the person of Christ will serve as a starting point. Following a survey of the meaning of "attunement" prior to the 20th century, I will give an overview of its meaning in the thought of Martin Heidegger. Finally, I will explore the contours of Rahner's general understanding of nature and grace, perhaps his most unique contribution to modern theology, in terms of attunement in order to expose its possible connections with Heidegger and to illustrate the role this term plays in Rahner's thought.

### THE *GESTIMMTHEIT* OF HUMAN BEING

In an early essay, "Dogmatic Reflections on the Knowledge and Self-Consciousness of Christ,"<sup>7</sup> Rahner considers how the incarnate Christ possessed an immediate vision of God. The question, of course, has an

<sup>4</sup> See Johnathan Flatley, *Affective Mapping: Melancholia and the Politics of Modernism* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University, 2008), who notes the recent quantity "of excellent work on affect in several disciplines (including literary studies, history, philosophy, psychology, psychiatry, sociology, cognitive science, and neurobiology)" (11).

<sup>5</sup> The work of Andrew Tallon is perhaps the most salient example (see n. 62 below). Other recent works include: William Alston, *Perceiving God: The Epistemology of Religious Experience* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University, 1991); Martha C. Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (New York: Cambridge University, 2001); Oliver Davies, *A Theology of Compassion: Metaphysics of Difference and the Renewal of Tradition* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2003). For work prior to 2000, see the extensive bibliography in John Corrigan, Eric Crump, and John M. Kloos, eds., *Emotion and Religion: A Critical Assessment and Annotated Bibliography* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2000).

<sup>6</sup> This essay is an exercise in historical, rather than constructive theology. My purpose is less to endorse than to elucidate Rahner's Christology. In so doing I hope to contribute to the understanding of his historical period, since "the way any particular age has depicted Jesus is often the key to the genius of that age" (Jaroslav Pelikan, *Jesus through the Centuries: His Place in the History of Culture* [New Haven, Conn.: Yale University, 1985] 3).

<sup>7</sup> Karl Rahner, "Dogmatic Reflections on the Knowledge and Self-Consciousness of Christ," *Theological Investigations* 5, trans. Karl-H. Kruger (Baltimore: Helicon, 1966) 193–215.

extended history, which Rahner divides into two basic theories: an extrinsicist view, which sees this vision as an additional perfection subsequently joined to the hypostatic union; and an intrinsicist view, which understands the vision as an essential feature of the union. For reasons that cannot be pursued here, Rahner opts for the latter view. He suggests that Christ's vision of God should be understood as "the original unobjectified consciousness of divine sonship, which is present by the mere fact that there is a Hypostatic Union."<sup>8</sup> Accordingly, the beatific vision must not be thought of as a "sighting" of God, like some Object viewed by an "Other" who is facing it; rather, it should be understood as analogous to what Rahner sees as the basic intellectually subjective condition of human beings generally. For all spiritual creatures, whose basic condition is one of potential transcendence and freedom, there is a "direct presence to God" that is always already present as the ground and horizon in which all other "traffic with the things and notions of daily life takes place."<sup>9</sup> The difference, then, between the transcendental of Jesus of Nazareth and that of all other human beings is simply that in Jesus there belongs to this basic spiritual condition a "direct presence to God which is an intrinsic subjective element of the hypostatic assumption of the human spiritual nature of Jesus by the Logos."<sup>10</sup> Put more simply, although the "direct presence to God" in Jesus is a function of the hypostatic union and is in that way unique to him, it is nevertheless analogous to the spiritual, transcendental nature of human beings generally.

Noteworthy here is Rahner's description of this relationship of "direct presence to God" as a *Gestimmtheit* or "attunement" between the human creature and God, an attunement that serves as the horizon and ground of all other acts. In all persons, Rahner explains, there is "an unformed attunement [*Gestimmtheit*] which is the unembraceable ground of his whole knowledge, the permanent condition of the possibility of all other knowledge, its law and gauge, and its ultimate form."<sup>11</sup> From these terse remarks, *Gestimmtheit* emerges as Rahner's characterization of his transcendental anthropology, which he has elaborated elsewhere. To speak of this attunement as the ground, law, gauge, form, and condition of the possibility of all other knowledge suggests that *Gestimmtheit* is a description of the transcendental character of human beings. Before pursuing the notion of attunement in Rahner's anthropology it will be helpful to consider the conceptual and semantic history of this term.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. 208.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. 209.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

### GESTIMMTHEIT IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The modern German *Gestimmtheit* carries a rich set of semantic connotations. Most basically it is derived from *Stimme*, meaning a "voice" of either a person or an instrument. The corresponding verb *stimmen* is used transitively to describe the act of tuning an instrument; intransitively, it refers to a state of order or rightness (*richtig sein*). From *Stimme*, moreover, comes the polyvalent notion of *Stimmung*, which in modern German is most often translated as a "mood" or a "humor" and in this sense refers to a psychological state of mind. But *Stimmung* can also refer to an objective unity that extends over and unites an observer and her environment, such as the unity of a landscape. Related to this sense is the phrase *gestimmt sein*, "to be attuned," which, with its implication of a relative solidarity or agreement with something more comprehensive, distinguishes it from a state of mind. Thus one can speak both of "my *Stimmung*" or of the "*Stimmung* of a landscape," and in either case an underlying musical connotation is present in the sense of tuning an instrument or voice.<sup>12</sup> This more objective set of meanings is of special interest as background to this study.

Linguistic studies reveal that this modern notion of *Stimmung* is the fruit of a long semantic development that originated in ancient Greece and can be traced through late antique, medieval, Renaissance, and early modern times, until it appears in 18th-century German lexicographical sources. Originally the word did not suggest a changing, temporary condition or mood, but rather a stable "tunedness" of the soul, as well as of the cosmos as a whole. And, in this sense, it was evidently a translation of such Latin words as *temperamentum* and *consonantia*. These Latin words, in turn, described respectively the ideas of a "well-tempered mixture" and a "harmonious consonance," and together formed an all-embracing notion of world harmony. In its distant origins, then, the concept of *Stimmung* connotes an understanding of the world as a whole (macrocosm) and of the individual soul within it (microcosm), which is characterized by an objective harmony that is musical and mathematical at once, a world resembling a lyre in which all things are consonant, tuned, and unified.<sup>13</sup>

In the philosophical worldviews of the 19th century and the existential philosophy of the early 20th, the unique philosophical profile of *Stimmung* finds its meaning on the border between "feeling" (*Gefühl*), "affect" (*Affekt*), and "sentiment" (*Empfindung*). While *Stimmung* figured in the thought of Shaftesbury and Kant, it was Dilthey who first gave words

<sup>12</sup> Leo Spitzer, *Classical and Christian Ideas of World Harmony: Prolegomena to an Interpretation of the Word "Stimmung"* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1963) 5–7.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* 8–10.

derived from *Stimmung* a systematic place in his philosophy, wherein all world interpretations or meanings, from religion, philosophy, and poetry lead back to a certain *Lebensgefühle* or *Grundstimmung*, an expression that seems to have originated with Schopenhauer. For these thinkers, moods are more than states of feeling; they are world-embracing reference points, in whose light reality appears differently. They form the reference point, not for individual objects, but for the whole of a world.<sup>14</sup>

Also in the 19th century, an explicitly religious and even theological sense of the language of attunement emerges in the writings of certain Roman Catholic thinkers influenced by Romanticism. Viewing art as the primary expression of an interior feeling of infinity and the exteriorization of the experience of God, Alois Gügler, for example, sees art's fruitful womb as the soul's attunedness to God (*die Gestimmtheit des Gemütes*). This "being attuned" is a kind of divine determination of the human, which "in so far as it passes over into consciousness" establishes "a sensorium" capable of perceiving divine things. For Gügler, this "tuning" (*Stimmung*) is "a living commerce between God and man, a real *spiritual equating* of the two," "a living process whereby the tuner (*der Bestimmende*) and the tuned (*der Bestimmte*) are made equal." A musical analogy captures the idea: "when the relationships of a string of the instrument to the different resonances of the air have been established in being by tightening the string, and so forth, then the string is tuned."<sup>15</sup>

Gügler brings this theory of art to bear theologically, first at the level of creation. In Hans Urs von Balthasar's words, "this is how God brought creation into accord (*Stimmung*) with himself, and this, too, is the only way in which the 'otherwise mute creation received a voice (*Stimme*) and a language.'" The human recapitulates this general accord within it, being, again in Balthasar's words "tuned by God's breath to reflect and express the attunedness (*Gestimmtheit*) of matter and spirit, nature and God." History too, though, for Gügler, "is the never-fading tuning [*Stimmung*] of all nature and life in search of eternal harmony. The compatibility and relationship between the eternal being of things and their cycle of birth and death . . . can be conceived only in terms of this tuning [*Stimmung*]."<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Johann Ritter and Karlfried Gründer, eds., *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, vol. 10 (Basel: Schwabe, 1998) 173–76.

<sup>15</sup> Alois Gügler, *Die heilige Kunst: Darstellung und Erklärung der Heiligen Schriften aus ihnen selbst*, vol. 2, part 1 of a 3-in-2-vol. work (Lucerne: Johann Martin Anich, 1817) 177–80, cited in Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, 7 vols., trans. Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis et al. (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1982–89), vol. 1, *Seeing the Form* 99; see also 95 n. 43.

<sup>16</sup> Balthasar, *Seeing the Form* 100, quoting Gügler, *Darstellung und Erklärung* 177–80.

As Balthasar notes, “all this reaches its perfection, for Gügler, in the Christian revelation of the Trinity: ‘The Father appears as the force that draws us, Christ as the medium, and the Spirit in us is God’s very tuning of us itself.’”<sup>17</sup> The “‘anointing’ that the Spirit pours over us is ‘like a divine instinct’ which ‘opens up and transfigures everything’ for the Christian.” In this way, “all historical revelation has this [tuning of us] as its goal: the touching of the very core of man, the interior ‘world of mankind’s heart by the divine tuning.’” With this theory, Balthasar concludes, “Gügler throws a great arch, from the spiritual *harmonia* of Pythagorean Platonism to the ardent intimacy of religious Romanticism (Schleiermacher).”<sup>18</sup>

In short, these traditions of thought surrounding *Stimmung* and its derivatives afford a particular paradigm for relating God and world, the divine and the human, in intimate and subtle ways. This paradigm also provides a rich semantic soil in which the thinking of later German writers can take root and flourish. In particular, the historical origin and etymological derivation of “attunement” offers a general backdrop for Rahner’s discussion. A more immediate context, though, is Heidegger’s philosophy of *Sein* and *Dasein*, of being<sup>19</sup> and human existence, where the notion of attunement finds an original and important role.<sup>20</sup>

### ATTUNEMENT IN HEIDEGGER

In *Being and Time*,<sup>21</sup> Heidegger closely links mood (he uses *Stimmung*, as well as the related *Gestimmtheit* and *Gestimmtsein*<sup>22</sup>) with “disposed-

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. 100, quoting Gügler, *Darstellung und Erklärung* 197.

<sup>18</sup> Balthasar, *Seeing the Form* 100.

<sup>19</sup> In treating the word “being,” i.e., whether or not to capitalize it, my principle for the remainder of this article will be this: (1) when quoting other authors, I will leave the word as I find it; (2) in regard to Heidegger’s own thought, I will use a lower case “b,” which seems to be the preponderant practice among scholars; and (3) in regard to Rahner or other theologians, where it seems clear that “being” is identified with God, I will capitalize it.

<sup>20</sup> For a comprehensive discussion of *Stimmung* in Heidegger’s thought, see Boris Ferreira, *Stimmung bei Heidegger: Das Phänomen der Stimmung im Kontext von Heideggers Existenzialanalyse des Daseins* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2002); also see Michel Haar, “Attunement and Thinking,” in *Heidegger: A Critical Reader*, ed. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Harrison Hall (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992) 159–72; and Flatley, *Affective Mapping* 19–24.

<sup>21</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962) (hereafter *BT*).

<sup>22</sup> Michael Inwood, ed., *A Heidegger Dictionary* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999) 130. See Rodolphe Gasche, “Floundering in Determination,” in *Reading Heidegger: Commemorations*, ed. John Sallis (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1993) 7–19, at 14–17. The word *Stimmung* and a variety of related words, including *Bestimmung*, *Gestimmtsein*, *Gestimmtheit*, and *Übereinstimmung*, appear frequently in *BT*.

ness" (*Befindlichkeit*), one of *Dasein's* three essential determinations:<sup>23</sup> "What we indicate *ontologically* with the term *Befindlichkeit* is *ontically* the most familiar and everyday thing: *die Stimmung, das Gestimmtsein*."<sup>24</sup> Or, as Theodore Kisiel puts it, "disposedness is the existential-ontological expression of the existentiell-ontic attunement of mood."<sup>25</sup> Mood thus reflects a certain orientation or posture vis-à-vis the world, which *Being and Time* described as "finding oneself" (*sich befinden*) in the world into which one has been thrown.<sup>26</sup> Attunement is *Dasein's* primordial mode of being related (*Beziehung, Bezug*) to the world. In this "finding itself," *Dasein* experiences its "thrownness," that is, its facticity, its belonging to a particular world and as belonging alongside particular or determined intraworldly things.<sup>27</sup> This fact of already being-in-the-world, as in a meaningful context, grounds the

<sup>23</sup> *Dasein's* basic constitution is Being-in-the-World, where "in" refers not to spatial containment, but to a particular mode of being that is habitually concerned or preoccupied with something. This preoccupation with things or with other instances of *Dasein* is the unrelenting mode of human existence. This, for Heidegger, is care (*Sorge*). *Dasein* can be further defined under three headings: In addition to *Befindlichkeit*, there is also "understanding" (*Verstehen* or *Existenzialität*), defined by the notion of "projection," that is, the anticipation of possibilities for self and other beings. There is also "fallenness" (*Verfallenheit*), which is *Dasein's* tendency to become lost in the multifarious business of the everyday world, to be diverted or distracted from the urgency of decision into the banal, the trivial, the materialistic, or the orthodox.

<sup>24</sup> *BT* 134, cited in *A Heidegger Dictionary* 131. *Befindlichkeit*, Heidegger's translation of Augustine's *affectio*, is a multidimensional term (less helpfully rendered by the psychologically tinged "state of mind" or "worldly disposition") encompassing affectedness, thrownness (*Geworfenheit*), facticity (*Faktizität*), and mood (*Stimmung*) or "attunement-to-things" (*Gestimmtsein*), as well as disclosedness, discoveredness, and resoluteness. How one finds oneself disposed is then an a priori posture, wherein *Dasein* finds itself always already engaged and affected by its environment. See Flatley, *Affective Mapping* 19–24; and Theodore Kisiel, "The New Translation of *Sein und Zeit*: A Grammatological Lexicographer's Commentary," *Man and World* 30 (1997) 239–58, at 243.

<sup>25</sup> Kisiel, "New Translation of *Sein und Zeit*" 243. "Having a mood may be psychological, but being had by one's situation, being-put-upon by the world ('The world gets to me [*geht mich an*]: *SZ* 137–9 . . .), constantly being moved by the 'happening' of life's contexts into 'be-having' in one way or another, is its worldly and ontological counterpart."

<sup>26</sup> See Kisiel, "New Translation of *Sein und Zeit* 243: "The middle-voiced reflexive verb, 'finding oneself,' is clearly being pushed formally to the outer limits of its receptive and passive passional past of already 'having found oneself and 'having been found (out),' thrown, already acted upon, determined, disposed."

<sup>27</sup> "World-impooverished animals' have pains, but no moods" (see Martin Heidegger *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 39, *Hölderlins Hymnen 'Germanien' und 'Der Rhein'*, ed. S. Ziegler [1980; 2nd ed. 1989] 82; and vol. 29, *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik: Welt-Endlichkeit-Einsamkeit*, ed. F.-W. von Herrmann [1983] 261; cited in *A Heidegger Dictionary* 132).

distinction between facticity (*Faktizität*) and factuality (*Tatsächlichkeit*).<sup>28</sup> The result of *Dasein's* attunement is its facticity; we find ourselves as being.<sup>29</sup> "Attunement" refers to the way that factual life is tuned to the world, its "at-tuning" and hence its "being-toward the world." A mood is a way or manner; it is not a form or mode, but a way in the sense of a melody that indicates the tone of this being (i.e., the *Art* and *Wie* of its *Sein* tunes and determines). "*Gestimmtsein* is a fundamental modality (*Grundweise*), how *Dasein* is"; "*Dasein* is always already attuned."<sup>30</sup>

Mood is thus not something that overcomes persons occasionally, not psychological or psychological states arising within the interior of a person; rather it is "an all-enveloping force that comes over us and things together."<sup>31</sup> It is the undergirding bedrock (*Untergrund*)<sup>32</sup> of the general human constitution: "Mood discloses how one is and becomes."<sup>33</sup> Mood is the basic mode of *Dasein* in virtue of which and in accordance with which it is always already raised beyond itself into being as a whole as it matters, or does not matter, to us."<sup>34</sup>

*Dasein's* attunement not only reflects its disposedness, but also "discloses" the world as that which is always already there, the world's being and the meaning of being itself.<sup>35</sup> Mood discloses *Dasein's* world in some overarching way, in some sense as a whole. The original experience of the world is . . . determined and conditioned by mood: "We must surrender to the 'bare mood' in the ontologically foundational act the primary discovery of the world."<sup>36</sup> This disclosure of being is not knowledge in the sense of being known *as such*. The "that-it-is" disclosed to *Dasein* in its being-attuned does not express "ontologico-categorically the factuality belonging to presence-at-hand," which is only accessible if it is ascertained "by looking at it." The "that-it-is" disclosed in *Dasein's* disposedness is understood

<sup>28</sup> BT 135. See Kisiel, "New Translation of *Sein und Zeit*" 243.

<sup>29</sup> R. J. Snell, "Connaturality in Aquinas: The Ground of Wisdom," *Quodlibet Journal* 5.4 (October 2003), <http://www.quodlibet.net/articles/snell-aquinas.shtml> (accessed August 25, 2009).

<sup>30</sup> *Historisches Wörterbuch* 10:174.

<sup>31</sup> Heidegger, *Hölderlins Hymnen* 89, cited in *A Heidegger Dictionary* 131.

<sup>32</sup> In his later writings, he speaks of a *Grundstimmung* as one that: 1. "carries us away to the limits of beings and puts us in touch with the gods . . . ; 2. unites us with 'the earth and our native habitat'; 3. 'opens up beings as a whole . . . as the unity of a world'; 4. 'hands *Dasein* over to being, to undertake, shape and sustain it'" (Heidegger, *Hölderlins Hymnen "Germanien" und "Der Rhein,"* 223, cited in *A Heidegger Dictionary* 132–33).

<sup>33</sup> *Historisches Wörterbuch* 10:174.

<sup>34</sup> Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, 2 vols. (Pfullingen: Neske, 1961) 1:119; Engl. trans., *Nietzsche, vol. 1: The Will to Power as Art*, trans. D. F. Krell (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981) 100; cited in *A Heidegger Dictionary* 131.

<sup>35</sup> John D. Caputo, *Demythologizing Heidegger* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1993) 69.

<sup>36</sup> *Historisches Wörterbuch* 10:174.



as “an existential attribute of the entity which has Being-in-the-world as its way of being.” In being-attuned, *Dasein* is “brought before itself” not as beholding itself, but as “finding itself in the mood that it has.”<sup>37</sup> Heidegger observes: “in having a mood, *Dasein* is always disclosed as that entity to which it has been delivered over in its Being; and in this way it has been delivered over to the Being which, in existing, it has to be.”<sup>38</sup>

For Heidegger, then, mood is not a mere accompaniment of being-in-the-world; rather it discloses the world, reveals human thrownness into it, and enables human being to respond to other beings within the world.<sup>39</sup> This “that-it-is” in which *Dasein* finds itself in the mood that it has (*als gestimmtes sichbefinden*) represents by its very facticity the matrix for existentiell-hermeneutical understanding. *Dasein*’s *Gestimmtheit* attunes it to particular things (ontically), allowing it to be affected by them and in certain ways, and to direct itself toward things in a world.<sup>40</sup> Mood “has always already disclosed being-in-the-world as a whole, making it first possible to direct oneself towards something in particular.”<sup>41</sup> Unless I am in a mood I will not be affected, touched, or interested by anything; nothing will matter (*angehen*) to me.<sup>42</sup> Attunement is thus distinguished from feelings (*Gefühlen*) and affects (*Affekten*), both of which it makes possible and which are directed toward particular objects.<sup>43</sup> All joy is about some specific thing; hope expects something in particular. These have an intended end or focus. By contrast, moods are groundless, nondirectional, and indefinite.<sup>44</sup>

In sum, “prior to all cognition and volition, and beyond their range of disclosure”<sup>45</sup> *Dasein*’s attunement (*Stimmung/Gestimmtheit*) is the existential a priori of all possible linkage, connection, or relationship in the world,<sup>46</sup> the transcendental condition of the possibility for all categorical

<sup>37</sup> BT 174, in Gasche, “Floundering in Determination” 14.

<sup>38</sup> BT 173, in Gasche, “Floundering in Determination” 14.

<sup>39</sup> *A Heidegger Dictionary* 132.

<sup>40</sup> See also William J. Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*, 3rd ed. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974), 65: “Yet if all this is disclosed in the already-having-found-itself-there-ness of There-being, what is the nature of this finding? Certainly it is not a type of knowing (*Erkennen*), for the finding has a depth and richness which the processes of knowing are incapable of grasping. Rather it is an ‘awareness’ of the affective order which in the ontic dimension may be described as ‘mood’ (*Stimmung*), or ‘attunement’ (*Gestimmtheit*), completely spontaneous and unreflective.”

<sup>41</sup> BT 137, in *A Heidegger Dictionary* 132.

<sup>42</sup> *A Heidegger Dictionary* 132.

<sup>43</sup> But *Gefühl* and *Stimmung* can mean the same thing: “the way in which we find ourselves in our relation to beings and thus also in our relation to ourselves” (Heidegger, *Nietzsche* 1:62; Engl. trans., *Nietzsche* 1:51).

<sup>44</sup> *Historisches Wörterbuch* 10:174.

<sup>45</sup> BT 175.

<sup>46</sup> Gasche, “Floundering in Determination” 15.

interpretation and thematized knowledge.<sup>47</sup> Categorical determination or understanding (*Bestimmung*) is grounded in *Dasein's* transcendental attunement (*Stimmung*).<sup>48</sup> *Dasein's* "being-attuned" (*Stimmung*) or its "all-attunement-to-things" (*Gestimmtheit*) is part of *Dasein's* a priori transcendental structure, an existential of *Dasein*.<sup>49</sup>

### ATTUNEMENT IN RAHNER'S THOUGHT

This historical context of *Stimmung* and *Gestimmtheit*, particularly its significance in Heidegger's thought, provides a vantage point from which to view Rahner's use of these terms in his above-noted essay on Christ's possession of the beatific vision. These questions emerge precisely how does the notion of attunement function for Rahner? And, since his use of these terms was seen above to describe his basic conception of theological anthropology, how exactly does this concept function in Rahner's understanding of human nature's relationship to grace? Further, does attunement correspond in some way to the meaning and function of this term in Heidegger?<sup>50</sup> Before addressing these questions, an overview of Rahner's

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. 14.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. 14–17. *Übereinstimmung* (agreement) refers to a specific conception of truth as agreement (Lat. *adaequatio*; Gk. *homoiosis*) (see *ibid.* 15).

<sup>49</sup> Graeme Nicholson, "Ekstatic Temporality in *Sein und Zeit*," in *A Companion to Martin Heidegger's "Being and Time"*, ed. Joseph J. Kockelmans (Washington: Center for Advanced Research in Phenomenology, 1986) 211. In language similar to Heidegger's (and to Rahner's, as will be seen), Peter Albano has described Paul Ricoeur's philosophical anthropology in terms of attunement. Speculating on what Ricoeur's *Poetics of the Will* might have said, Albano suggests that the crux of the issue would have been this: "If God is to communicate himself, it must be in Word and Spirit. . . . The Word is the objective presence of God's self-communication in history. The Spirit is the subjective condition of God's self-acceptance in man, the attunement of man as 'ontological ear' to receive effectively the Word." Hence, the question is "this ontological structure of man as the open possibility for God's self-communication." "Man, to be eschatologically reconcilable, must be open to the infinite." The human person is fundamentally "a hearer, the one to whom the communication is to be made." Such a conception of the human person is the ground of the poetic imagination in Ricoeur. "This ontological dimension of feeling as original resonance with reality, more cognitive than emotional, is our being in touch with the richness down within things." See Paul Ricoeur, "The Metaphorical Process as Cognition, Imagination, and Feeling," *Critical Inquiry* 5 (1978) 143–59, cited in Peter J. Albano, C.M., "Ricoeur's Contribution to Fundamental Theology," *Thomist* 46 (1982) 573–92, at 585–90.

<sup>50</sup> Caputo notes that Heidegger exerted an enormous influence on Catholic theologians in the mid-20th century, including Rahner, who heard Heidegger lecture during this period. Rahner later acknowledged that he had many good professors (*Schulmeister*) but only one teacher (*Lehrer*), namely, Heidegger (see Richard Wisser, ed., *Martin Heidegger in Gespräch* [Freiburg: Alber, 1970] 48–49, cited in John D. Caputo, "Heidegger and Theology," in *Cambridge Companion to*

method and his view of human nature's relationship to grace will facilitate the inquiry.

It is customary to speak of Rahner's theology as following what he himself called a transcendental-anthropological method. His thought is focused on the human subject, analyzed transcendently, historically, and existentially, and it is executed in the thought forms of modernity, often in dialogue with modern philosophy.<sup>51</sup> Rahner pursues the subjective human conditions that enable knowledge of God. Thus, just as Kant before him had investigated the a priori reflexive conditions or categories of the knowing subject that are the condition for the possibility of knowledge of particular things, so Rahner sought to investigate the transcendental conditions that make knowledge of God possible. Following Heidegger, Rahner calls these a priori conditions of the possibility of knowledge of God "existentials."<sup>52</sup>

A central aspect of Rahner's transcendental or existential analysis, outlined in his early *Spirit in the World*, is the view that human knowing is characterized by a dynamic orientation toward, and anticipation (*Vorgriff*) of, being as a whole, as the infinite horizon of all particular things. And yet, this transcendent orientation of human knowing is always mediated through its interaction with particular things. Human being is always spirit-in-the-world, always existing transcendently through its encounter and interaction with everyday things and persons, always a "transcendental worldliness." Human knowing thus simultaneously comprise both a constant thrusting ahead toward the absolute horizon of being (i.e., the *Vorgriff* of being), as well as its openness toward and self-abandonment to the material world (i.e., its *conversio ad phantasma*). In this way, this spirit-in-the-world character of human being and knowing resembles what Heidegger had called *Dasein's Befindlichkeit* or "thrownness," that structure of *Dasein* that finds itself already in a particular environment, already adopting some particular posture toward other things—in short, *Dasein's* ontological "affectedness." For both thinkers, human being is dynamically oriented toward the infinite horizon of being,

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Heidegger, ed. Charles Guignon [New York: Cambridge University, 1993] 270–88, at 287 n. 15). On Heidegger and Rahner, see Thomas Sheehan, *Karl Rahner: The Philosophical Foundations*, pref. Karl Rahner (Athens: Ohio University, 1987); John D. Caputo, "Heidegger and Aquinas: Deconstructing the Rahnerian Bridge," *Philosophy and Theology* (1990), disk supplement; and Jack Arthur Bonsor, *Rahner, Heidegger, and Truth: Karl Rahner's Notion of Christian Truth, the Influence of Heidegger* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1987).

<sup>51</sup> See Thomas O'Meara, "Karl Rahner: Some Audiences and Sources for His Theology," *Communio* 18 (1991) 237–51, at 238: "The organizing idea of the system is . . . God and the human person in a special interplay."

<sup>52</sup> See Sheehan, *Karl Rahner* 103–29.

toward the whole, and yet it enacts this transcendence through its ordinary "traffic with" (knowing and choosing) material things. In other words, human knowing implicitly and unthematically grasps being as a whole each time it knows individual things, and this anticipatory grasp of being as a whole is reciprocally the "enabling horizon," the condition of the possibility of knowing individual things.<sup>53</sup>

In sum, for both Heidegger and Rahner, attunement pertains to the ground or horizon of consciousness; it establishes the precognitive and prevolitional foundation on, and framework in which, cognition and volition occur. This is a crucial notion, which Rahner takes from Heidegger. But Rahner also makes it his own. For, while Heidegger understood this ground and horizon as being,<sup>54</sup> Rahner identified it with God, a controversial move that starkly differentiates the two thinkers.<sup>55</sup> For Rahner, it is God who is given as the nonobjective, cointended term of the dynamic, human *Vorgriff* of being, and who is experienced nonobjectively and nonthematically as such.

This basic understanding of human being as spirit-in-the-world may be termed a categorically-mediated transcendental. Rahner extended and gave it a more specifically theological content in *Hearer of the Word*, where he argued that questioning, the radical openness of thinking to being, represented in fact the dynamism of the mind as open to God. He treated the *Vorgriff* of being as a preunderstanding of God, in as much as God is that being that is implicitly and unthematically sought in all thought and action. Appropriating and extending the thematics of speaking and hearing introduced by Heidegger, Rahner saw the believer as transcendentially disposed to receive both transcendental and categorical, thematic revelation. In its ontological makeup, human being is poised to be addressed by God, that is, in its ordinary, temporal interaction with material things, the human being is listening for a possible word of revelation in history. This ontological structure is the condition of possibility of being addressed by the Word itself, which the Father speaks to humankind, primarily in Christ, but in other ways as well.<sup>56</sup> A human being, then, is that creature whose basic posture is an "attitude of listening to an eventual

<sup>53</sup> Stephen J. Duffy, *The Dynamics of Grace: Perspectives in Theological Anthropology*, New Theology Studies 3 (Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical, 1993) 261–85.

<sup>54</sup> See Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1995); Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1999) 15–17, 60, 277–78.

<sup>55</sup> Later critics saw Rahner's identification of Heideggerian being with God as a fundamental ontotheological mistake (see Sheehan, *Karl Rahner* 308–17).

<sup>56</sup> Caputo, "Heidegger and Theology" 279–80.

revelation” from God.<sup>57</sup> In his own interpretation of Thomistic terminology drawn from 19th-century neo-Scholasticism, Rahner called this ontological structure a *potentia obedientialis* for hearing a revelatory word. Thus, the human person’s ontological posture—as that of one who is called to listen in history, listen in her ordinary, everyday concourse with ordinary, everyday things for a word of revelation from God—is the natural orientation of human being toward God.

*Hearer of the Word* describes this transcendental structure of human being as a natural human capacity that can be transcendently determined by grace for such a revelation. Moreover, for Rahner in his later writings, the grace that brings about this determination of human being is uncreated grace, nothing less than the self-communication of God.<sup>58</sup> Thus, this transcendental posture of listening for a word of revelation can be thought of as an intrinsic forming of nature by grace. In another appropriation of Scholastic terminology, Rahner speaks of uncreated grace as a “quasi-formal cause” of nature that informs and disposes nature for grace. On the basis of this concept of quasiformal causality Rahner speaks of this “engracement” of human beings as a “supernatural existential” that elevates, illuminates, and orients human transcendence toward its end in God.<sup>59</sup>

### ATTUNEMENT: A THEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION

As is apparent from this summary of Rahner’s anthropology, the concept of attunement, both in light of its use by Heidegger and in the context of its general meaning, offers a helpful way of describing Rahner’s view of the human person and the relationship between nature and grace.

<sup>57</sup> Karl Rahner, *Hearer of the Word: Laying the Foundations for a Philosophy of Religion*, trans. Joseph Donceel of *Hörer des Wortes*, 1st ed. (New York: Continuum, 1994) 16.

<sup>58</sup> I am indebted to Frederick Lawrence for this observation.

<sup>59</sup> As scholars have noted, this understanding of human being advanced in *Hearer of the Word* implies that there is no such thing as pure human nature apart from grace. Rahner does not wish to speak of “pure human nature” in the concrete, but only as an abstraction or “remainder concept” that describes what would be the case hypothetically if human nature were not always already transcendently determined by grace. For Rahner, nature’s concrete relationship to grace is grounded in the radical “drawing near” of the remote, infinite horizon of being that God is. In that radical coming near, God graciously becomes not only the creative ground and infinite horizon, but also the innermost moment of nature, becomes radically intrinsic and intimate, though not essential. The paradox of human being, then, is that its innermost moment, that from which, in which, and by which it exists, is precisely not a part of its essence or nature, but is pure grace. For Rahner, nature is always already graced.

The capacity for a categorical word to become the objectification of one's prethematic attunement to grace, that is, the objectification of the transcendental "word" that has already been "spoken" to the human creature as a constitutive determination of its being (or, put another way, the capacity to "hear" in history the word one has already "heard" in one's metaphysical depths) seems analogous to the attunement that for Heidegger had made *Dasein* in its "thrownness" and "facticity" open to Being. Just as for Heidegger, the possibility of categorical determination (*Bestimmung*) is grounded in *Dasein*'s *Stimmung*, so for Rahner the possibility of categorical revelation, the posture of listening for and the possibility of hearing a word of revelation in history, is grounded in the transcendental *Gestimmtheit* of nature to grace, the attunement of the human person who is predisposed to hear a word, to listen for a word in its own state of affectedness, of its "thrownness," of its facticity, in short, of its historicity.

In light of the foregoing, it is possible to appreciate more fully Rahner's discussion of attunement in his article on the beatific vision with which my article began. There he offers the following reflections on attunement, which clearly echo the meaning and function of this notion in Heidegger's thought, while also revealing Rahner's own distinctive deployment of the term:

A direct presence to God belongs to the nature of a spiritual person, in the sense of an unsystematic attunement (*Gestimmtheit*) and an unreflected horizon which determines everything else and within which the whole spiritual life of this spirit is lived. This direct presence to God belongs to the nature of a spiritual person as the ground which, though not allowing us to grasp it completely in a reflex manner, is nevertheless the permanent basis for all other spiritual activities and which, on this account, is always more "there" and less objectively "there" than anything else. This presence belongs to the nature of a spiritual person as the tacit factor in self-awareness which orders and explains everything but cannot be explained itself.<sup>60</sup>

Rahner goes on to give a description of human being that reflects this necessary relationship between the transcendental state of attunement and its categorical objectification:

This basic condition is itself of such a nature as to demand a fixed form and a spiritual, conceptual objectification, without it itself having such a form as yet, though leaving all the necessary free room for it in the *a-posteriori*, objective consciousness. . . . In spite of man's always already-given basic condition as a spiritual being, and in spite of the attunement (*Gestimmtheit*) which is always present in the very ground of his existence (but which has nothing at all to do with a "mood" or *Stimmung*), a man must first "come to himself," i.e. only in the course of long experience can he learn to express to himself what he is and what indeed he has always already seen in the self-consciousness of his basic condition.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Rahner, "Dogmatic Reflections" 209.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.* 210–11.

Here, the fundamental nature of human being, what it means for the human to be a spiritual being is, in the depths of this being, to be oriented toward God, not as an object, but as the unthematized ground and unreflective horizon of its entire existence and the basis for all subsequent knowing, feeling, and self-realization. This is the *Gestimmtheit* of human being. By it, human nature is transcendently attuned for a categorical word of self-revelation from God in history.

Moreover, since for Rahner the transcendental orientation of human being is an already graced condition, *Gestimmtheit* can also be seen as a description of the relationship of “quasi-formal causality” between nature and grace, that relationship that grounds the gratuitous elevation and illumination of human nature by grace and for grace, thus providing a “supernatural existential,” an elevation of human transcendental toward its supernatural end in God. The *Gestimmtheit* of human nature, then, is an existential, that is, a transcendental condition for the possibility of human knowledge of God.<sup>62</sup>

It is because human being always finds itself already transcendently attuned to God, and hence is always listening for a word of revelation, that the objectification and thematization in history of divine self-communication is possible.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Recently, Snell has implied that a link between Rahner and Heidegger in regard to the notion of attunement may gain both clarity and plausibility in relation to the thought of Thomas Aquinas. In his discussion of “connaturality” in Aquinas, Snell found it helpful to employ Heidegger’s conception of “mood or attunement (*Befindlichkeit* or *Stimmung*),” prompting Snell to define connaturality in Aquinas as “an attunement towards the Divine, a tendency towards, a resonance with, a sympathy or conformity to the Divine.” Intriguingly, Snell appealed not only to Heidegger but also to Rahner in order to explicate further Aquinas’s notion of connaturality as attunement: “The importance of discovering mood as a fundamental existential is that it serves as the condition allowing for our desire to know. Without attunement, Being would not be an issue for us, that is to say that without attunement we would not resonate with Being, would not reach out for Being, would lack the *Vorgriff*, and would not desire to know Being. . . . So while we do not grasp Being, we do reach out for Being, and it is this reach, or dynamic attunement towards Being, that allows cognition” (Snell, “Connaturality in Aquinas”).

<sup>63</sup> Interestingly, this description of human nature seems to be confirmed by recent studies in neuroscience suggesting that attunement is, as it were, genetically “hard-wired.” See Mario Beauregard and Denyse O’Leary, *The Spiritual Brain: A Neuroscientist’s Case for the Existence of the Soul* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007); Alister McGrath, *Dawkins’s God: Genes, Memes, and the Meaning of Life* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005); Dean H. Hamer, *The God Gene: How Faith is Hardwired into our Genes* (New York: Doubleday, 2004); Andrew Newberg, Eugene D’ Aquili, and Vince Rause, *Why God Won’t Go Away: Brain Science and the Biology of Belief* (New York: Ballantine, 2001); Benjamin Libet, “Do We Have a Free Will?” in *The Volitional Brain: Towards a Neuroscience of Free Will*, ed. Anthony Freeman, Keith Sutherland, and Benjamin Libet (Exeter, UK: Imprint Academic, 2000) 47–58; B. Allan Wallace,

## ATTUNEMENT AND AFFECTIVE CONNATURALITY

This notion of attunement in both Heidegger and Rahner plays an important role in a subsequent development of interest in the affective dimension of human being. Of particular merit here is the work of Andrew Tallon.<sup>64</sup> His advocacy for the irreducible role of affectivity in human consciousness draws deeply on a 20th-century strand of transcendental Thomism (beginning with Pierre Rousselot and including Rahner) that sees in this Heideggerian notion of attunement a means to appropriate the Thomistic notion of connaturality.<sup>65</sup>

Tallon posits a view of the spiritual nature of the human as fundamentally triadic, involving not only rational and volitional dimensions but also an affective dimension. Employing the category of intentionalities rather than the older view of distinct "faculties" within the soul, Tallon sees an "affective intentionality" within human consciousness: affective, because the human person is capable through it of being altered deep within, in relation to an other; intentional, in so far as the one so affected is oriented outward to (*ad*) the other.<sup>66</sup> For Tallon, this affective intentionality embraces and conditions the rational and volitional intentionalities. Appropriating Aquinas's conception of connaturality,<sup>67</sup> Tallon's affective intentionality indicates a kind of sympathy between knower and known, lover and beloved. One can know and will with different degrees of affect-*edness*, determined by the degree of shared participation in some common

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*The Taboo of Subjectivity: Toward a New Science of Consciousness* (New York: Oxford University, 2000).

<sup>64</sup> See the following works by Andrew Tallon: *Head and Heart: Affection, Cognition, Volition as Triune Consciousness* (New York: Fordham University, 1997); foreword to Pierre Rousselot's *Intelligence: Sense of Being, Faculty of God*, trans. and notes Andrew Tallon (Milwaukee: Marquette University, 1999); "The Heart in Rahner's Philosophy of Mysticism," *Theological Studies* 53 (1992) 700–28; and "Affectivity in Ethics: Lonergan, Rahner, and Others in the Heart Tradition," in *Religion and Economic Ethics*, ed. Joseph F. Gower (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1990) 87–122.

<sup>65</sup> See Heidi Ann Russell, "The Heart of Rahner: The Theological Implications of Andrew Tallon's Theory of Triune Consciousness," (Ph.D. dissertation, Marquette University, 2009).

<sup>66</sup> Tallon, "The Heart in Rahner's Philosophy of Mysticism" 706. For Tallon, drawing on Ricoeur, while reason and will divide and oppose subject and object, by setting the object of knowledge or will apart as object, affection unites and binds subject and object together. Thus Ricoeur: "Whereas the whole movement of objectification tends to set a world over against me, feeling unites the intentionality that throws me out of myself, to the affection through which I feel myself existing' (*Fallible Man* 200)"; cited in Tallon, "The Heart in Rahner's Philosophy of Mysticism" 706 n. 12.

<sup>67</sup> The key text from Aquinas here is *Summa theologiae* 2–2, q. 45, a. 2; it has a long history of interpretation.



reality or nature.<sup>68</sup> On the ethical plane, connaturality implies a “felt resonance” between actor and ethical act or between actor and object of the act; on the mystical axis, God is known and willed connaturally through an “attunement with the divine (the *res divinae*), the sacred, the holy.”<sup>69</sup> So Tallon can describe connaturality as “the attunement of the agent” to “the ethical and mystical good” through repeated acts of knowing and loving, by which one becomes “co-naturalized to the co-responding good.”<sup>70</sup>

A comprehensive summary of Tallon’s complex theory is neither possible nor necessary for my purposes here. The crucial point is that for Tallon both the possibility for, and the conscious experience of, these affective intentionalities (namely, ethical and mystical) are grounded in a more fundamental attunement of human being to grace. In this respect, Tallon can distinguish between “feelings and moods.”<sup>71</sup> Feelings, the consciously felt attraction for the ethical good or the mystical Good, in which the rational creature experiences itself tending toward it, is possible only because of human nature’s deeper metaphysical mood,<sup>72</sup> the prethematic, nonconceptual “experience of God as horizon.”<sup>73</sup> Here Tallon adverts explicitly to Rahner and his appropriation of Heideggerian attunement:

Rahner has a wider sense of feeling than particular emotions; he means feeling more as “moods” consonant with fundamental options and as the highest achievement of the human spirit attuned to God—with a *Stimmung* akin to Heidegger’s *Befindlichkeit* and *Angst* as attunement with Being, made positive (and named faith and hope) in the spirit’s experience of the graced horizon.<sup>74</sup>

In short, for Tallon, the phenomenology of feeling entailed in connatural affectivity is grounded in an underlying *Gestimmtheit* of nature to grace, conceived of quite explicitly along the lines of Rahner’s own appropriation of this notion from Heidegger.<sup>75</sup>

### CONCLUSION: “RENDERING THE SCORE INTO MUSIC”

The metaphor of “attunement” (*Gestimmtheit*) nicely captures the notion of a transcendental orientation of human nature to grace, in which nature is intimately and intrinsically disposed and “informed” by grace, though never as an essential determination. With its suggestion of an inti-

<sup>68</sup> Tallon, “The Heart in Rahner’s Philosophy of Mysticism” 704

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid. 705.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. 700.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid. 714 n. 27.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. 719.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. 717.

<sup>75</sup> See Tallon, *Head and Heart* 77–81. For his part, Tallon’s goal is to elaborate his own theory of triune consciousness beyond the language of “faculty” psychology that Rahner never entirely abandoned. Accordingly, Tallon is more concerned to develop the dialogue between Rahner and Heidegger (and, of course, among Ricoeur, Lonergan, Levinas, and others) than to describe Rahner’s thought as such.

mate, objective harmony or consonance between two entities, “attunement,” in Rahner’s view, pinpoints the basic relationship between nature and grace. Like a musical string tuned to a particular pitch, nature is attuned to grace and intimately consonant with it. Here it is useful to recall the historical origins of the concept of *Stimmung*, with its connotation of objective cosmic harmony, the *mundana musica*, and the frequently recurring image from antiquity forward of a musical lyre that evokes the intimately harmonious relationship between the divine and the created. In the same way that an instrument’s strings can be objectively tuned to a certain pitch and are capable of being animated by a sound wave—a wave that intimately and intrinsically modifies the strings without ever being an essential part of them—so for Rahner, nature is objectively, intimately, and intrinsically attuned to grace and in harmony with it.

Finally, the musical description entailed in the notion of *Gestimmtheit* offers a way of thinking about Rahner’s conception of the relationship between the categorical and the transcendental. In the essay cited in my introduction, after stressing the unformed and unobjectified attunement obtaining between the person of the Logos and the humanity of Jesus in the incarnation by the very fact of the hypostatic union, Rahner goes on to assert that it is of the essence of this transcendental condition to seek its own progressive historico-categorical thematization. Jesus gradually comes to consciousness of, and so is progressively able to live into and out of, that attunement, which is always already present as the ground of his human being. The ontic, rather static condition of the hypostatic union comes progressively to an ontological realization: the radical acceptance of God’s offer is not accomplished ontically, once and for all, at the moment of the incarnation; rather, it is carried out through the life and activity of the Savior.<sup>76</sup> Perhaps, then, this process of self-interpretation or self-realization in history and in the categorical can be likened to rendering the transcendental “score,” which has already been “attuned” to its ground, into categorical “music.”

For Rahner, Jesus is the exemplar for what can occur in all human persons. The *Gestimmtheit* of nature and grace comes to paradigmatic fruition in Jesus of Nazareth, but it is also present in the lives and histories of all human beings of every age and culture. The human person is a being in time, attuned to and thus listening for a self-revelatory word of God in history. The *obedientia potentialis* in a sense can be conceived of as a *Gestimmtheit*: an ontological posture of being projected into time with a concern, a solicitude, for revelation. It is another way of describing the “supernatural existential,” that is, the intrinsic but not essential (and therefore always gratuitous)

<sup>76</sup> See Karl Rahner, *Foundations of the Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*, trans. William V. Dych (New York: Crossroad, 1995) 302–4.

modification or orientation toward God, by which God becomes the “quasi-formal cause” of the human person. *Gestimmtheit* thus offers a metaphor for how a human being (conceived as a personal, free subject with a particular history) and God (also conceived as personal and free, with God’s own history, but at the same time directed toward human being) are intimately and ultimately related.

In short, attunement is central in Rahner’s thought, not only because it reveals an important connection between Rahner and Heidegger, but also because it offers a rich and illuminating description of Rahner’s theology of nature and grace.