

ORIGINAL SIN: CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES

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THE NUMBER of books and articles which have appeared recently on the subject give evidence of keen interest in the doctrine of original sin. Several brief surveys of this literature are available in English,¹ but it might be of interest to trace the progressive development of thought in this area according (in most cases) to the chronological order in which these studies appeared. Before presenting the individual hypotheses, however, economy will be served by reviewing the variety of influences which have drawn each of these authors to a reconsideration of this doctrine and which—more or less, as will be evident in each case—they would all accept.

FACTORS INFLUENTIAL IN A RECONSIDERATION OF THE DOCTRINE

Difficulties Inherent in the Classical Position

No theologian, *laudator temporis acti* though he might be, is unaware of the fundamental problems which for ages have plagued the traditional presentation of the doctrine of original sin.² How are we to explain the fact that the single sin of one man is the sole explanation for a condition of deprivation in every other man? By the virtual inclusion of all men in this one? By juridical imputation? By some form of "corporate personality"? As we know, none of these theories have proven fully satisfactory. How are we to account for the transmission of this sinful condition? Can we seriously hold that the nontransmission of grace, which by God's decree man should have, is the positive transmission of guilt? In what sense can the deprivation of grace be called "sinful" *in* the individual when not personally willed *by* the individual? These and other problems have vexed theologians for centuries. We should not feel, therefore, that new approaches to the question arbitrarily discard a totally satisfactory explanation. Rather,

¹ See K. H. Weger, "The Debate on Original Sin," *Information Documentation on the Conciliar Church*, Oct. 26, 1967; "New Thinking on Original Sin," *Herder Correspondence* 4 (1967) 135-41.

² For a rather trenchant criticism of certain points, see E. Gutwenger, "Die Erbsünde und das Konzil von Trient," *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 89 (1967) 433-35.

the suggestion is that a new perspective on the question might yield other and complementary data, assisting finally in the formulation of a fresh theological synthesis.

Modern Philosophy

Modern philosophy, whether explicitly existential and personalistic or not, has introduced a much richer appreciation of the specifically human than was the case in the scholastic tradition. The latter asked the question of being out of the context of its Aristotelian, cosmological origins, whereas in modern philosophical inquiry it is human being which is central. Thus our notions of freedom, consciousness, temporality, historicity, and the interpersonal as constitutive of human existence have been greatly enriched. Since original sin is a human condition, these philosophical inquiries cannot but influence and aid our thinking on the question.

Theological Developments

Since there is but one Word of God to man, incarnate in Jesus, theological reflection on any given facet of revelation is necessarily influenced by developments in other areas. Hence the doctrine of original sin, now as in the past, must look to current thinking in the theology of revelation, Christ, the Church, and grace for its own self-understanding. Perhaps a newly-awakened Christocentric view of reality is the most influential factor in a rethinking of original sin. If all men have been created with, to, and for Christ, and hence enjoy a primarily Christic solidarity, what are we to think of mankind's solidarity in Adam? If "to live is Christ," are not sin and death to be measured in terms of one's relationship to Christ rather than to Adam?

The Natural Sciences

In the area of the natural sciences it is evolution which has had the strongest influence on the doctrine of original sin.³ Despite the variety

³ On the problem of evolution and original sin: M. M. Labourdette, *Le péché originel et les origines de l'homme* (Paris, 1953); K. Rahner, "Theological Reflections on Monogenism," *Theological Investigations* 1 (Baltimore, 1961) 229-96; J. Feiner, "Ursprung, Urstand und Urgeschichte des Menschen," *Fragen der Theologie heute* (Einsiedeln, 1958) pp. 231-63; J. de Fraine, *The Bible and the Origin of Man* (New York, 1962); T. J. Motherway, "Adam and the Theologians," *Chicago Studies* 1 (1962) 115-32; K. Rahner, *Hominisation: The*

of conflicting explanations on the precise how of the evolutionary process, stubborn resistance on the part of the theologian to the fact of evolution now seems fruitless.⁴ Moreover, it is no longer a question simply of the evolution of man's body, but rather of man in his totality.⁵ Theologians have also pointed to the fact that evolution in our day is not simply one scientific theory alongside others, but has become a particular perspective upon reality as a whole: a world view.⁶ Evolutionism—the "ism," of course, makes it pejorative—is a danger which not all may have avoided, but it must be the calculated risk in this dialectical phase of dogmatic thought.

Evolution presents the doctrine of original sin with a number of interesting questions. Is the traditional Adam, particularly as endowed with the classical preternatural gifts, a "marvelous parenthesis"⁷ in the otherwise progressively more perfect evolution of the world? Is the scientifically more favorable theory of polygenism (the original emergence of a *number* of human beings), if not polyphyletism (the original emergence of several disparate *groups* of human beings), to be rejected out of hand on theological grounds? How does the theologian explain the unity of the human family, a presupposition for the universality of original sin, in view of these hypotheses? In a polygenistic context, how would a theologian explain the transmission of original sin, related as it has been to direct physical generation from the first father of all?⁸

Modern Biblical Scholarship

The classical theology of original sin, from the time of St. Augustine onward, relied very heavily for its justification on a certain few biblical texts, especially Rom 5:12–21, in which the "in quo omnes peccaverunt" was taken as the Christian interpretation of the fall of all

Evolutionary Origin of Man As a Theological Problem (New York, 1965); P. Smulders, *The Design of Teilhard de Chardin* (Westminster, Md., 1966); J. O'Rourke, "Some Considerations about Polygenism," *THEOLOGICAL STUDIES* 26 (1965) 407–16; L. Scheffczyk, "Adams Sündenfall," *Wort und Wahrheit* 20 (1965) 761–76; A. Hulsbosch, *God in Creation and Evolution* (New York, 1965); Z. Alszeghy and M. Flick, "Il peccato originale in prospettiva evoluzionistica," *Gregorianum* 47 (1966) 201–25; R. Lavocat, "Réflexions d'un paléontologiste sur l'état originel de l'humanité et le péché originel," *Nouvelle revue théologique* 89 (1967) 582–600; K. Rahner, "Evolution and Original Sin," *Concilium* 26 (Glen Rock, N.J., 1967) 61–73.

⁴ Lavocat, *art. cit.* ⁵ K. Rahner, *Hominisation* (New York, 1965).

⁶ Alszeghy–Flick, *art. cit.*, p. 204. ⁷ Labourdette, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

men in the Adam of Genesis. Hence we find this text constantly repeated in the Councils of Carthage, Orange, and Trent. Modern biblical scholars present us with quite a different picture of these texts and in light of their interpretations the systematic theologian must take a new look at his biblical foundations for the doctrine of original sin.

Genesis 2-3

It was the presumption of the classical doctrine of original sin that Adam and Eve enjoyed the same kind of historical existence as David and Solomon, and that they were to be understood as the first mother and father of subsequent generations in the physical sense of the word. The relatively recent realization that Gn 1-11 cannot be history in the modern, scientific sense of the word demands a reconsideration of this older position.⁹

The key question for the biblical scholar is: What was the didactic *intention* of the sacred author(s) in this particular text? *Why* has he composed and included it? Only on the basis of this question can we understand *what* the text teaches.

The sacred author's didactic intention in Gn 2-3, scholars commonly agree, is to explain contemporary Israel's universal and hereditary condition of sinfulness, a sinfulness of which the author is conscious in and through God's self-revelation in history. To explain the *hereditary* character of sin (which is not clearly distinguished from guilt or punishment), he must trace it back to his forefathers; to explain its

⁹ On this question it is interesting that Rahner, who staunchly defended monogenism in "Theological Reflections on Monogenism" (n. 3 above), has recently changed his mind. In "Evolution and Original Sin," *Concilium* 26 (1967) 72-73, he says, "It would at least appear to be neither certain nor necessary to maintain that only a monogenetic original group (one individual or one couple) must be at the origin of that first sin of mankind in order to explain what we call original sin in the orthodox and traditional sense of the word. . . . Therefore, there seems . . . no reason for the magisterium to intervene in the matter of polygenism in order to protect the dogma of original sin."

⁹ On Gn 2-3 with reference to original sin, see A.-M. Dubarle, *The Biblical Doctrine of Original Sin* (New York, 1964); H. Haag, *Biblische Schöpfungslehre und kirchliche Erbsündenlehre* (Stuttgart, 1966); K. Condon, "The Biblical Doctrine of Original Sin," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 34 (1967) 20-36; H. Renckens, *Israel's Concept of the Beginning* (New York, 1964); P. Grelot, "Réflexions sur le problème du péché originel," *Nouvelle revue théologique* 89 (1967) 337-75, 449-84.

universal character, he traces it back to the father of all, Adam, the Man.¹⁰

Although the author is interested in depicting a truly historical cause for a truly historical situation (and hence Adam is not an atemporal and mythical Everyman), he has neither the resources for, nor an interest in, writing modern scientific history. Rather, he represents the universally hereditary, cumulative character of sin in a symbolic and imaginative account, in which Adam, the talking serpent, the tree of life, and the four rivers are all of a piece. He portrays "in one single ancestor and the sentence pronounced on his descendants the common effect of multiple sins. . . . It is possible that the whole of mankind with the constant factors of its condition was consciously represented in the story of Adam whose name means 'man.' " ¹¹

From the Genesis account, therefore, it is obviously quite impossible to establish the traditional doctrine of original sin in any detail. Not only is original sin a *Christian* doctrine, but the Old Testament author would have been completely bewildered by *our* contemporary questions about original sin. Was Adam the physical father of all men? Did his sin alone cause deprivation of grace in all? Was this deprivation transmitted by physical generation? Is Adam's sin inherent in each of his successors? Such questions move far beyond the data of Genesis and the intention of the sacred author. We must be constantly careful not to read these texts through the Christian spectacles of a much later era.

Romans 5

Of far greater interest for the Christian doctrine of original sin is the key text of Rom 5:12–21, which is so often cited by subsequent councils in their exposition of the classical position. "Per unum hominem peccatum intravit in mundum, et per peccatum mors, et ita in

¹⁰ This "indicating an earlier event as the reason for an observed state of affairs or occurrence in human affairs, the observed state of affairs being the means whereby the cause is known" is called "historical aetiology" by Rahner, *Hominisation*, p. 36, and in "Ätiologie," *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* 1 (2nd ed., 1957) 1011–12. N. Lohfink, "Genesis 2 f. als 'geschichtliche Ätiologie,'" *Scholastik* 21 (1963) 321–34, takes exception to the terminology but agrees with the substance of Rahner's thought.

¹¹ Dubarle, *op. cit.*, pp. 223–24.

omnes homines mors pertransiit, in quo omnes peccaverunt" (Rom 5:12).

Whereas classical theology tended to cite this text in isolation from its over-all context, modern exegesis¹² insists on asking why Paul chose to employ the Adam-Christ parallelism, not only in this chapter but in the epistle as a whole. Modern scholars agree that Paul's intention in using this parallel is the more effectively to proclaim *universal redemption in Christ Jesus*, who saves man from sin and death. The inverse of redemption is not merely the sin of Adam but the universality of sin which is described in Rom 1:1—3:30. All men, Jews and pagans alike, are sinners and need therefore the salvation of Jesus. Thus Rom 5:12–21 is a kind of meditation on the kerygma of Rom 3:24: "Both Jew and pagan sinned and forfeited God's glory, and both are justified through the free gift of His grace by being redeemed in Christ Jesus."

Granted Adam plays a subordinate role to Jesus in this text, does Paul here affirm the historical existence of a unique sinner in the beginning? Flick and Alszeghy feel that he must; otherwise the parallelism between Adam and Jesus would be between the notional and the real, thereby vitiating the historical point of the text.¹³ Others would agree that Paul personally presumes the historical existence of Adam, but that affirmation of the same is not his didactic intention and hence does not pertain to his teaching.

"Adam's culpability, the universality of sin, and the solidarity of all men are to him [Paul] facts commonly known and proven from Scripture. They are not *ends*, but rather *presuppositions* and *means* for his proof. He uses them in order to illumine and clarify the universality of the saving work of Christ."¹⁴ It follows, then, that "the

¹² See S. Lyonnet, *Saint Paul: Épître aux Romains* (Paris, 1957); Dubarle, *op. cit.*; P. Lengsfeld, *Adam und Christus: Die Adam-Christus Typologie im Neuen Testament und ihre Verwendung bei M. J. Scheeben und Karl Barth* (Essen, 1965); Haag, *op. cit.*; Lyonnet, "Das Problem der Erbsünde im Neuen Testament," *Stimmen der Zeit* 7 (1967) 33–39.

¹³ Alszeghy-Flick, *art. cit.*, p. 209.

¹⁴ In "Das Problem der Erbsünde im Neuen Testament," *Stimmen der Zeit* 7 (1967) 35, Lyonnet concludes: "The central message of both passages [1 Cor 15:20–22; Rom 5:12–21] in which Paul mentions expressly the sin of Adam is the truth of universal redemption through Christ. But this redemption of all mankind can be better understood against the background of a similar solidarity of all in sin, and for this solidarity in guilt Paul finds an illustration in an original sin of the first man, as he read it in Scripture and heard it from

literal understanding of the account of the Fall does not belong to *the object* of Pauline teaching, any more than the literal understanding of the story of Jonas can be considered an object of Jesus' teaching."¹⁵ This opinion is also emphasized in the detailed study by Lengsfeld: "Therefore in the typology of Adam-Christ, nothing, really nothing, can be affirmed regarding the historical individuality of *the figure of Adam*. Paul neither wanted to, nor could he, make any historical affirmations about Adam and his posterity which go beyond what is otherwise known."¹⁶

A second question is raised by modern scholarship. Is it the intention of St. Paul to teach that the single sin of Adam is responsible for the universal condition of sin? The universality of original sin, even in infants, was established traditionally by citing "in quo omnes peccaverunt," in the sense that "all men sinned *in Adam*." It has been quite clear for a long time that "in quo" is a mistranslation of the Greek *eph hō*, which should rather be translated "because" or "on the condition that," while the "peccaverunt" refers not to mankind's sin in Adam but to each man's personal sins, by which he freely ratifies in himself the sin of Adam.¹⁷

Indeed, throughout this text Paul speaks both of personal sin and the sin of Adam to an extent where it becomes clear that Christ's redemptive work is contrasted to *all sin*, original and personal. In light of Paul's use of sin throughout, it seems difficult to conclude that in 5:19 ("through the disobedience of one man all are constituted sinners") Paul is speaking of "pure" original sin. "Since, in everything which preceded, the sin of Adam was connected with the personal sins of his posterity, it is highly improbable that Paul was merely thinking about 'original sin in se.'"¹⁸

his teachers. There is no indication that he had not made this illustration his own. But it serves him only as an example or illustration. He adopts it without taking a position. He mentions it only to clarify the salvific work of Jesus Christ and to facilitate his listeners' access to the fundamental truth of Christian belief."

¹⁵ Haag, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

¹⁶ Lengsfeld, *op. cit.*, p. 115. In "Réflexions," (n. 9 above) pp. 340 and 349, Grelot agrees that Paul simply borrows the representation of human origins from Gn 2-3 without addition or development.

¹⁷ Lyonnet has written widely on this point; see, e.g., *St. Paul: Épître aux Romains* (Paris, 1957) pp. 521-58. See also H. Rondet, *Le péché originel dans la tradition patristique et théologique* (Paris, 1967) pp. 151-52.

¹⁸ P. Schoonenberg, *Theologie der Sünde* (Einsiedeln, 1966) p. 157.

All scholars agree that we cannot look to Rom 5 for revealed teaching on the mode of transmission or the nature of original sin in mankind as a whole. And much less is there support here for the practice of infant baptism.

Gutwenger, who perhaps is more outspoken than others, lists the misunderstandings which the traditional position has drawn from this Pauline text. (1) Whereas it cannot be said with certainty that for St. Paul "Adam," in the Adam-Christ comparison, enjoys actual existence (and even if Paul thought so, he was not teaching it as dogma), the classical teaching took it as a fact. (2) Paul's "Powers of Sin and Death," which Adam unchained, are two beasts *outside* of man, whereas in the classical teaching they become hereditary sin and death *within* man. (3) The "Powers of Sin and Death," in Paul, are effective because all men actively sin, whereas in the classical position their effectiveness is viewed from the perspective of hereditary transmission. (4) For Paul, the fact that all must have sinned follows from the universality of redemption, whereas in the classical theology the universality of redemption follows from the universality of sin. (5) Paul's is an "adult theology," which is silent about the condition of infants, whereas classical theology argues from infant baptism to the fact of inherited guilt.¹⁹

Modern Interpretation of Magisterial Statements

The hermeneutic principles of biblical scholarship are now being applied to the study of magisterial statements in order to enable us to ascertain the precise didactic intention of the author(s).²⁰ The fundamental question, therefore, of the historical theologian is: Within *his* intellectual, cultural, and historical context, what does the author mean to say, and what is he *not* saying? Since the Council of Trent resumes earlier teaching on the doctrine of original sin and is the latest conciliar statement on the question, recent interpretation of this Council exemplifies the modern methodology.²¹

¹⁹ E. Gutwenger, "Die Erbsünde und das Konzil von Trient," *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 89 (1967) 437-38.

²⁰ Recent studies on the historical development of original sin are J. Gross, *Entstehungsgeschichte des Erbsündedogmas* 1: *Von der Bibel bis Augustinus* (Munich, 1960); 2: *Im nachaugustinischen Altertum und in der Vorscholastik* (Munich, 1963); Rondet, *op. cit.*

²¹ What follows is drawn from A. Vanneste, "Le décret du Concile de Trente sur le péché originel," *Nowelle revue théologique* 87 (1965) 688-726.

In digest form the five canons of Trent are the following: (a) “primum hominem Adam. . .sanctitatem et justitiam. . .amisisse” (DS 1511); (b) “sanctitatem et justitiam. . .nobis etiam eum perdidisse” (DS 1512); (c) “hoc Adae peccatum. . .origine unum est et propagatione, non imitatione transfusum omnibus inest unicuique proprium” (DS 1513); (d) “parvulos. . .in remissionem quidem peccatorum. . .baptizari” (DS 1514); (e) “in baptisate. . .tolli totum id, quod veram et propriam peccati rationem habet” (DS 1515). Herein we readily recognize the ingredients of the classical position on original sin.

Before we can tell what the Council is saying, we must ask why or to what purpose the Council Fathers are speaking about original sin at all.

We know, first, that their original intention was to formulate a rather elaborate decree on original sin in order to prepare for the subsequent decree on justification. Because of the pressure of time (this decree was prepared and promulgated in three weeks) and doctrinal dissension among the Fathers, they settled for these five canons.

Why, then, *these* five canons? Since intrinsic justification was the major issue of the Council, canon 5 was clearly promulgated with this purpose in mind. It seems quite likely that the “inest unicuique proprium” of canon 3 was directed against A. Pighius, who taught that the one sin of Adam is imputed to us but is not interior in us. The other canons are basically anti-Pelagian in tone (though canon 4 might look also to the Anabaptists), for the reason that they are largely drawn from the Council of Orange.

What was the didactic intent? Why did the Fathers of Trent resume the teaching of Orange? First, because the Reformers had accused the Catholics of a Pelagian bias. Secondly, because the Fathers of Trent, unable as they were to reach consensus on the essence of original sin, could do no better under the circumstances than repeat previous conciliar statements.

The question then becomes, why did the Fathers of Orange treat of original sin? Essentially, Orange taught the necessity of Christ's grace for salvation as against the optimistic naturalism of the Pelagians. Thus in Augustinian style they stressed the debility of human freedom. This debility is traced to the sin of Adam in us. Thus Orange's primary didactic intent is man's need of grace; original sin is intro-

duced to stress this need. Little is said of Adam. There is no effort to define original sin. Orange argues from Augustine's misinterpretation of Rom 5:12. The how of transmission is not discussed. Indeed, in view of the didactic purpose of the Council, we should not expect such questions to be raised.

Having briefly surveyed the why of Trent's canons, we are in a position to understand what the Fathers meant to say. For our purposes, we might ask the following questions: Did the Council of Trent define that Adam was a single, concrete, historical person, who is the physical father of us all? Does Trent, therefore, define strict monogenism, to the exclusion of any kind of polygenism? Does "propagatione, non imitatione transfusum" confirm this monogenistic position?

In order to answer such questions, modern scholars are beginning to develop some hermeneutical principles directly applicable to conciliar theology. Schoonenberg recently proposed the following: (1) A text does not give direct answer to questions which were not asked at the moment of origin. (2) Texts should be interpreted according to their final affirmation, according to the question which they seek to answer. (3) If a pronouncement is issued against a certain opinion, its positive statements should be interpreted in the first place as a defense against the condemned opinion and not as the only possible definition of the mystery which is being defined.²²

Gutwenger agrees essentially with Schoonenberg's third principle, but explains that a conciliar statement should be understood to mean that this position is conducive to salvation, not that it is the only position on the question, or even the best. Moreover, a statement which begins "si quis" and concludes "anathema sit" cannot automatically be taken as *de fide divina et catholica*. He illustrates this point with some "solemn definitions" of Church customs.²³

To the question, then, whether the Council of Trent formally taught the actual historical existence of a man named Adam, first father of all others, Vanneste replies:

The question of the historicity or the nonhistoricity of the narrative of the Fall never crossed the minds of the conciliar Fathers. In the sixteenth century, Catholics

²² P. Schoonenberg, "Some Remarks on the Present Discussion of Original Sin," *Information Documentation on the Conciliar Church*, Jan. 28, 1967, pp. 8-10.

²³ Gutwenger, *art. cit.*, pp. 439-45.

as well as Reformers thought "naively" that everything had actually happened just as it is presented in Genesis. . . . Even if we consider Adam as a literary type or a mythical figure, this first canon retains its sense and proper object, for the fulsome description it gives of the condition of Adam after his sin is an obvious attempt to explain the consequences of sin in us. In my opinion, for the modern theologian the question of the historicity of Adam remains for the most part the very same after a study of the Council of Trent as before.²⁴

For the same reason Trent leaves the question of monogenism and polygenism perfectly open. The "propagatione, non imitatione" is from Orange, which took it literally from St. Augustine's anti-Pelagian writings. The point, then, is a rejection of the Pelagian "bad example" theory of original sin, and "propagatione" is intended less as an explanation of the transmission of original sin than simply as a rejection of Pelagianism. "Origine unum" is, as we have seen, directed against Pighius, and teaches original sin as common to all but *in each*.

This brief survey suffices to indicate the caution required in the reading of magisterial texts. Similar analyses might be made of *Humani generis* (DS 3895-97) and the recent address of Paul VI to the theologians convened at Rome to discuss the doctrine of original sin.²⁵ Neither document substantially changes the position of Trent.²⁶

RECENT HYPOTHESES

The foregoing summary of the various factors which have been influential in a reconsideration of the doctrine of original sin was merely preparatory to an exposition of some of the more recent hypotheses which have been proposed. Although they differ in particulars, all are concerned to render the doctrine more intelligible to the modern mind in scholarly fidelity to the data of revelation. As we have mentioned, the positions are listed according to the degree—which generally happens to be chronological—in which they move progressively further from the classical statement of the doctrine.

The authors of these studies are (1) Zoltan Alszegehly and Maurice Flick of the Gregorian University in Rome; (2) Pierre Grelot, Professor of Scripture at the Institut Catholique in Paris; (3) Piet Schoonen-

²⁴ Vanneste, *art. cit.*, pp. 716-17.

²⁵ *AAS* 58 (1966) 654.

²⁶ See Dubarle in *Le monde*, Aug. 6, 1966, and Rouquette in *Etudes*, Oct., 1966, pp. 381-91.

berg, Professor of Dogmatic Theology at the Catholic University of Nijmegen in the Netherlands; (4) A. Hulsbosch, Professor of Scripture at the Catholic University of Nijmegen; (5) Henri Rondet, Professor of Dogmatic Theology in the Jesuit Seminary of Fourviere, France; (6) Alfred Vanneste, Dean of the Theology Faculty of the University of Lovanium in the Congo; (7) E. Gutwenger of the University of Innsbruck.

Alszeqhy-Flick

Zoltan Alszeqhy and Maurice Flick collaborated in the publication of two articles, the first of which dealt with the condition of original sin (*originatum*) as analyzed in terms of personalist philosophical themes,²⁷ while the second studied the Fall (*originans*) in its compatibility with an evolutionary world view.²⁸

The authors undertake their personalist analysis with the conviction that since sin—and hence the condition of original sin—is a personal state, it cannot be described in the static, ontic terms which are equally applicable to things (e.g., as a privation of an accidental perfection). Human existence, rather, is constituted by and fulfils itself in interpersonal dialogical relationships. Original sin, then, is defined as the dynamic incapability, prior to an individual's personal choice, of entering freely into dialogue. Alszeqhy-Flick reject the hypothesis that the sinful situation of the world is an adequate explanation for this dialogical impotence and hence for original sin, since this hypothesis presumes that all men, despite Christ's grace, are universally sinful and that man is not conceived but "becomes" a sinner upon his contact with the world. It is, rather, in one's innate and absolute inability to enter freely into dialog with God, as one's Father, that original sin is grounded. Without the revelation of God as Father (which created nature cannot give) and the transforming strength of Christ's grace, a man, because of original sin, is unable to love God affectively above all things by his own natural powers.

Thus original sin is both "personal," because an incapability of interpersonal dialog, and "natural," in the sense that this inability

²⁷ Z. Alszeqhy and M. Flick, "Il peccato originale in prospettiva personalistica," *Gregorianum* 46 (1965) 705-32.

²⁸ Z. Alszeqhy and M. Flick, "Il peccato originale in prospettiva evolucionistica," *Gregorianum* 47 (1966) 201-25.

is prior to the personal choice of a given individual. This prior inability is a consequence of the fall of all men in Adam.

How one man's sin induces dialogical impotence in mankind is the central issue in the second article: the Fall in an evolutionary perspective. Adam was the first man who evolved to a degree of self-consciousness sufficient to recognize and freely respond to God's invitation to supernatural life. Although there might well have been pre-Adamites and co-Adamites who were truly human, they were as yet incapable of free decision. When, for the first time in Adam, man was called to co-operate freely in the ongoing evolutionary plan of God, he disobediently refused to accept God's invitation to grace. Thus he thwarted the original evolutionary plan. As a consequence, the instinctive and supernatural impulse, orientation, or tendency toward further conscious supernatural evolution (the grace which Adam possessed "virtually") was simply blocked, not only in Adam but in all men. What Adam lost for himself, he lost for all mankind, and henceforth man could be saved only through the death-resurrection grace of Christ the Redeemer.

Adam's sin affected all mankind, for all men are one. (1) All have come from a common primordial "matter" created by God to be the substrate of hominization. (2) All men form a corporate person in whose actions individuals share independently of their own free choice. (3) God's call to grace is addressed to humanity as a whole and to individuals only as members of this family. (4) Since the first sinner was the only person who was able to accept or refuse the divine call, his response was effectively the response of all humanity. (5) This collective rejection originated the "world," which is hostile to God, and it is as a member of the "world," and not of Christ, that each man is now born.

Thus, to return to the condition of sin, man's dialogical impotence is truly sinful, because it is due to one's solidarity with the "world," and is to that extent a voluntary condition.

We will recognize that in their hypothesis Alszeghy-Flick are clearly in the classical tradition. Though they admit biological polygenism, though Adam did not *actually* possess grace prior to the Fall, though they admit human evolution or hominization (their theory here is not clear), and though the transmission of original sin is not related

to procreation as to its cause, nonetheless there is a true theological monogenism—all men as corporate person constituted as one in Adam, in whose single sin all men fell.

Grelot

In an article intended to update the doctrine of original sin in view of modern thought in biblical hermeneutics, paleontology, and depth psychology, Pierre Grelot presents an explanation of the Fall which in its essentials is quite like that of Alszeghy-Flick—"mitigated polygenism," Grelot calls it.²⁹ Admitting the possibility of pre- or co-Adamites, Grelot's Adam is, unlike that of Alszeghy-Flick, not the first *man* to cross the threshold of self-conscious freedom, but the first *couple*, since sexual bipolarity is a constitutive ingredient in human self-consciousness. Awakening to self-consciousness and freedom is precisely an *act* of self-conscious freedom, and it is this first act of freedom—attempting to "be like God" in the "knowledge of good and evil" (proud mastery over one's destiny)³⁰—that constitutes the Fall. Man reached full humanization in and through the free act by which he denied God and thus lost the grace in which he was created, but which he was meant to appropriate personally in his first act of freedom.

Unlike Alszeghy-Flick, Grelot does not explain the subsequent universality of sin on the basis of corporate personality, but rather by a kind of contagion. The co-Adamites, true men who had not yet reached the threshold of self-consciousness, were awakened to it in the cultural ambience provided by their contact with "Adam and Eve," and thus from the start were introduced into a human family already in the condition of sin. Moral contamination thus spread through the entire race by "psychological" rather than physical generation.

Despite rich reflections on the wisdom of Gn 2-3 and on the specifically human or interpersonal factor in the hominization process, Grelot's theory leaves certain questions unanswered. Why could it have only been *one couple* which emerged to consciousness independ-

²⁹ Grelot, *art. cit.*, p. 472.

³⁰ This theme was well developed some years ago by S. Lyonnet, *De peccato et redemptione* 1 (Rome, 1957) 29 ff.

ently? Does "psychological generation" adequately explain the interiority of original sin? Others will question, as we shall see, the necessity of a "catastrophic act" in *the* first conscious human.

Schoonenberg

Piet Schoonenberg's theory differs from those we have seen in that the Fall is constituted, not by a catastrophic sin of a first man, but rather by the innumerable personal sins of all mankind throughout history, taken as a collectivity.³¹ Like Grelot, however, he attempts an existentialist explanation of the transmission and subsequent condition of original sin: man as essentially "being-situated."

Adam is the first sinner, though not necessarily the first man, and in view of the total history of sin, his sin, though first, is relatively insignificant. The Fall is not the sin of Adam alone, but rather "the whole history of sinful deeds"³² from Adam to the present time. These innumerable sins in their collectivity constitute "the sin of the world," and to be in the "world" is to be in the condition of original sin.

Original sin is transmitted through procreation in the sense that it is through generation alone that man enters and is "situated" in the "world." Thus neither monogenism nor physical descent from Adam is required for the doctrine.

It is most important for Schoonenberg's hypothesis to understand his "being-situated" in the personalist philosophical sense in which he proposes it. A man's situation is not exterior or extrinsic to him; it is a constitutive factor in his existence. "This 'being-situated' in original sin is, according to German terminology, an 'existential' of man."³³ To be a man is to be-in-a-situation, which determines freedom inasmuch as one cannot but respond to the good or evil that con-

³¹ P. Schoonenberg has written extensively on this topic: "Erbünde und 'Sünde der Welt,'" *Orientierung* 26 (1962) 65-69; "Sünde der Welt," *Theologie der Gegenwart* 5 (1962) 159-64; *Gottes verdende wereld*, 1962; "Zonde der wereld en erfzonde," *Bijdragen* 24 (1963) 349-89; *Man and Sin* (Notre Dame, 1965; a translation of the third volume of *Het geloof van ons dopsel*); *Theologie der Sünde* (Einsiedeln, 1966); "Some Remarks on the Present Discussion of Original Sin," *Information Documentation on the Conciliar Church*, Jan. 28, 1967; "Mysterium iniquitatis," *Wort und Wahrheit* 21 (1966) 577-91 (digested in *Theology Digest* 15 [1967] 203-8).

³² *Man and Sin*, p. 190.

³³ "Some Remarks . . ." (n. 31 above) p. 13.

fronts him. "Man possesses a *situated* freedom; every human choice is conditioned by past decisions and restricts future possibilities."³⁴

To "be-situated" in the "world," therefore, means that man's freedom and indeed man himself is constitutively and "interiorly" conditioned by original sin, a condition or inner determination which is his from the beginning, from his origin, and which precedes all his free choices. The "world" conditions man and his freedom in a variety of concrete ways: (a) bad example; (b) absence of good example; (both a and b obscure or eliminate values and norms); (c) absence of the grace which men are meant to mediate. Thus solidarity in sin creates a situation of blindness to value and the privation of grace. "Every man is born lacking grace because the communication of ethical-religious values has been interrupted through the sins of past ancestry."³⁵

How the universality of original sin can be explained in this hypothesis is a difficulty for Schoonenberg himself.³⁶ In *Man and Sin* he held that original sin became universal because of and only after the world's rejection of Christ by crucifixion. "The sin through which Christ has been excluded from the world and from our existence on earth is the fact that makes the situation of original sin inescapable for all."³⁷ Prior to this we need not postulate universality, especially because it was taught in conjunction with the necessity for baptism—and thus in the post-Christian era.³⁸

Schoonenberg has now revised his view. The question of the universality of original sin "led us to the opinion that the rejection of Christ results in a general situation of non-salvation and that it [the rejection] replaces, as such, Adam's sin. In the past, I have always characterized this as the most hypothetical element of the theory and for the most part have now rejected it."³⁹

Though still not fully satisfied, Schoonenberg now holds that original sin is absolutely universal—before and after Christ's death—because "every sin is part of the existential situation of those who are born after it."⁴⁰ "Because sin has entered the world, every man will meet

³⁴ "Original Sin and Man's Situation," *Theology Digest* 15 (1967) 204.

³⁵ "Some Remarks . . ." (n. 31 above) p. 13. ³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

³⁷ *Man and Sin*, p. 190; see also pp. 110-11. ³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

³⁹ "Some Remarks . . ." (n. 31 above) p. 14. ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

it in some form or other. . . . Could not the influence of all mankind as an educative community explain the universality of original sin?"⁴¹

Besides the difficulties with universality, theologians criticize this theory on the grounds that "Man would not be conceived in sin, but would become a sinner, be it only through the influences brought to bear from the time of his embryonic life."⁴² Moreover, can we reasonably conceive a society so wicked as to effectively *eliminate* the possibility of charity? Would there be original sin if an infant were born and reared by saintly parents? All of this is related, of course, to Schoonenberg's own problem with universality, which need not vitiate the theory but certainly leaves it incomplete.

Hulsbosch

Like Schoonenberg, A. Hulsbosch⁴³ identifies original sin as the "sin of the world," which becomes the sin of each man inasmuch as his very existence is constituted by the relations with others which make him to be who he is. Just as the world as a whole, since sinful, is under the power of the Evil One, so also is each individual man who is born into the world.

What is most provocative in Hulsbosch's treatment, however, is his new focus on the question. Adam and his Paradise of the past in a static, essentially unchanging world are replaced by Christ, toward full union with whom in future glory the world and man are evolving. Both viewpoints agree that the doctrine of original sin states the conviction of faith that man's relation to his Maker is not what it ought to be, that man labors under a deficiency which is moral as well as physical, that man as he now is does not correspond to the intention of the Creator. Where Hulsbosch and the traditional position part company is precisely on this question: What is the *norm* by which this deficiency is to be measured?

To this question the traditional position, based almost exclusively on Gn 2-3 (through St. Paul, St. Augustine, and the Scholastics), replies: Adam and his original Paradise. It is this condition from which

⁴¹ "Original sin . . ." (n. 34 above) p. 207.

⁴² Alszegey-Flick, "Il peccato originale in prospettiva personalistica," *Gregorianum* 46 (1965) 715.

⁴³ A. Hulsbosch, *God in Creation and Evolution* (New York, 1965).

man has fallen, and it is to this condition that we must return. The underlying supposition here, of course, is that God's creation, man included, was in complete possession of its proper perfection from the very beginning. It was "given"; there was no need to grow toward it. This is the static view of the world.

In the Christian evolutionary perspective the focus is reversed from Adam in the past to the fully glorified Christ of the future, who, as the primary *intention* of God's creative action (what man is meant to become and be), is also the *norm* by which human deficiency must be judged. As the first in intention is the last in execution, mankind must gradually achieve itself and progressively grow into the fulness of Christ. "God creates the world and humanity in and unto Christ. . . . The man whom God creates *is man as he shall be at the end*. The men who are now alive in this world are being created. They have not yet reached the stature which was the intention of God in creating. . . . The intention of God's plan is consummated in the course of cosmic evolution." ⁴⁴

The criticism that Hulsbosch identifies original sin with a purely natural evolutionary uncompletedness is a misconception of his thought. Though he is mindful of the indispensable distinction between the natural and the supernatural, he does not dwell on it here on the quite defensible grounds that "the actual order is a creation of communion with the glorified Christ." ⁴⁵ He refuses to concede that evolution, human especially, is a purely natural phenomenon. In clarification, he distinguishes two aspects of the actual evolutionary process, each of which corresponds to an aspect of the salvific work of Christ: (a) man's creative self-achievement in personal freedom before God; (b) man's need for reconciliation through Christ with God because of original sin. Both are aspects of a single reality: justification; both are supernatural; both require the grace of God in Christ. We will consider each in turn.

Hulsbosch takes up the first aspect by stressing that as a creature under God man is, of himself, imperfect and unfinished. Under the progressive creative action of God, man has evolved from lower forms as an image of God. God has called him out of the actuality of the world as a partner *capable* of dialogue face to face. This capacity,

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28. ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

which manifests itself in the natural desire to see God, belongs to the very essence of man. Man is by nature an asking after God, a subject who can be addressed by his Maker.⁴⁶

By virtue of creation, therefore, man possesses an inclination, a suitability, or a disposition by means of which he is orientated to the supernatural end of seeing his Maker. However, although man is directed by this natural desire to his completion as a creature of God, it is absolutely impossible for him to reach this consummation unless God reveals Himself and meets man in grace.

Thus man can achieve his properly human perfection, can achieve himself as man, can become what by God's creative intention he is meant to be only by the free acceptance of God's grace revealed in Christ Jesus. This supernatural gift of grace to man in Christ is purely a gift, but a gift which is now seen as the final phase of God's creative action. It is given to man to affirm his freedom by obedience to the creative will of God. Only in this way will he at last possess himself in freedom.

Within the context of this analysis we can understand why Hulsbosch speaks of Christ's salvific work as "the completion of the work of creation."⁴⁷ When an individual is baptized, he "becomes a new creature already possessing, through the Spirit of Christ, the grace of a future mode of being through which he will be completed *as a creature.*"⁴⁸

There is a second aspect or moment to Christ's salvific work: reconciliation. What was at the start purely not-yet-possessing has become a sinful absence, because man has affirmed his uncompletedness as a positive condition, in conflict with God's creative will. Hulsbosch defines sin as the refusal of man to subject himself to God's creative will. It is man's "wishing to stay where he is, seeking his happiness on earth, and refusing the continuing creative action of God."⁴⁹

From revelation we know that mankind as a whole, whose deepest unity is grounded in its "belonging to Christ," has refused the continuing creative action of God, has refused the grace of God in Jesus. The world as a whole lies under the power of the Evil One, and each man

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 37. Though undeveloped, Hulsbosch's presentation is much like that of Rahner in his *Hörer des Wortes*.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 34. ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 35. ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

is precedently determined by an influence which affects him from mankind as a whole. A man born into a world of sinners already belongs, by virtue of this fact alone, to this sinful world. Since our relation to others is not incidental and external, but belongs to human nature, and since our actual personal relations with our fellows are much more constitutive of what a man is than is common descent from one progenitor, then the condition of the world is codeterminate for the condition of each man born into the world.

The man born into the sinful world is the man born in original sin. The second moment, therefore, of Christ's salvific work is reconciliation. In the present economy of sin, baptism not only makes man a new creature, but also frees the believer from his sin. In His mercy God takes away the sin of the world and founds a community in salvation through the redemptive work of Jesus.

What is important in either moment of Christ's salvific work is the utter gratuitousness of man's completion: "without grace man can do nothing, and the way to the sight of God is closed."⁵⁰ Hulsbosch feels that this is the essential message of the Church's teaching on original sin. "When the councils concerned themselves with original sin, this grace [the saving grace of God in Christ Jesus] was their central preoccupation."⁵¹

In his theory Hulsbosch appears to combine the best of Schoonenberg and a truly Christological foundation for the doctrine. There is much here that is appealing. His "original-sin-by-situation," however, suffers from the same difficulties which Schoonenberg faces.

Rondet

Like Hulsbosch, Henri Rondet⁵² takes a Christic view of original sin. He proposes his position in a series of six theses, the final one of which is the key to his explanation. "In order the better to understand the sin of Adam, it is necessary to recognize the unity of the human family in Christ, the New Adam, in whom have been created or, preferably, are created all men who in the course of time have been, are, or will be."⁵³

Rondet explains this thesis in the three dialectical steps or moments

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 42. ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁵² Rondet, *op. cit.* (n. 17 above). ⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 309.

in which God's eternal plan is realized in history: (1) From all eternity God sees all men in His beloved Son, the Head of a mystical body of which He is the *raison d'être* and finality. God's decision to create a universe is His decision to become man, the God-man who will be the center of all created reality and the prototype of all men. God sees the universe gathered around His Son. (2) From all eternity (in the second dialectical step) God sees humanity in sin and thus separated by sin from Christ, who was meant to make men one. Endowed with the liberty to say yes or no to God and surrounded by the grace of God which is offered him, man necessarily (except for extraordinary exceptions) sins, even though freely. Thus God sees humanity as a *massa damnata*. (3) From all eternity God sees man as saved in Christ the Redeemer. The third moment of this dialectical view of creation and human history is finalized toward Christ. Principle of unity, substantial bond of the universe and of history, Christ is also Saviour and Redeemer who liberates man from sin and its consequences. This solidarity in the redemption is logically prior to all natural solidarities.

Who or what is Adam in this scheme of things? Rondet admits that there obviously was a chronologically first sinner, but he transcends the whole question of monogenism or polygenism in maintaining that Adam is Man, humanity taken as a totality which, in the second dialectic moment, appears in the view of God as separated by sin from Christ, i.e., as not yet under the influence of the grace of Christ. Adam is "legion: he is Humanity; he is man insofar as he is still a stranger to grace and calling for a Saviour who will be, at the same time, the principle of unity." ⁵⁴

The sin of Adam, therefore, is "an innumerable multitude of personal sins constituting a collective sin, the sin of the world, the sin of Adam." ⁵⁵ Each man is born with original sin, enters into existence burdened with a sin of nature, insofar as he assumes a sinful human nature, the nature of Man, of Adam, who is outside of Christ, yet oriented to Christ as principle of unity. "Original sin in us is caused by actual sin, but as a collective sin, constituted by the ensemble of the personal sins of men of all times." ⁵⁶

It is clear that Rondet is thinking of "moments" here in the strict philosophical sense, certainly not of chronological steps in the created

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 316. ⁵⁵ *Ibid.* ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 321.

order, for sinful humanity (second moment) is *simultaneously* created (first moment) and redeemed (third moment) in and through Christ. Thus, though he speaks of mankind in the second moment as "surrounded on all sides by the grace of God offered to him,"⁵⁷ this is a grace of *God*, which by hypothesis mankind does *not* accept. Man at this "moment" is outside of Christ and necessarily in sin. Indeed, Rondet maintains the *necessity* of sin in such a condition, because of the Church's age-old teaching that a man deprived of grace cannot avoid sin for any length of time, since God alone is essentially impeccable. The creature is always deficient by nature, and in the moral order this deficiency is called sin.

Rondet takes great care to reconcile his thesis with the biblical data (following Dubarle), with magisterial statements and Trent in particular (following Vanneste and Lengsfeld), and the objections of theological reason. He feels that once we realize that Trent affirms neither the historicity of Adam nor monogenism as a requirement of original sin, as Flick and Alszeghy concede, his position is no more difficult to establish than theirs.

Vanneste

Alfred Vanneste⁵⁸ is convinced, with the authors we have seen previously, that the whole thrust of the doctrine of original sin is Christological and soteriological. He describes original sin as "the need of every man for redemption by Christ." If we trace the historical development of the doctrine from Romans through to Trent, we see that this need for Christ has been the basic motivation and the essential message. "What is the significance of Christ in the living of each Christian?" was the central issue in the Pelagian controversy, which understandably narrowed down to the limit-case of infants and their need for baptism. Here the necessity of infant baptism was an application of the principle that *all* men, infants included, need salvation in Christ, and therefore the statement that infants are in sin, not personal but "original."

As a statement of man's need for redemption by Christ in the limit-

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 315.

⁵⁸ A. Vanneste, "De theologie van de erfzonde," *Collationes Brugenses et Gandavenses* 12 (1966) 289-312 (digested in *Theology Digest* 15 [1967] 209-14).

case of infants, Vanneste finds "original sin" quite satisfactory. But he insists that we appreciate the very analogous use of the word "sin." Properly speaking, "sin" is a religious category which can apply only to adults, but in this case we apply it by extrapolation to infants insofar as they are still in need of Christ's redemption and hence at this time are outside of Christ. It comes to this: unbaptized infants *would be* in the state of sin if, being what they are, they were adults. Although, on the one hand, it is meaningless to speak of sin in infants, since they lack the mature consciousness to be religious at all, it also makes little sense, on the other hand, to call them good or innocent; hence there is no choice but to term them sinners. Though they are created unto Christ in order to be united to Him, they are, as unbaptized, outside of Christ. And this limit-case of purely "original sin" expresses explicitly the most fundamental doctrine of Christian belief: Jesus is the redeemer of all men. Christ's grace is absolutely necessary for every man who comes into the world.

Vanneste concludes with several clarifications. (1) Since the doctrine of original sin is essentially a theological expression of man's common need of salvation through Christ, we can and must transcend the scientific questions of monogenism, polygenism, evolution, etc., which encumber the traditional framework. Actually they have no bearing or interest as such for theology. (2) Since original sin is a specifically Christian doctrine expressing the significance of Christ for all mankind, it is totally different from the philosophers' view of original sin as a mythical expression of man's general sinfulness. (3) Original sin should not be used to explain, even in a general way, the origin of suffering and death in the world. Biological suffering and death are "results" of sin in the same way the Decalogue promises long life to those who honor their parents.

Gutwenger

Engelbert Gutwenger quite frankly denies the appropriateness of speaking of a condition of "original sin" or of an "inherited guilt."⁵⁹ He finds no justification for such statements in St. Paul and feels that Trent's restatement of the Augustinian synthesis is a formulation

⁵⁹ E. Gutwenger, *art. cit.* (n. 19 above) pp. 433-46.

which is conducive to salvation, but certainly not the only or the best one.

With Hulsbosch, Rondet, and Vanneste, Gutwenger views the doctrine from a Christological perspective. All men have been created unto Christ, and this dynamic rules the entire history of humanity. As philosophy has discovered certain existentials of human existence, so revelation has made known to us the basic existential of man: being-for-Christ (*Auf-Christus-hin-sein*), which pertains as much to man's constitution as being-in-the-world or being-with-others. Christ is the one finality of actual human existence; to lose it is to fall into absurdity, for this finality is identical with man's essence. This existential calls out as a question to be answered affirmatively, to fulfil one's manhood and to cross over into the situation of salvation, which ultimately is realized in eschatological life with God and the resurrection of the flesh.

To affirm one's existence as for-Christ in personal decision through faith and baptism is to be transformed into being-*in*-Christ, which is called redemption and salvation. Not to affirm one's existence as for-Christ but rather to reject it by free, personal decision is to be-*outside*-of-Christ, which is called sin and eschatological death.

Previous to free personal decision there can be no talk of sin or salvation. Prior to the possibility of free choice for or against Christ, man is in a state of innate indifference, which is identical with the human condition. Though it obviously implies a lack or a want, insofar as the individual in question is not yet in Christ, it is not a sinful condition, but is positively willed by God, just as He wills man's decision for Christ, because this indifference is a necessary presupposition for such a decision. To say that this state of indifference is "inherited" makes only as much sense as saying that man inherits his human nature. Nonetheless we must say that man is born unredeemed, since redemption is the fruit of personal decision under grace for Christ.

Gutwenger recognizes the deep significance of infant baptism, but confesses to the theological difficulties which the traditional position has always encountered.

CONCLUSION

In moving, rapidly as we have, through this series of presentations, it is quite obvious that there has been a progressive change of focus

on the doctrine of original sin from man's solidarity in sin with Adam to the human condition as not-yet-in-Christ. To be in "original sin" is simply to be outside of Christ prior to the possibility of free personal decision for or against Christ.

The question then arises whether this not-yet-in-Christ prior to personal decision can appropriately be called a "sinful" state—even when qualified as "original" sin. Gutwenger would deny the appropriateness of this terminology, while Vanneste accepts it provisionally, in the sense that, since it is meaningless to speak either of personal sin or of innocence in an infant, "original sin" describes the condition as well as anything else. He gives the clear impression, however, of holding Gutwenger's view, while making a concession to traditional terminology.

Hulsbosch and Rondet also maintain that the very core of Christian faith is man's need for salvation in Christ, and this whether there were a question of "original sin" or not. But in their interpretation there is a second aspect or moment to Christ's redemptive work, namely, reconciliation of truly sinful man to God. Thus they strike a balance between the traditional teaching on original sin and the more creative-Christocentric positions of Gutwenger and Vanneste. Granted the doctrine of original sin grew historically out of a stress on man's need for the grace of Christ; it would seem that Hulsbosch and Rondet have better preserved the Christian sense of the *mysterium iniquitatis* and the "sin of the world." Man's fascination with evil and penchant for self-destruction have been observed even by philosophers of the stature of Hegel and Kant. It looms large in the works of existentialist theologians Kierkegaard and Berdyaev.⁶⁰ Modern philosophers, too, point to a mysterious kind of alienation of man from the Ground of his being. Paul Ricoeur makes much of this in his *Fallible Man* and *The Symbolism of Evil*. These moderns are far, of course, from holding the classical Catholic formulation of original sin, but they are also far from the rather optimistic "innate indifference" of Gutwenger. Perhaps, then, Hulsbosch and Rondet are closer to the full truth than Vanneste and Gutwenger.

This is not to say, however, that there are no difficulties with this position. That "all men have been created unto Christ and that there-

⁶⁰ Rondet, *op. cit.*, pp. 229-58.

fore the fundamental existential of human existence is 'being for Christ,' whom to attain is human self-achievement, and whom to reject is damnation" is quite easy to say. The Christocentric view is popular these days. To explain it in theological depth is quite another matter. This is not the place to review or discuss these problems; suffice it to recall the controversies which have raged over Rahner's "supernatural existential" and the very delicate questions relating to nature and grace as they have been treated by Henri de Lubac, Leopold Malevez, Juan Alfaro, Karl Rahner, and others. All agree that the *actual* economy is supernatural, but may we immediately conclude that the gratuity of grace *is* the gratuity of creation? Without taking this question further, it should be clear that Christology must be much more thoroughly investigated before Christocentric theories of original sin can be more than a rough sketch along broad lines. In fairness to the authors reviewed, we must realize that this is all they intended.

A second difficulty which the authors themselves admit as unresolved is the way in which original sin becomes one's own through being-situated. It would be difficult to deny that this *is* an important aspect of the mystery. Perhaps we should combine being-situated-in-the-world with the radical existential, being-for-Christ. But does this combination suffice to explain the *mysterium iniquitatis*?

Thirdly, an observation. The authors reviewed avail themselves of the data of paleontology, sociology, personalist philosophy, etc., but despite a passing reference here and there, little work seems to have been done in the area of depth psychology. Grelot mentions Ricoeur and his importance for this field, but never returns to the subject. It would be interesting to see a study on this topic for the light it might shed on our self-understanding in original sin.

Finally, all must agree that it is most gratifying to read theologians of such stature who, with their characteristic scholarly humility, have attempted in their tentative hypotheses to free the doctrine of original sin from a structure which had proven too narrow to embrace the fundamental Christian doctrine of sinful man's need for salvation in Christ.